

# Co-operantics

## *Co-operative skills for everyone*

### DEALING WITH WORKPLACE TENSIONS

Tensions between individuals inevitably arise from time to time. The following guidelines can be used by both the individuals concerned, and by other co-op members.

#### **Be constructive**

Instead of trying to 'win', seek changes that will make both sides happier

#### **Be specific**

- Talk about action and behaviour, not personality
- Examine facts, not assertions and accusations
- Discuss examples, not generalizations

#### **Talk about your own feelings**

- *"I feel angry"* not *"you really get up my nose"*
- *"I feel disappointed"* not *"you've let me down"*
- *"I feel nervous"* not *"you make me jumpy"*

#### **Be clear about what you want to happen**

- Be clear about who you want to take action
- Be clear about what action you want them to perform
- Ask them to start or increase doing the thing you want (rather than stop doing the thing you don't want)

#### **Explain why**

If you ask someone to change their behaviour, make sure they understand the reason:

When you do ... (concrete example)

I feel ... (acknowledge feeling)

And I want you to do ... (specific, positive request)

Because ... (explanation or reason)

#### **Look for agreement**

- Do you understand?
- Can we agree about this?