

# Dealing With Difficult People In Your Audience



**The TALKER-** Someone who dominates the audience participation.

When you have someone like this in the audience, divert the discussion away from them, or say something like “I’d like to hear what someone else has to say before I hear from you”

**The KNOW-IT-ALL-** Someone who thinks they know all the information about your subject matter. (Their knowledge may be genuine, but they don’t let the audience participate).

When you have someone like this in the audience, involve these people in the program, pull them aside during an activity and ask them to let other participants, or treat them like *the talker*.

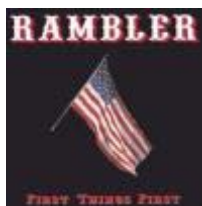


**The SHOW-OFF-** Someone who tries to divert audience participation to themselves.

When you have someone like this in your audience and they ask a question that you can’t answer, put them on the spot and ask them what they know or think about the subject.

**The WHINER-** Someone who doesn’t want to participate, shoots down ideas, and complains.

This person can be dealt with in several different ways. You can try to involve them more, specially ask for their input on topics/activities, or ask them to leave (in private).

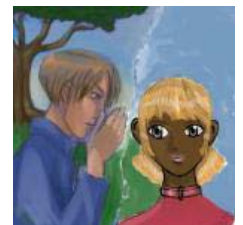


**The RAMBLER-** Someone who talks in circles and asks unnecessary questions.

When you have someone like this in the audience you can cut them off in a nice manner or tie what they are saying back into your speech. Once again, you can always tell them you would like to hear from someone else.

**The CHATTERBOX-** Similar to *the rambler*, this person talks all of the time and distracts the audience and the presenters.

This person can be asked if they have any direct input for the group, and asked questions by you, and asked if they have any questions. Try to keep direct eye contact with them at all times- this might make them uncomfortable.





**The HECKLER-** Someone who interrupts with sarcasm or rude comments.

When you have someone like this, you can do several things. First, you can confront them and ask them to keep their comments to themselves or leave the program. Second, you can ignore them, or third, you can comment politely on what they are saying.

**The SEARCHER-** Someone who is in search of his or her own answers and ends up dominating the conversation by their constant questioning.

The person can be handled in two ways. If you know the answers- go ahead and tell them what they want to know/or refer them to someone else who will know the answer, OR ask them to hold their questions until the end of the program when you will be pleased to meet with them and talk to them about the topic.



**The CYNIC-** Someone who is scornful, bitterly mocking or has a sneering attitude.

You can handle this person by asking them what they think about the topic – and then ask the audience what they think about the cynics comment. You can also ask this person to keep their comments to themselves if they are disturbing the program.

**The QUIET TYPE-** Someone who doesn't say much or participate in activities.

When you have this type of person you have to decide if you want to make an effort to involve them or leave them alone...either decision is ok. If you do decide to make an effort to involve them, ask them questions, ask them to lead an activity in a small group, or ask them to assist you (i.e.: passing out handouts).



**The REBEL-** Someone who makes it known that they don't want to participate or outwardly disregards what you ask them to do in an activity.

Once again, you can ask this person to leave if they don't want to participate, or you can have an officer or advisor of the group you are presenting to, handle them.

***Remember, you can always ask the advisor or club president to handle a disruptive student.***