

# How to Handle Difficult Conversations with a person who is Shy, Non-Emotional & Hard to Read



The biggest challenge in recognizing the Shy, Non-Emotional type is that they are hard to read. They blend into the background, don't speak up and generally keep to themselves. They happen to be people-oriented but because they are introverted, they do more listening than talking. So to be sure you're dealing with this type, let's take a look at some of their characteristics.

Here are some traits of a Non-Emotional person:

- Quiet
- Friendly
- Tactful
- Loyal
- Resistant to change
- Process oriented and methodical
- Supportive
- Steady and patient

The latest research shows that **35% of the population is Non-Emotional**. This type may gravitate towards professions where they can be supportive and accommodating such as Administration and Customer Service. They will typically choose roles where they do not have to be center stage. *65% of the population is more expressive and emotional* and may have challenges communicating with the Non-Emotional type.

Let's look at some of those challenges. Because Non-Emotional don't express themselves, you generally don't know where you stand with them. They might like you, they might not. Either way, you probably won't be able to guess. They tend to be very poker-faced.

They are low risk takers. They dislike change, preferring the status quo. This has them stay in situations when they are unhappy (relationships, jobs) too long.

If you upset them, you probably won't know it for a long time. They tend to hold silent grudges. They like security and stability in relationships and dislike confrontation. So they won't "rock the boat" by telling you what they really think. Only when they have been suppressing negative emotions for a long time will something finally push them over the proverbial "edge" and they will become emotional and tell you what's on their mind.

## Specific Tips for Communicating with the Non-Emotional Person

- Don't press them to share more than they want to. This type more than any other will clam up under pressure. You must create safety for them by being patient and sincere. They are slow to trust and will share more with you over time.
- Give them time to gather their thoughts and information before making a decision. They need to feel prepared and safe. Otherwise, they may agree with you under pressure and then back out of the commitment later on.
- Pay attention to their body language, words, and tone of voice. They may say they are "fine" but you can usually detect unspoken tension in their voice.
- Reassure them that you care about their interests, values and family.
- Use active listening. Repeat back to them what you think they said because if you misunderstand – they won't likely correct you.

*Here ye, here ye. From this day forward the DJDT Wizard declares that you shall alter your communication with a Non-Emotional person in the following manner...*

***Don't do "drive-by" communicating.***

Take the time to slow down and talk at their speed.

***Don't rush into business or the agenda.***

Start with personal comments. Break the ice.

***Don't stick coldly or harshly to business.***

Show sincere interest in them as people.

***Don't force a quick response to your objectives.***

Patiently draw out their personal goals and ideas. Listen and be responsive.

***Don't threaten with positional power or be demanding.***

Present you case logically, softly, non-threateningly.

***Don't interrupt as they speak.***

Listen carefully. Ask specific questions. (preferably, how?)

***Don't be abrupt and rapid.***

Move casually, informally.

***Don't mistake their willingness to go along for satisfaction.***

If the situation impacts them personally, look for hurt feelings.

***Don't promise something you can't deliver.***

Provide personal assurances and guarantees.

***Don't force a quick decision, provide information.***

If a decision is required of them, allow them time to think.

***Don't over use gestures, facial expressions, or enthusiasm.***

Tone it down and be sincere.

## General Tips for Communicating More Effectively with All Types of People

- With any interaction, the only person you can control is yourself. So there is no sense in wasting energy on trying to change the other person (as nice as that would be). Therefore, you must take 100% responsibility when communicating with others. It is your reaction to them and the conversation that will determine the outcome – far more than the conversation itself.
- Assume the best. Orient yourself to this person's good qualities. C'mon – you can find something if you look hard enough. Remember that everyone has some good qualities. Find something you like and respect about this person. Approach your next conversation with these qualities in mind.

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### #1 Mistake Most People Make When Communicating with a Non-Emotional Person

The worst thing to do with an Non-Emotional person is to get, you guessed it, emotional. Anger or even extreme enthusiasm can shut down the Non-Emotional person.

They prefer a calm, stable environment and extreme emotions disrupt the peace. Give yourself a few minutes to calm down before going to communicate with this type of person. Better yet, give them a heads up that your coming to talk to them so they can feel prepared.

**BE PATIENT AND CALM!**

### Action Plan

Now that you have learned more about the Non-Emotional behavioral style, take a moment and think of some people you know who may fit this description (customers, employees, work associates, family, friends or even casual acquaintances). Then, fill out the table below.

Name of Person	My challenges communicating with him/her	Possible tips for communicating more effectively

- The very next interaction you have planned with a Non-Emotional (email, phone, in-person) give them advanced notice that you want to talk to them. Let them know the topic so they don't feel ambushed. If it's a difficult topic (a relationship or performance issue), say so. Remember to be calm, sincere and supportive.

This report contained just one way to use DISC in your organization – understanding and dealing with others more effectively. Listen to the ways my clients have used the DISC process...

### **For hiring and selection...**

*We have been enjoying the DISC consultation for a long time and have had very accurate results. One in particular - the analysis showed that this one candidate had the potential to become very frustrated and would ultimately voluntarily terminate employment. We thought we could manage through the situation, however, we could not and the employee quit due to the stress around the job.*

~ David J. Cecere, CPCU, Executive Vice President,  
Tompkins Insurance Agencies, Inc., Batavia, NY

### **For supervisor and manager promotions...**

*We did indeed offer the supervisor position to the employee we assessed last month and she is doing a great job. She's also much happier in this new position...it's a much better fit for her. Not only has she commented on this, but many other co-workers have even passed along great compliments. So...you could say it's going very well! We really appreciate your insight and help in making this decision. Thanks again for your help.*

~ Andrea L. Holland, Former Operations Manager, ExecuScribe, Inc., Rochester, NY

### **For leadership development...**

*These DISC assessments have been invaluable in assessing and addressing the specific behaviors of our key management team. This process has provided opportunities for professional growth as well as personal growth for our leadership team.*

~ Terry Knapp, HR Director, Ultrafab Inc., Farmington, NY

### **For sales team development...**

*What a tool! I was amazed at the accuracy of the DISC assessment. It nailed the behaviors of a sales team member on the head!! Using the DISC assessment will definitely give you an idea of the type of behaviors you may be employing (or are thinking of employing). Certification made sense for us!*

~ Alice Curry, HR Manager, Hammer Packaging



This isn't hocus pocus! DISC assessments have become recognized as a proven, powerful tool for many top organizations to solve many of their human resource challenges.

Now is the time to join our "secret society" so you to can become ...a behavioral wizard yourself!

<http://www.discwizardonline.com/disccertification.html>

**The DISC Wizard**

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