The DOs and DON’Ts of Confrontation

DO

• confront in private if the individual may become defensive or angry
• praise in public
• indicate that you care for the person and their feelings; be sincere
• carefully involve significant others
• choose a confronter who is respected and admired by the person being confronted
• condemn the behavior/action not the individual (the sin, not the sinner)
• use the “sandwich technique” (positive, negative, positive)
• keep to the issue - don’t digress
• have the facts, don’t make assumptions
• help the person identify the impact and consequences of his actions/behavior
• clearly define the sanctions for the actions/behavior
• listen to what is being said and handle silence appropriately
• anticipate the individuals objections and prepare your responses
• cool off before confronting - ALWAYS!
• time the confrontation as close as possible to the inappropriate action/behavior
• reflect that “we have a problem” not “you have a problem” to be less threatening
• build an army of supporters
• follow through on any agreements made
• show empathy, not sympathy
• be firm in the standards you set

DON’T

• attack the individual - physically, verbally, or otherwise
• be condescending or sarcastic
• excuse the action/behavior
• get trapped by the individual’s excuse for his action/behavior
• set standards or announce terms that you aren’t prepared to enact and enforce
• lose your cool - you will only lose credibility