



Security Spotlight

An Informational Guide for Securitas Clients

Verbal Judo

Judo is the Japanese phrase for “the gentle way.” The Verbal Judo technique helps deescalate situations by responding to force with calm authority instead of meeting force with force. Verbal Judo helps redirect force toward a positive outcome—using carefully chosen words to avoid physical contact. The right words can calm people, just as the wrong words can fuel emotions.

Employing the concept of “the gentle way” keeps the focus on the person with whom you are talking. Empathy allows you to see the situation from another person’s perspective even when you don’t agree.



Communication skills for conflict management

Conflicts are a natural part of human interactions. There are ways to resolve a conflict without resorting to a physical confrontation. Knowing how to use verbal and nonverbal communication skillfully will help you better manage heated or emotional situations.

Security officers can help resolve conflicts

A security officer’s authority, duties, and responsibilities differ in several critical areas from those of a police officer. Security officers detect, deter,

and report. They use their training to persuade people to comply with procedures. Some of the training security officers receive includes communications techniques to help deescalate a conflict.

Take control using LEAPS

Approach a conflict by first assessing the situation, then plan your response and use LEAPS (Listen, Empathize, Ask, Paraphrase & Summarize). Observe your environment and anticipate what could occur. Contact a supervisor with an initial report so that if the police are needed, they will be prepared to respond. Determine



Taking the time to listen calmly to a person may prevent a critical conflict from becoming catastrophic. Although it can be challenging, maintaining your own calm in contentious situations enables you to help a person understand the possible repercussions of making a poor choice.

Some benefits of Verbal Judo

- Uses a flexible response to reach a given goal
- Redirects energy rather than confronting it
- Use verbal techniques to avoid the use of force

Verbal judo employs reasoning, which may not be effective with disturbed or irrational people. In this situation the police should be called. Attempting to work through it will only aggravate the situation.



who is approaching and whether you can establish what the individual wants.

Step 1: Listen. Active listening means to hear what's really being said. This will help you determine the reason for the problem. Good listening skills include:

- Giving the speaker your undivided attention
- Maintaining direct eye contact
- Focusing on what is being said
- Not interrupting the speaker

Step 2: Empathize. Empathizing with the person demonstrates that you relate to their situation without necessarily agreeing. You show that you care and would like to work together to find a resolution. For example, you could say, "I can see how you might be frustrated."

Step 3: Ask. Ask questions that help clarify what the person wants. Questions show that you are paying attention and want to learn more so that you can help. One example might be, "Could you give me a minute to understand how I can help you?" Asking also helps divert attention from the person's anger.

Step 4: Paraphrase. Paraphrasing restates what a person has said. It helps provide clarification and promote understanding. It also helps establish a connection by communicating to the person that you've listened. Paraphrasing is an opportunity to take control of the conversation and gives you a chance to correct any misunderstandings, make the other person a listener, and politely insert suggestions of positive changes in behavior into the other person's mind.

Step 5: Summarize. Summarizing implies that you have agreement that the individual will comply with the suggestions you made in the "paraphrasing" step. Remember, the goal is to get the person to comply with security policies and procedures,

peacefully. If successful, the conflict should now be resolved.

Conflict management tips

- Remember the benefits of Verbal Judo.
- Assess the situation before acting.
- Determine the nature of the person you're dealing with. Are they upset or calm? Are they likely to listen and be open to suggestion?
- Try to deescalate the encounter using LEAPS.
- Maintain your composure and don't react to verbal threats.
- Offer possible solutions, and suggest consequences if the person refuses to comply.
- When confronted by an aggressive individual maintain a calm and confident posture:
 - Maintain eye contact
 - Keep your voice steady
 - Stand straight with your hands out of your pockets

