

Conflict Cheat Sheet

Reference this during a difficult or frustrating client or co-worker interaction

Created by John Thomas- Tech Empath

Conflict With Client	Tech Empath Response	Key Dialogue/Action
Impatient / Pushy	Slow down. Have a calm mindset: "Patience is my strength. Provide clarity over speed."	"I appreciate your eagerness. I'll have an update by..."
Frustrated / Angry	Think: Their frustration is about the problem, not me	"I hear your frustration, let's figure out what's happening."
Passive-Aggressive / Dissatisfied (Vague complaints, sighs, "It's fine, I guess")	Dig deeper with care. Validate their feelings, seek clarity of the situation	"Could you tell me more about that?"
Vague / Unclear	Ask, don't assume. Focus on specifics.	"Could you help me visualize an example?"
Demanding / Unrealistic (Impossible deadlines, wants more than scope)	Ground yourself. Hold boundaries.Mindset: "My value is in realistic solutions, not false promises."	"I understand the urgency, we need to prioritize this..."
Conflict With Colleague		
Stand Offish / Cold	Try to be creative in response and relate to them	"Is it Friday yet? This meeting needs to start now!"
Commandeering / Controlling	Find out the root behind their motive (They may have a good reason and this can sometimes be positive)	"Anything you want me to research specifically?"
Upset / Frustrated (Their conflict is with co-worker or client)	Pause, be silent for a bit and let them speak first...Then respond with agreement	"[pause]...this is definitely frustrating."
Distracted / Off-Task	Consider their behavior and help redirect their focus	“We should take a coffee break, then get back on track.”
Disengaged / Not Cooperative	Get them involved with enthusiasm	"Are there any other solutions we can come up with to make this better for the client?"