



VERBAL JUDO

- Definition – a philosophy that can show you how to be better prepared in every verbal encounter: How to listen and speak more effectively; how to engage people through empathy (the most powerful word in the English language); how to avoid the most common conversational disasters; how, instead, to have a proven, easily remembered strategy that will allow you to successfully communicate your point of view and take the upper hand in most disputes. *Source – back cover of Verbal Judo, The Gentle Art of Persuasion.*
- Book published in 1993 by George J. Thompson, Ph.D.
- George J. Thompson – former English professor and black belt master of karate. Former police officer



VERBAL JUDO: 11 Things Never to Say

Things Not to Say

1. Come here
2. You wouldn't understand
3. Because those are the rules
4. It's none of your business
5. What do you want me to do about it?
6. Calm down.
7. What's your problem?
8. You never ... or you always ...
9. I'm not going to say this again

10. I'm doing this for your own good

11. Why don't you be reasonable

Marsili's Alternative Phrases

1. Can I talk to you a second?
2. If I can explain?
3. We have established (rules, laws, regulations, etc.)
4. I am not permitted to elaborate
5. Unfortunately I cannot proceed any further
6. Take a deep breath or drink of water
7. Can I help you?
8. I understand you are upset but in my opinion ...
9. We need to resolve this situation, so let me say it again
10. My action is going to help your situation, here is why
11. Let me see if I understand your position, (paraphrase their own words)



Verbal Judo

- Think as another might think and speak with his perspective in mind.



Verbal Judo

- When receiving insults from a difficult person that you are trying to have comply with your directions, try *“strip phrases.”*
- Sample Strip Phrases:
 - “I appreciate that you feel that way, but I have a job to do and I will still need to ...”
 - “I understand how you might see it that way but ...”



Verbal Judo

- Handling Insults: “You’re an idiot!”
- Apologize – “I’m sorry you feel that way.”
- Ignore – “What did you say you were looking for.”
- Say Thanks – “Thank you.”



Verbal Judo: Difficult People

Principles for Dealing with Difficult People

1. Empathy
2. Active Communication
3. De-escalation



Verbal Judo

Principles for Dealing with Difficult People

1. Let them spout off
2. But you have the last action



Verbal Judo: Difficult People

How to interrupt when you are being attacked

1. "Whoa!"
2. "Listen!"
3. "Wait a second!"

Followed by a strip phase

1. "Let me understand what you are saying ..." Then paraphrase their insult.
2. Then say, "you are feeling X because of Y, true?"



Verbal Judo: Difficult People

- If someone wants to ruin your credibility all they have to do is make you angry enough to miss use words.



Verbal Judo: Five Step Hard Style

Persuading Difficult People

- 1. Ask (ethical appeal)
- 2. Set context (reasonable appeal)
- 3. Present options (personal appeal)
- 4. Confirm (practical appeal)
- 5. Act (determination of appropriate action)



Verbal Judo: Step 1 Ethical Appeal

- Appeal to a person's basic ethics, instead of ordering someone out of car, ask,
- “Would you please step out of the car? If you stay inside I can't see your hands and that is a safety problem.”
- By using a request instead of an order, then explaining your request, you may find compliance more likely.



Verbal Judo: Step 2 Reasonable Appeal

- First you might calm person down, people under duress will probably not appeal to reason. After the person is calmed sufficiently, set context,
- “This is the policy, procedure or law, I am confined to this action.”



Verbal Judo: Step 3 Personal Appeal

- Truly difficult people will more likely respond to the personal appeal.
- You are demonstrating to the person what they have to gain or lose in response to your requests. Present options,
- “If you are arrested, you leave your warm, comfortable house and have a hard wooden cot to sleep on. Pay thousands of dollars in bail to be released or go to the County lockup. Pay thousands of dollars to an attorney to fight your case. Or you could just comply and avoid all that headache.”



Verbal Judo: Step 4 Practical Appeal

- To gain voluntary compliance you might want to try using, humor, redirection, or refocusing.
- Humor shows your more human side which can foster a more agreeable attitude.
- Redirecting them to confirm that you want this to end in the most peaceful manner possible, say,
- “Is there anything I can say or do to earn your compliance?”



Verbal Judo: Step 5 Act

- If all the other steps don't work you have to act.



Verbal Judo: Greatest Weakness

- Identify your 'greatest weakness,' "define it, name it, then own it."
- This will help you stop before you lose your temper.
- Know yourself first, then know your opponent and you win 100% of the time.



Verbal Judo: Greatest Weakness

“Wanna bet guy.”

Subject challenges an officer's authority, “you can't do that!”

Officer, “wanna bet? Watch me!”

This type of response breeds errors.



Verbal Judo: Greatest Weakness

- Recognizing that you are a “wanna bet guy,” helps you step back during a challenging verbal confrontation. This allows you to consider better options before hastily acting in a more (inappropriate) aggressive response.



Verbal Judo: Greatest Weakness

- “wanna bet guy” continued.
- In other words, “don’t speak from ego.”



Verbal Judo: Dealing with Tension

- Empathy absorbs tension
- Maintain a concerned and caring face
- Stand in their shoes
- Have them take a deep breath, drink of water



Verbal Judo: Taking Criticism

- 1. Look him/her straight in the eyes
- 2. Hold your argument until it is appropriate and give it calmly
- 3. Nod & show you are listening
- 4. Use phrases that confirm you are willing to work with him/her
- 5. When you have the floor don't only defend yourself but show you are willing to work with the other party.



Verbal Judo: Giving Criticism

Provide your criticism in a calm, reasoned but firm manner. Describe why the behavior is not constructive. Explain that the behavior cannot be repeated and that you expect better from the individual.

Finish with a specific incident where the individual has provided a positive effect on the work environment. Examples: A task that was done professionally. A problem they solved with other employees, etc.

This positive ending of the interview will help to encourage cooperation from the individual being criticized.



Partner De-Escalation Pact

- Agree with your partners to permit their intervention if they detect signs that you are testing the bounds of legality, ethics, morality, etc. when dealing with suspects, witnesses, victims, etc.
- Your partners will also agree to permit your intervention also.
- Supervisor of a shift could facilitate this pact agreement.