

# Switch #1

For Others



Parking lot

- 1 Allow people to briefly articulate their thoughts.
- 2 Capture their thoughts somewhere visual (ie. write a note or scribe on a whiteboard).
- 3 Reassure them the issue is not being dismissed, then focus on the more immediate issues at hand.



*A parking lot reassures Apes that their view is heard, allowing the meeting to move swiftly on without appearing rude, or brushing aside a point that might escalate Ape reactions.*

## Switch #2

For Others



Listen

- 1 Pause what you are doing and really pay attention.
- 2 Let them know you are listening.
- 3 Don't interrupt, just be attentive and hear them out.



*People calm down when they can tell their story and know that it's heard.*

# Switch #3

For Others



Empathy

- 1 Try to imagine what they are feeling or needing emotionally in this situation to feel safe.
- 2 Think, “I wonder if he/she feels ..... because .....?”
- 3 Check your understanding. Ask them if you’ve interpreted correctly, eg. “Are you feeling upset because you don’t think I’m taking this issue seriously?”



***Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand another person’s mental state without necessarily feeling it.***

# Switch #4

For Others



Offer help

- 1 Suggest finding a solution together.
- 2 Brainstorm ideas and help to lay out a plan that will correct the situation.
- 3 Demonstrate commitment to lending a hand.



*Just the sense that we're working together with others can dramatically increase our motivation to complete difficult tasks—even when we're actually working alone.*

# Switch #5

For Others



Breathe

- 1 Move to a quiet relaxed environment where you won't be disturbed.
- 2 Sit comfortably.
- 3 Suggest, "Let's take three deep breaths together".



*When anxious or angry people take quick, shallow breaths which tells your brain you're in danger. Taking long, deep calming breaths disrupts that information loop and helps you calm down.*

## Switch #6

For Others



Respond

- 1 Ask yourself, "Am I reacting or responding right now?"
- 2 Let go of your own ego and not take things personally.
- 3 Remember someone that is angry cannot be reasoned with.
- 4 Be generous and patient. Wait until they have calmed down.



*When you're confronted with an angry person it's easy to react, often making the situation worse. If you respond calmly and stay in control, and you can often defuse the situation quickly.*



## Stay present

- 1 If the conversation drifts toward past events, and old territory avoid getting involved.
- 2 Let them give a monologue of their expired accusations without asking who did what, when and why.
- 3 Ask how they propose solving this problem now.



*Most angry people have a victim mentality. What angry people say is almost never factual but emotional in content.*

# Switch #8

For Others



Check in

- 1 At the beginning of any emotionally charged or complex meeting, get people to say how they are feeling about the impending conversation.
- 2 Have everyone articulate what they hope to achieve by the end of the meeting.
- 3 Ask how they will feel when those outcomes are achieved.



*Making an effort to understand emotions in non-judgmental ways can be quite valuable in helping to regulate them better, and consequently, navigate our environments more effectively.*

# Switch #9

For Others



Interpret

- 1 If someone is lashing out, ask them what has triggered the reaction.
- 2 Ask what meaning they are making from that trigger.
- 3 Ask what other meaning may be plausible.



***Making assumptions about others motivations creates the risk of interpreting situations incorrectly, leading to negative outcomes.***

# Switch #10

For Others



## Fake letter

- 1 Give them a notebook and ask them to write what they really want to say to the person they are upset with.
- 2 Have them destroy the page when complete.
- 3 Ask them to re-write the letter focussed on a constructive solution.



*When you focus on evaluating what is causing an issue, you are able to respond to the situation, rather than react.*

# Switch #11

For Others



humour

- 1 Lighten the situation with humour.
- 2 Make a joke or stop and point out something funny in the situation without ridiculing the person or group they belong to.



*Laughter relieves stress, elevates mood, and makes you more resilient. Laughter brings people closer together, creates intimacy, and helps manage conflict and reduce tension.*

# Switch #12

For Others



- 1 If the idea of talking it through seems to make it worse give them space and time instead.
- 2 Give them at least 20 minutes to calm down.



*The body takes about 20 minutes to return to normal after a full fight/flight response. In other words, angry people need time to calm down before they can think clearly again.*

# Switch #13

For Others



Nature

- 1 Go for a walk together.
- 2 Go somewhere green and peaceful such as a garden or park.
- 3 Get outside into the fresh air, breathe deeply and observe the small wonders in nature.



*Research has shown that spending time in the great outdoors lowers our blood pressure and eases muscle tension.*