

Personal Safety
Conflict Management
Training Material
London City Mission



Conflict Management

Contents

Two Minute Risk Assessment	2
Personal safety and Conflict Management	3
Personal safety Questions you should ask yourself	3
P.L.A.N	4
Dynamic risk Assessment	5
P.O.P assessment Model	6
S.A.F.E.R evaluation model	7
Using Verbal and Non-Verbal Defusion techniques	8
Open P.A.L.M.S model	9
Switching – Contact and Control	10
PROMPTING and ESCORTING	10
Contact and Cover	11
Changing Roles	11
Duty of Care	12
Reasonable Force	12
Dealing with difficult phone calls	14
Tracing System Checklist	15
Purple File	16
Action Plan	17

The 'Two-Minute Risk Assessment'

Initially designed by Brennan and amended by NFPS and LCM.

No	Question	Yes / Don't Know	No	Total
1	Do you know the person? Have you access to information about them from anyone or anywhere else	5	10	
2	If yes, does the person have a known history of violence?	10	0	
3	Is the person under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs?	10	0	
4.	Is there anyone else in the environment under the influence of alcohol / drugs who could pose a risk?	10	0	
5.	Is the person in possession of a weapon: or are there any potential weapons in the immediate area? Has the person a history of carrying offensive weapons?	10	0	
6.	Does the person have, or appear to have, a mental health problem?	10	0	
7.	Has the person said they intend to become violent towards you or a colleague?	10	0	
8.	Is your task likely to cause the person to become angry? E.g. are you giving bad news or doing something the person may find offensive, intimidating, embarrassing, painful or distressing?	10	0	
9.	Is there sufficiently trained staff with you to manage a violent situation should it arise?	0	5	
10.	Do you have access to a Mobile phone / Panic alarm / CCTV / training / other staff?	All 3	None 10	
11.	Has the person suddenly become verbally abusive or very quiet?	10	0	

Add up the scores:

13 – 34: **Low risk of violence** – no further action required.

35 – 84: **Medium to High risk of violence** - requires effective risk controls to be in place or appropriate further action from management – This level of risk must be taken seriously and all other staff should be alerted to the potential risk.

85 – 105: **High risk of violence** – the activity should stop immediately and staff should consider leaving the area or not entering in the first place. This risk level requires immediate action in terms of effective controls, personal protective equipment, and competent staff training.

Personal safety and Conflict Management

Seeking a Win-Win Outcome

To successfully resolve conflict we need to think win-win. A win-win situation is where both sides come out of the encounter feeling satisfied with the outcome. To be successful we need to:

1. **Avoid criticism:** Accept the conflict is behind you and that you do not want to restart it.
2. **Deal with the problem:** Break it into small parts and show you can reach an agreement.
3. **Separate the problem from the person** – don't make it personal
4. **Look for a win-win solution:** It is not always possible to meet everyone's ideal result but if partly reached, people are more likely to be satisfied with their treatment. A simple explanation or apology may be enough.

Personal safety Questions you should ask yourself

Do I want to deal with this situation?

Am I the most appropriate person to deal with this situation?

Am I equipped to deal with this situation?

Am I underestimating my own vulnerability because I am used to this kind of behaviour?

Am I paying enough attention to this situation?

Am I allowing my own values and beliefs to impair my judgement of the seriousness of the situation?

P.L.A.N

P REPARE

- Assess the risks
- Plan your actions
- Wear appropriate/sensible clothing
- Know your route; Tell someone where you are going;
Tell the person what time you expect to return.

L OOK CONFIDENT

- Be alert with a sense of purpose
- Radiate non- vulnerability
- Watch your body language = stand tall and look alert
- Carry a personal alarm and a mobile
- Trust your instincts – They are there to warn you of danger

A VOID RISK

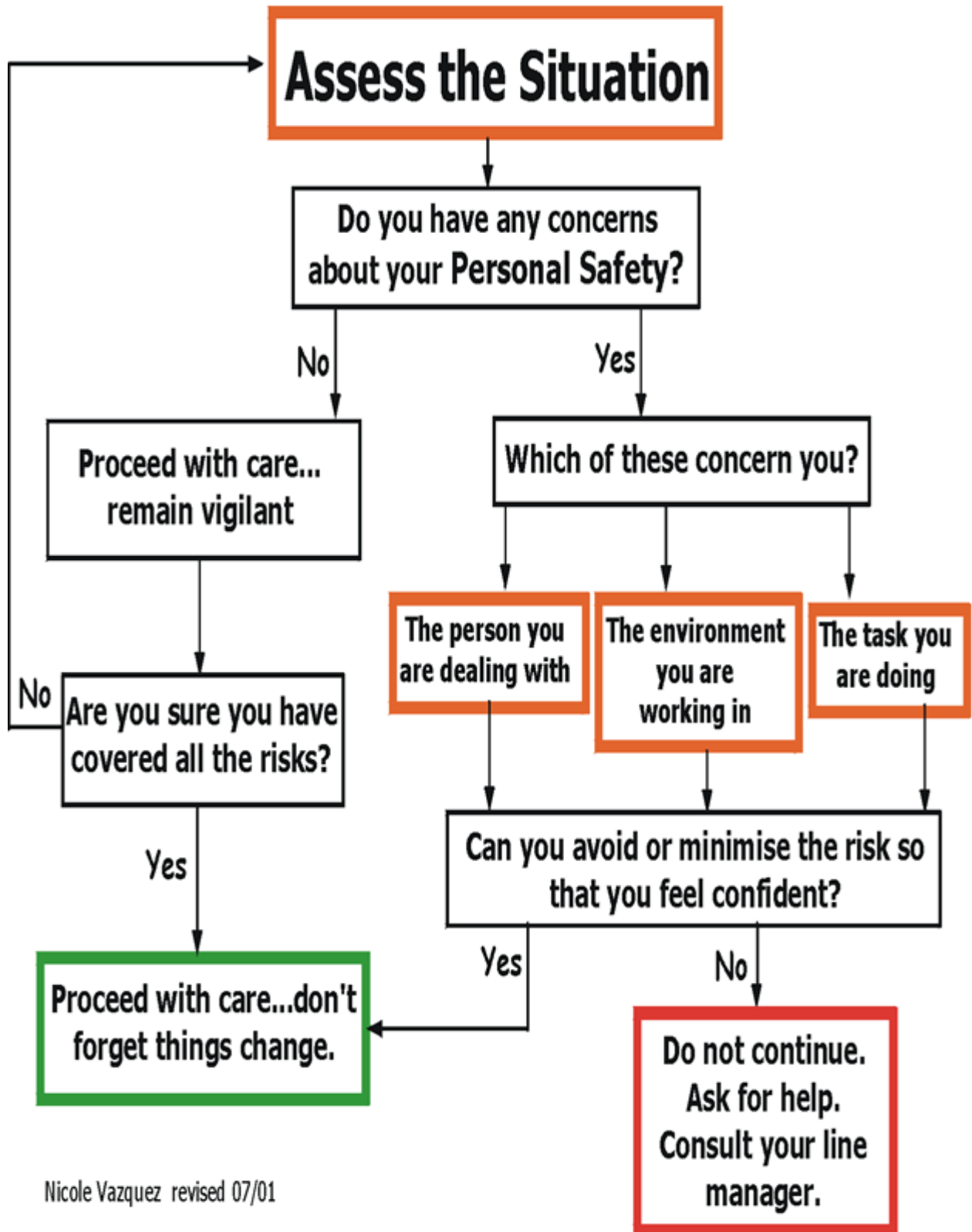
- Assess and re-assess situations to help yourself become aware of risks as soon as possible
- No spur of the moment choices
- Keep a hand free
- Keep to familiar territory where possible
- It is not weak to walk away from trouble

N EVER ASSUME

- It won't happen to you
- Because they look respectable
- It's only a short visit

People are not always what they seem even when you think you know them

Dynamic Risk Assessment



Nicole Vazquez revised 07/01

The P.O.P. Model

P = Person

O = Object

P = Place

Using the **P.O.P** model you make the assessment process a conscious dynamic act.

PERSON - What is it about the person that may pose a risk?

DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM NOT THE PERSON

- Are they acting as though they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Have you met the person before?
- Do they have a known history of violence / criminal record?
- Have they had a bad experience of the organisation?
- Are they suffering from mental health problems?
- Are they bigger, fitter, younger, and stronger than you?
- Who else is present - who will they support?

OBJECT – what could add to the problem

- An object in the persons possession or a nearby item that could be used as a weapon
- Dangerous dogs;
- A vehicle that could be driven dangerously?

PLACE – what is the area like?

- Outside - where peer-pressure may be a factor or a route to or from work
- On or near staircases;
- Remote areas, away from observation, safe refuge;
- Exits – blocked

The S.A.F.E.R. Model

This SAFER model helps you evaluate a potentially difficult situation, stay in control and choose the best response.

S = Step Back

A = Assess the Situation

F = Find help

E = Evaluate Options

R = Response

Step Back

- *Do not rush in* - even to help someone.
- *Physically step back* - the more we can see the better we can assess what is going on.
- *Mentally and emotionally step back* - detach and think rationally about what is happening and what your response might be.

Assess

- Identify potential dangers using **P.O.P.**
(**P**eople, **O**bjects, **P**lace)
- **Assess your own feelings, strengths and weaknesses**

Find Help

Consider what help you require:

- The emergency services
- Colleagues
- By-standers
- Manager
- Seeking help can assist us to cope and deal with an incident rationally. The scale of help needed depends on the issue, situation and behaviour of all concerned.
- Someone to debrief with afterwards

Evaluate Options

Three options:

- Exit –to a safe place
- Pass control to another person
- Deal with the person yourself

Response

Respond appropriately. Continually assess:

- The threat
- Your ability to think and behave rationally
- The effectiveness of the strategy
-

Using Verbal and Non-Verbal Defusion techniques

Say sorry – find a reason

Make a positive response:

- Needs to be appropriate to show you are listening
- “Let me go and check”
- “How can I help”
- Empathise non verbally and verbally

Inform don't Threaten –be assertive but not aggressive

Let them Vent – they cannot hear you when they are talking

Explain what can be achieved

Say sorry

- **Direct:** "I apologize that we did not get back to you on time.
- **Blameless:** "I'm sorry that you are frustrated - let's see if we can sort this out for you.
- **Fake:** "It sounds like we owe you an apology."

Open - P.A.L.M.S. Model

The **Open PALMS** model has been developed to help you show the other person that you do not want to fight him/her by signalling non-aggression.

- P = POSITION** Allow exit routes, do not block in
- A = ATTITUDE** Display positive and helpful attitude
- L = LOOK & LISTEN** Use normal eye contact and active listening
- M = MAKE SPACE** Maintain a comfortable distance
- S = STANCE** Shoulders relaxed and turned away to the side

Position

Make sure the person does not feel trapped or hemmed in. Let them see any exit routes. The person needs to see a way past you. If you block the possibility of “flight” they may see little choice but to fight. Equally, ensure that you are not blocked in

Attitude

Show a positive and helpful attitude to avoid sending the conflict around in a circle. Avoid trigger phrases that can be misunderstood. Smile and talk calmly as it is your responsibility to emphasise a willingness to help and find a solution to the problem.

Look & listen actively

Eye contact is vital in signalling non-aggression. Maintain as normal a level of eye contact as possible. Do not stare. Demonstrate active listening with appropriate head nodding, gestures and repeating phrases you hear to show you understand.

Make space

- Intimate Space: 0 to 0.5 metres
- Normal Space: 0.5 to 1.2 metres
- Stranger Space: 1.2 to 3.0 metres

Do not invade someone’s intimate space. Create and measure personal space using the following:

- Can you see the other person’s feet?
- Do you feel a vague sense of discomfort?
- Would they have to take a step forward to touch (hit) you?

Stance

Stand slightly to one side of the person and place one foot backwards to support you. Open your stance to show the route to an exit.

PROMPTING and ESCORTING

Prompting = “Incite or move person to action”, “assist (hesitant person) with suggestion etc.,” “thing said to help memory esp. of actor” (Oxford English Dictionary)

Use your arms and hands to show/direct the client in the way they should go. This should include turning your body and making a movement in the appropriate direction. This involves no physical contact and may defuse a situation before it requires any physical intervention. You may want to prompt the client out of the building or to a safer place where their issue can be addressed.

When ‘prompting’ a person we should make effective use of good communication skills as well as distance.

Only if it is safe to do so should we approach a subject to use any form of ‘physical’ prompt e.g. touching an elbow.

Escorting = Assisting the client to move in an agreed direction

Place your inner hand on the clients back and use your outer hand to hold their wrist. The hand on the back is there purely as a ‘prompt’ to encourage the subject to move.

No direct pressure is to be applied to the back or spine in any forceful or direct way. The hand on the back is only a means of encouraging guidance.

Switching – Contact and Control

Switching is an extension of controlling manoeuvre that uses two members of staff.

This can be used when you are struggling to deal with the person and things are escalating to a higher level. This moves the persons attention from you to the second staff member - you “switch” roles.

Usually switching is initiated in one of two ways:

1. By inviting your colleague – by a pre-arranged signal
2. When it is clear that your colleague has become part of the problem, you need to change places to stop the situation escalating

The end result will leave your colleague having eye contact with the person and you move to one side. Your colleague will immediately adopt Open PALMS.

Give a Gift

This can be used to bring a discussion that is going nowhere to an end. It allows the customer to leave with the impression that you have worked hard to resolve their problem. An example of a “gift” would be offering the use of a telephone. You are free to return to your work.

Contact and Cover

1. Contact and Cover is used to maximise safety when dealing with difficult subjects
2. There are two clearly defined roles as staff will work in pairs
 - A. Contact worker
 - B. Cover worker
3. Do not position yourselves in front of the subject as both of you will become easy targets
4. **DO NOT POSITION A WORKER BEHIND THE SUBJECT AS IT MAY INCREASE ANXIETY** – so only adopt this position if absolutely necessary e.g. a high risk to staff.

Contact Worker

1. Generally the first on the scene
2. First to come into contact with the subject
3. Person responsible for establishing communication with the subject

Role

1. Analyse the situation
2. Establish verbal communication
3. **DO NOT RUSH IN**, and if necessary **BACK OFF**
4. Use peripheral vision to check for weapons

Cover Worker

1. The second worker on the scene
2. There to protect the Contact worker
3. Takes up a flank position to the contact worker

Role

1. Go to a flank position
2. Act as protector to the Contact worker
3. Increase the teams **PERIPHERAL VISION FIELD**
4. Direct non-essential staff away from the scene
5. Identify and respond to other problems such as others joining in, a crowd forming or evidence being dumped.

Changing Roles

Should the subject move their attention to the Cover worker then the two workers immediately change their roles.

Workers should keep a safe distance and also avoid talking at the same time to avoid causing confusion and reducing control.

Additional staff

Other staff become extra cover workers and should take up vacant positions on either flank.

Alternatively they could relieve the Cover worker by dealing with any other problems or take up the Cover worker role if they are dealing with the other problems.

Duty of Care

All staff owe a “Duty of Care” to clients they have contact with through their paid/voluntary work.

The Neighbour Principle

A duty of care is said to be owed to: “persons who are so closely and directly affected by my act that I ought reasonably to have them in contemplation as being so affected when I am directing my mind to the acts or omissions which are called in question”.

This ‘principle’ was first laid down by Lord Atkin in the case of *Donoghue v Stevenson* [1932] AC 562 (at 580), where it was held that the manufacturer of a bottle of ginger beer owed a duty of care to the person who eventually drank it.

Reasonable Force

Remember: Reasonable Force must only be used with a minimum of two staff members

Sec 3(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1967 provides that:

“A person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime, or in effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders or of persons unlawfully at large”

The use of force against the person may be justified or excused in law because the force was reasonably used in the defence of certain public or private interests.

- To prevent or terminate the unlawful detention of oneself or another - governed by the common law;
- To prevent or terminate a breach of the peace - governed by the common law;

Physical Force should only be used if “absolutely necessary” and as a last resort when all non-violent options have been exhausted.

However, this still means that force could be a first resort where a failure to use force could result in greater harm being done.

The amount of force used should be proportionate, which is enough to overcome the resistance offered whilst attempting to minimise injury to all concerned.

Physical force should only be used for its lawful purpose and not for:

- Revenge;
- Retaliation;
- Retribution;
- Teaching people a lesson.

Reasonable Force

The requirement to use force which is reasonable in the circumstances involves two issues:

1. Absolute Necessity
2. Proportionality

What is Reasonable?

- Was the force used necessary (or honestly believed to be necessary) to prevent the crime or effect the arrest?
- Was the force used proportionate to the evil to be avoided?

Necessity

The need or 'necessity' to use force is generally based on what a reasonable person would think it would be necessary to do when confronted with a situation.

The Proportionality Rule

The standard of PROPORTIONALITY is best defined in terms of what is reasonably proportionate to the amount of harm likely to be suffered by the defendant or likely to result if the forcible intervention is not made.

REMEMBER

If it is not NECESSARY to use force, (so force should not be used) then we cannot construct an argument that although we shouldn't have done it the force used was proportionate.

Dealing with difficult phone calls

Effective communication

7% = words/verbal 38% = tonality 55% Visual = Missing on the phone 93% = Non verbal

CALLER

C - Control your feelings

A - Ask questions

L - Listen for the main points

L - Let them talk

E - Evaluate

R - Respond with an option

Say Sorry

- **Direct:** "I apologize that we did not get back to you on time."
- **Blameless:** "I apologize for the fact you are frustrated - let's see if we sort this out for you."
- **Fake:** "It sounds like we owe you an apology."

Putting the Phone down

STOP - Shouting/abusive language

Stay calm

Tell them you will end the call if they continue to abuse you

Offer to continue if they stay calm

Put the phone down if the caller continues in the same manner – but do it when you are speaking

Report it to your line manager and the Personnel Department

Tracing System Checklist

- 1) My colleagues will know where to start looking should I not return to base on time.
- 2) We have a system for me to raise the alarm discreetly/covertly in case of emergency while working alone.
- 3) We have a clear procedure to follow in case someone does not return at the expected time.
- 4) I am confident that an appropriate person will pick up the phone if I call in an emergency.
- 5) If I decide to change my plans during the day someone would be aware of this.
- 6) When I am lone working out of office hours, we have a system to monitor my safety.
- 7) There is information available so that my manager could contact my partner, family or next of kin (to ensure my safety) should I fail to return from an appointment.
- 8) My partner, family or next of kin would have contact details of a colleague should I fail to return from work, even if this should happen after office hours.
- 9) If I do not follow my team's agreed tracing system, there will be consequences and I know what these are.

Purple File

Your colleague has asked for this file and needs you to **RESPOND IMMEDIATELY.**

They are facing a difficult situation and your response is vital.

If you are still on the phone ask your colleague

Is your personal safety at risk?

Do I need to bring someone with me immediately?

Shall I call the Police?

Are you in Reception?

Are you on your own?

Is the person alone?

Does anyone know where you are?

(Remember they may only be able to answer Yes/No in order to explain how you need to respond)

If you have replaced the phone – call them back and ask the questions

Alert a colleague and take them with you for support

Action Plan

In what areas am I already taking precautions to reduce the risks to my personal safety?

What have I learnt today about risks to my personal safety that needs me to make some changes?

What changes can I make personally to take immediate effect?

What changes will I seek to make through discussions with my colleagues or management?