



Unit: Cooperative Power  
**Skill 39: Cooperative Process**  
**Activity B: Cooperative Process**  
 Worksheet

## Dealing with Difficult People

**Sherman Tanks-** *These people try to intimidate you with “in your face” arguments, and state opinions as facts.*

- Get their attention by using their first name to begin a sentence
- Maintain eye contact; give them time to wind down
- Stand up to them without fighting; don't worry about being polite
- Suggest you sit down to continue discussions

**Snipers-** *These individuals take potshots in meetings but avoid one-on-one confrontations.*

- Expose the attack; draw them out in public and don't let social convention stop you
- Get other opinions. Don't give in to the sniper's views
- Provide the sniper with alternatives to a direct contest.

**Chronic Complainers-** *These people find faults with everyone- except themselves.*

- Politely interrupt and get control of the situation
- Quickly sum up the facts
- Ask for their complaints in writing

**Negativists-** *Know that nothing new will work; they'll toss a wet blanket when you're trying to light a fire in group brainstorming sessions*

- Acknowledge their valid points
- Describe past successes
- Avoid “you're wrong, I'm right” arguments

**Exploders-** *Throw tantrums that can escalate quickly*

- Give them time to regain self control
- If they don't, shout a neutral phrase such as “STOP!”
- Take a time out or have a private meeting with them

Created by Pen State <http://leadership.cas.psu.edu/Materials/ConflictMngmtB.doc>