

## Handling Problem People? No Problem!

Presented by **Roxanne Miller, CBAP**  
Author of *The Quest for Software Requirements*

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## Who is Roxanne Miller?



- ◆ Requirements Quest® founder
- ◆ Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP®)
- ◆ Keynote speaker at industry conferences
- ◆ Author

*Self proclaimed 'Requirements Super Freak'*



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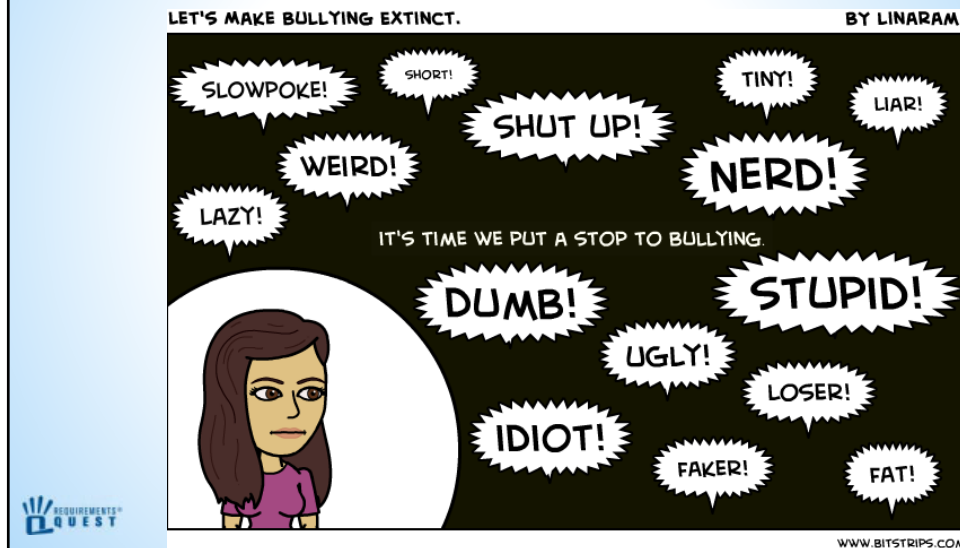
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## Real People. Real Situations.



## Behavior, not the Person, is Dysfunctional



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### What is Dysfunctional Behavior?

Any activity by a participant that is (consciously or unconsciously) a substitution for expressing displeasure with the session content or purpose, the facilitation process, or outside factors.



Michael Wilkinson; *The Secrets of Facilitation*

### Dysfunction is a Substitution



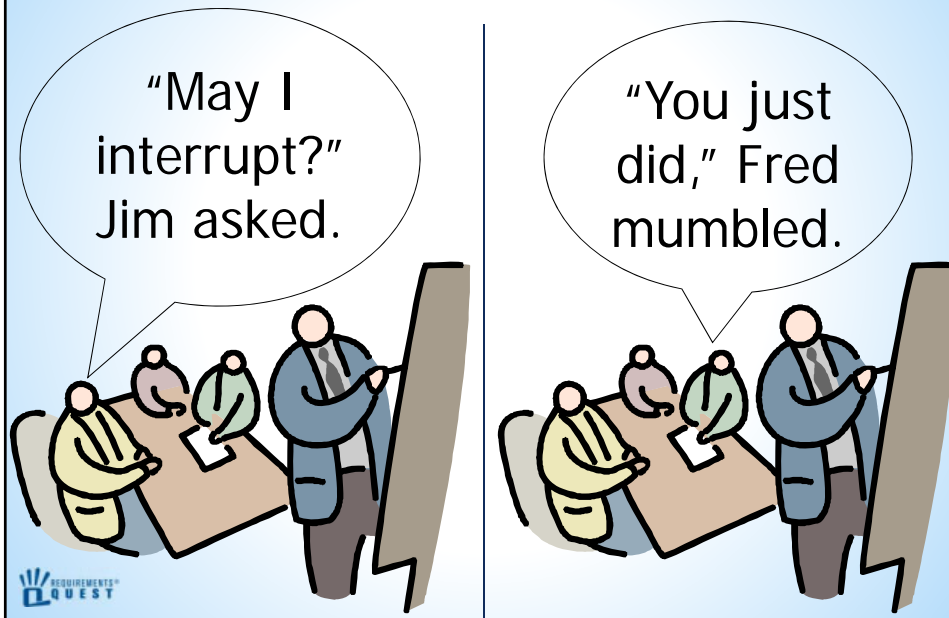
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## Identifying Potential Dysfunction



## Is Intervention Needed?



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Ask  
Permission  
to Facilitate






## Be 'Nice'

1 **Nicest** Friendly Reminder

2 **Nicer** Direct Reminder

3 **Nice** Personalized Reminder

4 **Not as Nice** Direct Request





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## Friendly Reminder

- ◆ “Excuse me, we agreed to follow the ground rules.”
- ◆ “Just a reminder, we agree to ‘defer judgment’ in our ground rules.”



## Direct Reminder

- ◆ “Excuse me, one conversation at a time.”
- ◆ “Let’s ‘defer judgment’, please.”



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### Personalized Reminder

- ◆ “Sarah, do you have a clarification question? If not, please hear Karen out.”
- ◆ “Jeremy, you seem to be unhappy with suggestions from others. What **positive** solution can you offer?”

Nice



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### Direct Request

- ◆ “Sarah, please stop your side conversation, and let Karen finish.”
- ◆ “Jeremy, despite my reminders, you continue to pass judgment. If you have a positive solution, you can share it after you’ve given at least one advantage to the idea presented.

Not as Nice



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## Ground Rules (Norms)



### Latecomer

#### Behavior:

Habitually late; makes a “show” upon arrival; insists on “catching up”

#### Ground Rules:

- Everyone participates
- Be on time





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## Dropout

Behavior:

Silence, lack of participation; texting or ignoring the proceedings

Ground Rules:

- ◆ Everyone participates
- ◆ Offer positive solutions



## Loudmouth

Behavior:

Talks too often and out of turn; dominates the discussion

Ground Rules:

- ◆ Everyone participates
- ◆ Leave titles at the door



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## Whisperer

Behavior:

Holds side conversations;  
upstages the facilitator as  
well as other group  
members

Ground Rules:

- ◆ One conversation at a time
- ◆ One person speaks at a time



## Doubter

Behavior:

Skeptical and cynical;  
wonders if the process  
will work

Ground Rules:

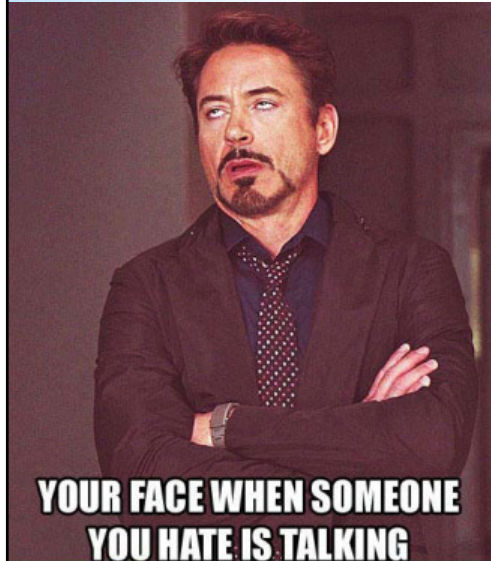
- ◆ Offer positive solutions
- ◆ Keep an open mind



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## Head Shaker



### Behavior:

Expresses disapproval through body language

### Ground Rules:

- ◆ Defer judgement
- ◆ Offer positive solutions



## Using Your Body

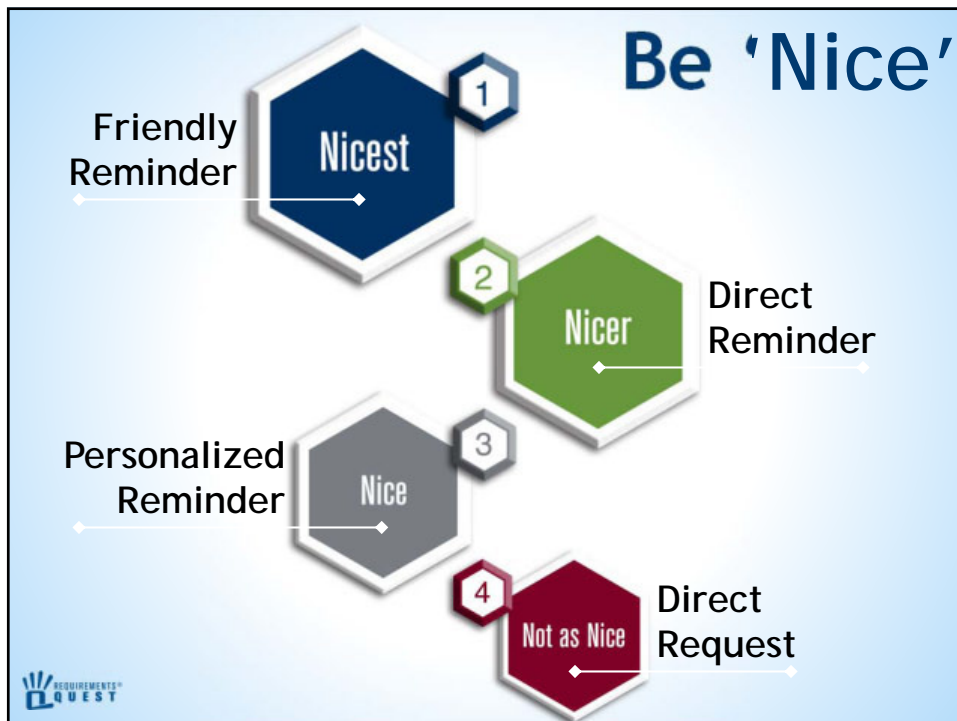
- ◆ Come “into” the U-shape
- ◆ Hand gestures
- ◆ Standing close
- ◆ Turn your back
- ◆ Rearrange the participants



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## Eye Contact: The "Look"



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## Be Nice!



## Today's Presentation

- ◆ Handout: <http://RequirementsQuest.com> for a presentation handout copy (click on Resources, then Tools).

- ◆ Connect with Roxanne:



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