



Welcome to Today's  
PaperClip Communications  
Webinar



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# Student Services Front Line Staff:

**Training - Service - Compassion - Care & More**  
A Webinar To Help Prepare Student Services Staff For  
Everything & Anything They May Encounter



Tuesday, June 14  
2:00 - 3:30pm ET

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## Panelists



- Julie Johnson is the Office Associate /Assistant Coordinator of Testing Services at Western Kentucky University. Ms. Johnson has been serving the Counseling & Testing Center at WKU since August 2008. Before working at the university, she worked as a Development Officer for WKYU Public Media. Julia has always been a people person and enjoys the face to face interaction with others. She is a very caring individual and strives to make the center warm and inviting.



- Dr. Brian Van Brunt serves as the Director of Counseling at Western Kentucky State University. He is the president of the American College Counseling Association (ACCA) for the 2010-2011 term. He has worked in higher education for over twelve years.

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Customer Service & Prevention

Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating

Crisis!

What to Avoid



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POLL #1

- **What office do you represent today?**
  - A: Counseling or Health
  - B: Food Service or Bookstore
  - C: Residential Life or Student Affairs
  - D: Admissions
  - E: Registrar or Financial Aid
  - F: Parking, Police or Judicial Affairs
  - G: Athletics or Recreation Center
  - H: Academic Affairs

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Customer Service & Prevention

- **Customer Service**
  - We are here for the students, faculty and staff
  - Finding that “good mood” to work from
  - Being flexible and accommodating; good Karma
- **Prevention**
  - Investing time and energy into the office setting
  - A good office setting doesn’t just happen
  - Taking time to nurture a welcoming space

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## Customer Service & Prevention

- **Examples of good Customer Service**
  - Understand this is important to invest time in
  - Who uses your office
    - What problems do they bring?
    - What needs to they have?
  - Why might they be rushed or upset
    - Parking
    - Stress over exam or approval for service
    - Have misinformation or expectations

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## Customer Service & Prevention

- **An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure**
  - We want to get out ahead of student problems **before** they occur in our office or waiting room
  - An example is food and beverages given to students (WKU example, Brian ER example)
  - Join professional organizations to support office staff, training, discussions
  - Julia listserv

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## Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating




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## Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating

- “You need to fix this problem RIGHT NOW!!!”
- “I was told to come to your office to solve this problem. Now you are telling me I have to go somewhere else?”
- “What do you mean I’m not getting my check today?”
- “Why isn’t the person I’m suppose to meet with here right now. I have an appointment card!”

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## Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating

- Dealing with those who disrupt our office or who annoy and frustrate us can be a difficult process.
  - We like the “kill them with kindness” approach.
  - How to say no without causing problems
    - Golden Rule (how would you want to be treated in this situation?)
    - Understand, then be understood\*
- \* Particularly when you know what they are going to ask

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## Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating

- There are times when students contact the office via email or the phone with rude, entitled or aggressive behavior.
  - Don’t respond in-kind
  - Ask yourself “is there another way to continue to the conversation (switch email to phone?)
  - Try this--

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## Disruptive, Annoying & Frustrating



<http://mikeeatsdetroit.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/club-sandwich1.jpg>  
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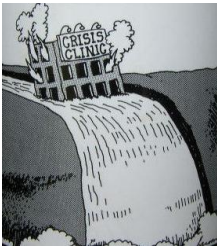
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## Crisis!



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## Crisis!

- Different offices are going to have a different ideas about what creates a crisis:
  - Police and ambulance in your waiting room
  - President or Dean comes into the waiting room
  - Student punches a wall
  - Student slams a door on the way out
  - Copier is broken
  - Office manager is out sick

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### Crisis!

- Dealing with any crisis situation requires the staff first calm down and keep a cool head.
- To do this effectively:
  - Don't personalize the frustration
  - They aren't doing this to annoy YOU, you are the front door to answering their problem/question
- One approach that can help is found in cycle breathing\*

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Breathe in slowly to the count of 1...2...3...4...

Hold your breath to the count of 1...2...



Breathe out slowly to the count of 1...2...3...4...

Hold your breath to the count of 1...2...



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### Crisis!

- The driving motivation for most upset people is fear. They are afraid of failing a test, not getting forms in on time—maybe even leave college.
- Understand where they are coming from first and then you can be more effective
- Listen.....Listen some more
- Tell them what they just said
- Then listen to make sure you got it right

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## Crisis!

- Understand the content (*what is being said*) and process (*how it is being said*) of the conversation:
  - **Spoken:** “I need to take care of this today. I can’t wait a week to have this problem solved. I don’t have any choice here. I want to speak to your supervisor!”
  - **Unspoken:** “I’m going to get kicked out of school!”

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## Crisis!

- By responding to the unspoken message, or meta communication, staff can match the question being asked and better satisfy the student with their response.
- Too often, we focus our response directly back to match the frustration and anger. Try to focus on the worry, concern and frustration underneath.
- As Covey says, “Seek first to understand and then be understood”

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## Crisis!

- Start with a calm mindset and develop rapport
- Realize the way you see things isn’t always the way they see things\*
- Build a bridge between you and them



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## Crisis!

• **Steps to diffusing "dangerous" situations between student**

1. Get the student away from the crowd.
2. Begin with a positive statement, not a negative one (constructive, not punitive)
3. Explain the documented issues in a neutral and reflective way (without sarcasm).

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## Crisis!

• **Steps to diffusing "dangerous" situations between student**

4. Explain that their present behavior is not in their best interest.
5. Ask how we can work together to solve this problem. Consider the miracle question "What outcome would you like to see?"

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## What to Avoid

- I had an EMT instructor once who shared some sage wisdom with me.
- He said, "If it feels good for you to say to a patient, it probably isn't the right thing to say."
- He was on to something.

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## What to Avoid

- Don't put up passive aggressive signs. They are annoying and don't get the desired result.



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## What to Avoid

- Don't repeat the same bad patterns over and over again. If you are having the same problem, look for a new way to solve it.
  - Too many people in the waiting room
  - Office locked early morning and people waiting
  - Bad transfers to the office from another office

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## WKU

- Here we are going to talk about and discuss some ideas we've put into place at WKU.
- We operate a combined counseling and testing waiting room that serves around 100 students on any given day.

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# Big Red Mascot



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# Big Red Mascot



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# Big Red Mascot



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# Big Red Mascot



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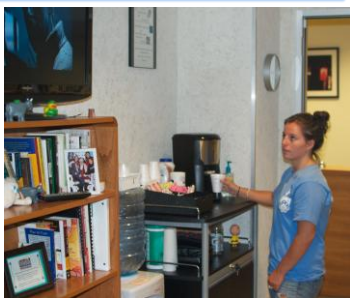
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# Coffee Service



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# Popicles



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# Stress Goat

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# Slideshow

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**Upcoming Webinar Conferences:**

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- *Assessment Next Practices – June 22, 2011*
- *Student Organization Risk Management – June 28, 2011*
- *Securing Campus Data– June 29, 2011*
- *Key FERPA Errors – July 14, 2011*
- *GI Bill Update – July 20, 2011*
- *Tobacco Free Campus Update – August 3, 2011*
- *Social Media: Building a Student Affairs Communication Plan – August 9, 2011*
- *Student Discipline & FERPA – August 16, 2011*
- *Student Loan and Collection Default – August 24, 2011*
- *Alumni & Advancement: Volunteers – August 25, 2011*
- *Advice for the Career Advisor – September 29, 2011*
- *10 Compliance Mistakes – October 5, 2011*

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