

# Security SpotLight

An Informational  
Guide for  
Security Clients

## Benefits of Using Verbal Judo

- Uses a flexible response to reach a given goal
- Redirects energy rather than confronting it
- Uses verbal techniques to avoid the use of force

**Verbal judo employs reasoning, which may not be effective with disturbed or irrational people. You will only make a situation worse if you attempt to work through it. Police should be called.**



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## Conflict Management: Using Verbal Persuasion

**Conflicts are inevitable, but do not have to lead to physical confrontation.**

### Security Officer's Role

The role of a security officer is completely different from that of a police officer. This distinction is extremely important. A security officer's authority, duties and responsibilities differ in several critical areas from those of a police officer. A security officer's role is to detect, deter, and report. Security officers are trained observers and they know how to persuade people to comply with procedures. Their training gives them an advantage in the enforcement of policies. Some of the training Securitas officers use can also help you deescalate conflict.

### Verbal Judo

Judo is the Japanese phrase for "the gentle way." Verbal Judo can help resolve a conflict while attempting to avoid physical contact. This means not meeting "force with force," but responding to force with calm authority. Calming a situation is also known as "deescalation." Verbal Judo helps redirect force toward a positive outcome—using the right words to avoid physical contact. The right words can calm people, just as the wrong words can escalate a situation.

By understanding the term, "the gentle way," you can focus on the person with whom you are talking. Empathy does not require you to agree with the individual, but simply to see the situation through the other person's eyes. Giving someone another

(continued)

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## Tips & Techniques

- **“Read the situation.”**
- **Who are you dealing with? Are they upset or calm?**
- **Will they listen to you, and respect your authority?**
- **Try to relieve the pressure of the situation using LEAPS.**
- **Let verbal threats “roll off your back.”**
- **Offer possible solutions, and suggest consequences if the person refuses to comply.**
- **When confronted by an aggressive individual, maintain your ethical presence:**
  - **Maintain eye contact.**
  - **Keep your voice steady.**
  - **Stand straight, hands out of pockets.**

minute may prevent a critical conflict from becoming catastrophic. Your challenge is to remain calm in conflict situations. Only then can you help a person understand the consequences of following a bad course of action.

## Controlling a Situation Using LEAPS

The first step in controlling a situation is to plan what you are going to do, then use ‘LEAPS’ (Listen, Empathize, Ask, Paraphrase & Summarize). Observe your environment and anticipate what could occur. Call the supervisor with an initial report so that if you need the police, they will be quicker to respond. Who is the person approaching you? Can you determine what that person wants?

### Step 1: Listen

Active listening means to hear what’s really being said. This will help you determine the reason for the problem. Good listening begins by:

- Stopping what you are doing
- Looking the speaker directly in the eye
- Focusing on what the speaker is saying
- Not interrupting the speaker

### Step 2: Empathize

Empathizing with the person demonstrates that you relate to their situation without necessarily agreeing. You show that you care

and would like to work together to find a resolution. For example, you could say, “I can see how you might be frustrated.”

### Step 3: Ask

Ask questions that help clarify what that person wants. Questions indicate that you are paying attention to the person and want to learn more so that you can help. A question could be, “Could you give me a minute to understand how I can help you?” Asking also helps divert attention from the person’s anger.

### Step 4: Paraphrase

Paraphrasing is a way to restate what a person has said. This helps provide clarification and understanding, and helps to build the relationship. It communicates to the person that you’ve listened. By paraphrasing, you take control of the conversation. You can correct any misunderstandings, make the other person a listener, and politely insert suggestions of positive changes in behavior into the other person’s mind.

### Step 5: Summarize

Summarizing implies that you have consent/agreement that the person will comply with the suggestion that you have made during the “paraphrasing” step. Remember, the goal is to get the person to comply with security policies and procedures, peacefully. The problem should be resolved at this point.

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For more information on this and other security related topics, visit the SCIS Safety Awareness Knowledge Center at <http://www.scisusa.com/knowledge-center/>