Perhaps the most important skill of all is to be able to remain calm even in the most difficult and challenging of situations. When we are calm and we communicate this to others by our body language, voice and actions, we are more likely to remain in control of a situation. Conversely, when we are not calm, angry or frightened or in a temper, that is when we are more likely to say something or do something that we might later regret.

How do we show calm? This image is from Dave Hewett’s “Challenging Behaviour: Principles and Practices”.

![Diagram of how to communicate calmness](image)

**Face**
- careful use of facial expression – not changing frequently
- don’t smile unless sure it will defuse
- use good, attentive eye contact, but be careful about the intensity of it – lower eyes if necessary

**Thoughts**
- calm, calm
- I am not compelling
- this is my job
- this is interesting
- time is on my side
- mental structures for incidents

**Body language**
- relaxed and still as possible
- shoulder, arms, hands, relaxed and ‘down’
- weight to one side, giving relaxed, slightly leaning posture
- move smoothly and predictably
- stay sensitive to personal space

**Other issues**
- tune-in to the other person for signals
- be prepared to hand-over to a colleague
- think about position, don’t stand on other person’s centre-line

For more:  
[http://www.seedsofknowledge.com/calm.html](http://www.seedsofknowledge.com/calm.html) (how to stay calm)


IBSN: 1-85346-451-1