

QUESSIE Newsletter May 2017

Dear **QUESSIE** Member

I am delighted to be speaking to pre service teachers at the University of the Sunshine Coast this month on handling difficult situations within the school environment. From irate parents to addressing sensitive subjects with children (and everything in between), there are certainly plenty of topics to cover. Dealing with difficult questions will form part of my presentation as in our profession, this is an area worthy of time investment.

Below are some standard responses you can employ when fielding difficult questions. These responses are deliberately general in nature and must be tweaked for your respective audience, as required.

- *That's out of my area of responsibility. Please direct that question to _____ (or....I will direct that question to the relevant party who is responsible for that area and get back to you.)*

Don't get caught speaking out of your area of expertise/responsibility.

- *I believe I've already addressed that question. (Repeat earlier response.)*

Answer what you're prepared to speak about. If necessary, reiterate what you've said.

- *What do you mean by that question? What exactly do you mean? What is your point?*

Put the questioner on the spot to clarify their intentions if you are unsure. Is there an ulterior motive?

- *Can you rephrase your question please?*

Sometimes hearing a question restated makes it easier to understand and answer.

- *That question is off-topic. I must confine comments to our current topic. Thank you.*

Control the scope and direction of the discussion.

- *I find that question too personal to answer, thank you.*

You define what you're comfortable responding to. Draw a line to protect yourself and others, where appropriate.

- *I won't dignify that question with a response.*

Refocus questioner(s) to the issues at hand. Let them know personal attacks and the like are out-of-bounds.

Thanks to Craig Harrison for input on this week's article.

Best wishes

SBoland

Sheldon Boland
QUESSIE Director



www.uessie.com

info@uessie.com

www.linkedin.com/in/sheldonjonboland