



The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude

P.M. Forni

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Many of us find ourselves confronted with rudeness every day and don't know how to respond. From the intrusive cell-phone user who holds loud conversations in public to the hostile highway driver who cuts one off with a quick swerve of his car, politeness seems to be on a downward spiral, surprising us at every turn. P.M. Forni, the author of *Choosing Civility*, has the answer. He knows that rudeness begets rudeness and, in *The Civility Solution*, he shows us what to do when confronted with bad behavior by being assertive as well as civil. In more than one hundred different situations, he shows us how to break the rudeness cycle by responding to a variety of confrontations from bullying to rude internet behavior or the hurtful words of an insensitive family member. How would you respond to the following?

...A salesperson ignores your requests

...A fellow driver gives you the infamous "finger"

...Your child's playmate misbehaves

...Your boss publicly reprimands you

P. M. Forni has solutions for all of these and many more. In yet another simple and practical handbook, P. M. Forni presents logical solutions that reinforce good behavior and make our world a more civil place.

The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude Details

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From Reader Review The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude for online ebook

Barbie Adamson says

Meh

Peggy says

I liked this book a lot. It gave me insight into why people are rude and what I should do about it. Whether it be at work, at the grocery store, on the highway or at home, there are times when people are just rude. This book gives advice about how to handle the rude person you meet along the way.

A friend and co-worker told me a story today to illustrate what to do when a co-worker is rude to you. She said she spoke to another worker and asked a question twice and never got an answer. She then said, 'If I have offended you in some way that you feel that you don't want to talk to me, let me know because I am trully sorry if I did'. The person finally did speak to her after that. The book is full of all kinds of advise on dealing with rudeness from friends, family, spouses, strangers on the street, bullies, and co-workers. I found it to be very helpful.

Rachel says

While some of the solutions in this book (which is comprised half of a treatise on what rudeness is and half of real-world solutions for dealing with specific situations) are useful, many of them sound patronizing.

"Excuse me, we are all here to enjoy the concert, but your conversation makes it very difficult for me to do so. Would you please keep that in mind for the rest of the show?"

"Ma'am, there is a fifteen-item limit in this lane. Would you please choose another?"

"Boss, all of us in the company respect your competence and experience. However, your department would respect you even more if you did a few simple things to build morale. I know they would appreciate your saying hello to everyone in the morning. It's a simple sign of acknowledgment, but it's important. Give the occasional pat on the back. Make your workers feel that they can do a good job, and when they do, show them you noticed. That will make all the difference." (It should be noted that this is a script suggested as an unsolicited piece of advice, not a response to the "Why do my employees hate me?" question.)

Or, and best, when interrupted in a business meeting: "Arnold, I am not finished. Do you understand? It is not your turn to speak yet. It is mine and I am using it. I will be glad to know when I'm done if you have trouble with that."

I don't know who can say this kind of stuff and get away with it--much of it is not actually that civil.

Indrani says

I read this after reading Dr. Forni's "Choosing Civility..." and Sara Hacula's "Saving Civility..."

For those who find the 25 or 52 "rules" of the aforementioned books a bit daunting to deal with, this may be the book for you. Dr. Forni paints with a much broader brush in this book, outlining fewer "rules" that are much less specific. For those who simply need a reminder, and who already understand concepts such as "active listening", this approach works well.

I did find that some of his examples seemed a bit trite when it came to the "what to do when..." section. I think that the author truly believes and/or hopes that if we only approach each other with a civil tone and language, others will respond in kind. Although he acknowledges that this will not only be the case, in most of such situations, he then recommends that the individual simply walk away, and remind himself that it is not worth the trouble. In many cases, he might be right - but it is a difficult thing for most of us to actually do! After all, when *you* are the one talking through the movie in the very full theatre, why should *I* be the one to go sit in the neck-breakers at the front just to get away from you?

However, it is certainly worth the read, if only for the amount of self-reflection it may generate. Who knows? Perhaps you will be prompted to be more aware of your own shortcomings in civility, and improve upon them. I know that I am trying.

Michaelene says

I rated it 3 stars for the reminder to be conscious of our own behavior in response to others, but I could not see the recommended verbiage actually being spoken by anyone I know. While I was reading I kept hearing the voice of MASH surgeon Major Charles Emerson Winchester III. So read the book as a guideline but be aware that making any of these pronouncements might just cause more trouble.

Don says

Read for research into a project involving civil discourse as it relates to diversity and inclusion. Went through very quickly and scanned a lot. Did not inform my discussion/research and so the low rating. Again, dated material.

Carol says

This books defines rudeness in the modern world. I particularly liked the difference between unfocused and focused rudeness. Its a good read for anyone who feels bullied by the world and wonders how to be part of a solution, not a problem.

Flynn says

The first section (comprised of guidelines and explanations) is insightful and helpful. The second section (which offers solutions to very specific problems) is far less helpful- a lot of the proposed suggestions are pretty patronizing.

Mary Lou says

I don't mean to be rude, but this book wasn't very good. Like other reviewers, I thought it had promise in the first section where Forni explored rudeness in our society and its many causes. But the practical section in which he gave scenarios and solutions was, frankly, unsatisfactory. Forni came across as whiny, and only someone with the charm of Cary Grant could get away with most of these scripted responses. Most of us would come across as snarky and passive-aggressive.

Despite that, the crux of his advice was sound and I'll give it to you here to save you the time of reading the book: don't take it personally, it's usually not about you; and stand up for yourself, but try to do it kindly and diplomatically, and then, only if it's safe in the moment to do so.

Jeff Scott says

This is an excellent book that describes why people are rude, how it affects people, and what to do about it. This type of book should be in the professional collections of a workplace.

Working in a service industry, this would be an essential book to read on how to handle and diffuse rude situations. It even provides hypothetical scenarios in the second half of the book. I would re-word some of the text in actual usage, not so much in the actual words used, but in how it is presented. I think another review said it sounded patronizing and I would agree. If presented differently, using the same carefully crafted words so that it doesn't escalate the situation, would be just as helpful.

I think this book had the best description on what causes rudeness
When people are Stressed, Unhappy, Rushed they become rude. There were some other excellent descriptions of what causes rudeness:

Individualism and lack of restraint (I'm more important than you or the group)
Inflated Self-worth
Low Self-worth
Materialism
Mental Health Problems
Injustice
Stress
Anonymity
Not needing others
Anger
Fear

What does rudeness do?
It adds to stress

It erodes self-esteem
It is bad for all kinds of relationships
It poisons the workplace
It escalates into violence

Eight Rules for a civil life

1. Slow down and be present in your life
2. Listen to the voice of empathy
3. Keep a positive attitude'
4. Respect others and grant them plenty of validation
5. Disagree graciously and refrain from arguing
6. Get to know the people around you
7. Pay attention to the small things
8. Ask, don't tell

How to improve your likability quotient

Set the mood, draw people out, be predictable (loyal and dependable), criticize thoughtfully, do not wait for people to ask for your help, appreciate what others do for you, never say anything mean spirited.

In dealing with rudeness:

State the facts
Inform the other person of the impact he or she had on you
Request that the hurtful behavior not be repeated

Brenda Puhlman says

I went back and forth on enjoying this book. Some of the solutions just do not seem reasonable, as other reviews had mentioned. But it's a good discussion starter.

Deb (Readerbuzz) Nance says

Our America is just crying out for a book like that. We Americans are rude. Have we always been this way? Or is it just our increased number of human interactions that make for more rudeness.

In any case, Forni takes on every possible case of rudeness and proposes what we are to do about it. His fundamental approach: confrontation, albeit gentle confrontation. His solutions did not seem plausible to me. I find it almost impossible to imagine that someone who spits in public would completely change their behavior when approached by a stranger and gently scolded.

I found him to be on spot when he spoke about things we can do in our own lives to rein in our own rude behaviors. He suggests that we slow down, become empathetic, remain positive, respect others, disagree graciously, become familiar with those around us, watch small things in our lives, and ask rather than telling.

Therese says

The beginning was insightful, causing self-reflection ("Am I the rude one? What is rudeness? Why are we rude?"). The second half, where this old-world gentleman of civility gives real-world advice, is just awful.

He councils responses to rudeness that, while technically not being rude themselves, are unrealistic, haughty and officious.

To paraphrase:

To the person who parks in the handicapped space without a placard, "You need to look at your conscious, and maybe next time, you'll choose right."

To the person ahead of you at the grocery who has too many items in the speed checkout, "You'll notice this lane's limit is 15. Please find another lane." ("If they will not, ask the cashier to alert the manager.")

Tasteless jokes at the office, "This sort of humor offends me. Please refrain from saying these things in my presence in future."

What is that? This advice, I promise you, will not work in real life. It's stilted, unfriendly and unnatural. It would embarrass, alienate, and cause people to become defensive, not friendly or accomadating. A book about countering rudeness should be about disarming situations, about being empathetic and confident, and finding ways to ethically get what you need no matter how the people around you are behaving.

Susan says

This book is separated into subject-based chapters (civility at work, etc.) that could conceivably make this a useful reference. Unfortunately, the scenarios aren't extensive enough to be truly useful. In addition, many of the prepared responses seem, at best, condescending and passive aggressive and sometimes even inflammatory.

Lisa Serrano says

I was recommended this book to understand that not everyone is kind. It helped understand my married family, but upset me the first time I read it. It described them perfectly. Read again & now I'm at peace.

Reminded me of this quote from President John Quincy Adams:

"I took mankind as you must take your wife, for better [and] for worse, and believed that the secret of dealing with my fellow creatures of my own times was to keep my heart and my judgment always cool. I have not always succeeded."

Excerpt From
John Quincy Adams

Fred Kaplan

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