What is DESC?

DESC can be used to communicate effectively during all types of conflict, and is most effective in resolving *personal* conflict. The DESC script is used in the more conflicting scenarios in which behaviors aren't practiced, hostile or harassing behaviors are ongoing, and safe patient care is suffering.

DESC stands for:
D — Describe the specific situation
E — Express your concerns about the action
S — Suggest other alternatives
C — Consequences should be stated

DESC-It

Let's "DESC-It!"

- Have timely discussion
- Frame problem in terms of your own experience
- Use "I" statements to minimize defensiveness
- Avoid blaming statements
- Critique is not criticism
- Focus on what is right, not who is right

Ultimately, consensus should be reached.

What is an example of DESC?

Scenario: A nurse feels that a patient has abdominal distension and pain secondary to a distended bladder and needs a foley catheter. The nurse receives the order from the resident on call. When the attending later realizes that the order was given without his consent, he raises his voice to the resident in front of staff and the patient.

D: I (resident) am sensing that you (attending) are upset with me for ordering the foley catheter for your patient.

E: When you question my judgment in front of others, it embarrasses me and makes me very uncomfortable. It also undermines my credibility with the patient.

S: If you are concerned or have a question regarding my performance, I would appreciate it if you would speak to me in private.

C: A private conversation would be more beneficial to me because I would feel less embarrassed and would be able to ask questions and supply information. Can we agree to follow such a procedure if this were to occur again?

Where can I get more information about DESC?

Visit www.leadingagekansas.org/tsmaterials