**I Know How to do Quality**

**The Situation:** You have been asked by **P**retty **T**errific **A**t**C**onversation (PTAC) Parent Center to provide some staff development for the employees. Although Pretty Terrific has enjoyed a great reputation for many years as a quality parent center, some complaints have surfaced of late, citing rudeness on the phone, follow-up phone calls and materials not attended to, and missing paperwork. You have 10 years of experience as a staff member at Pretty Terrific and have had many opportunities to train people at every level of the organization. You have developed a training based upon your many years of working as a trainer. You have some great ideas on how to improve customer satisfaction and the quality of work because you have had the opportunity to visit other centers and question their staff on how other centers are run. You are conducting your first session with the employee group and before you can get even one word out, one employee, Ms. I. M. Better, begins to challenge your every word. “I’ve been doing quality work forever.” “I have 25 years of experience in this organization and you can’t tell me what to do.” “Our center has a great reputation and you’re crazy if you’re telling me we need to change things.” The rest of the staff does not seem unreceptive to the training, but they seem to be waiting for Ms. Better to be placated before hearing your ideas.

**Assignment 1:** In your group discuss the case study. Think of ideas for handling the objections of an overbearing participant in a training session whose verbal actions prevent you from getting to the content of the training. How do you get I.M. Better to quiet down long enough for you to get at the main points of the training? How might you get her to reserve judgment long enough for some ideas to impact the group? How might you make an ally of her? How might the group help you control Ms. Better? The goal is not to permanently turn off her disruptive mouth. Rather, it is to get her to give you a chance to let the merits of the material sway the group and her. Try to come up with at least 3 actions that you could take as a trainer to accomplish that goal.

**Assignment 2:** After you have developed your strategies for coping with a vocally disruptive participant, select someone to play the role of the trainer and someone to be the disrupter in a role play. Draw on your own knowledge of quality and training expertise. Try to illustrate the effects of an overbearing participant and some of the strategies you suggest for dealing with the situation.