

# Learning to Appear Calm

Learning to appear calm in new situations is a great skill for a traveling nurse to learn. Being in new situations can be uncomfortable at first. However, appearing calm can help inspire the confidence of your co-workers.

## **Body Language**

The first thing someone will see before they talk to you is your body language. Your body language can give them lots of information to work with in forming an opinion of you. I can talk all day long about how to make your body look calm, but one of the best ways to do it is to see it. Take time today to look around and find people who appear calm and confident. You don't want to appear so calm that it looks like you don't care. You want to look alert, yet calm. When you see someone that has this appearance, take a good mental note of their posture and how they carry themselves. Then, when you want to look calm, picture this person in your mind and try to take on their stance. Pretend you are that person in a sense. You will instantly look different to others.

## **What you say**

The next step on the agenda is watching what you say. How you phrase things can make a tremendous difference in how others will view you. It is important here, though, that you don't get the idea that appearing calm is equated to knowing everything. People will see through this façade fast. Recently, an anesthesiologist resident flunked his internship because he tried to appear to know all the answers. His teachers quickly caught onto this and saw him far more unsafe than someone who simply admits that they will have to look at it further and find the answers

The way to inspire confidence without appearing to know everything is to phrase things in a neutral way. Let me provide an example. While working at a fertility clinic the other day and thinking about this article, I heard a new lab technician at the facility. The doctor asked her to tell him how many samples he needed to get a certain amount of viable specimens he needed. She replied, "I don't even know how many specimens are in a sample." Right after that statement, the doctor immediately began to feel unsure of the situation. She may not have known the answers, but she did have other more experienced resource people working in the lab with her. What she could have said was something like, "I will find out for you and let you know." This way she is not acting like she knows everything, but she does sound like she is taking care of the situation. This is how you want others to feel.

It's perfectly fine to ask questions. Just ask them. Don't preface it by saying you don't know anything. Don't say, I don't know where anything is, can you tell me where the bandages are? Say, where are the bandages? If someone asks you for the bandages or oxygen tank, say, "sure I will find it for you?" Then ask someone where they are.

Learning to appear calm and in control is a great skill to learn at work and outside of work. Effective leaders always appear calm and in control of their emotions. You may already use these techniques and not even realize it. Now you can become more aware of them and add to them. Perhaps by appearing calmer, you may find yourself feeling calmer as well.