# De-escalation Strategies for Libraries, Archives, and Museum Staff Group Activities Guide

This guide can be used to facilitate discussion and activities among a group of learners after they have individually completed this self-paced course. It is not necessary to be an expert in the course content to facilitate the following discussions and activities. For a deeper dive into learning group facilitation, refer to [WebJunction’s Learning Group Facilitation Guide](https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/facilitator-guide-general.html).

If possible, check in with your learning group before beginning this course to discuss what the group wants to accomplish, both as individuals and as a group.

## Group discussion questions

* What are some of the common scenarios in your organization that require de-escalation? Are there specific policies, events, or collections that seem to create difficult conversations or interactions?
* How do you prepare and support new staff and volunteers to address issues that may potentially escalate? How do they learn about relevant policies?
* How do you pause yourself to get calm in a conflict? What strategies work for you?
* What are some examples of times you have shown empathy to someone visiting your library, archive, or museum? How did that person respond when you attempted to connect with them?
* What could you do if you feel unsafe de-escalating a conflict? What resources and supports are available to you?
* What steps can you take to increase your confidence in de-escalation? What policies, procedures, and practices might help you feel more prepared to de-escalate a situation?
* What other areas of interest do you have around this topic? How will you fill the gaps in your learning?

## Suggested group activities

* As a group, identify steps you could take (individually or within your organization) to increase confidence around de-escalation.
* Create talking points for your organization about how to de-escalate common scenarios.
* Take turns practicing a de-escalation scenario in your group. Select a common scenario in your organization (e.g., policy enforcement, responding to someone who is offended, sharing disappointing information, etc.) and identify roles in that scenario, then play out those roles using the framework in the course. If you need help thinking of scenarios, here are a few to get you started.
  + A museum visitor loudly interrupts a tour guide to ask why the museum doesn’t allow recording when their tax dollars paid for the exhibit.
  + A parent approaches the help desk and angrily shoves a book at the library assistant, saying, “Can you believe I found this in the children’s section?”
  + A researcher shows no signs of wrapping up as the archive nears closing time. When asked to prepare for closing, the researcher says, “Can’t you see I’m in the middle of something? I’ll leave when I’m ready.”