

# The 3-Step Response Formula for Influencing Your Friends, Neighbors and Co-Workers

Whenever you hear someone say something you disagree with and want to influence him/her to see the issue differently, try using this simple 3-step formula to craft a response which will be heard. Speak in a calm voice with sincerity. Your voice is powerful.

**STEP 1** A statement which agrees with some part of what you just heard, or – if there is nothing you can agree with – a neutral statement.

(Example: You hear: “Obama said he would make equal pay for women a priority of his administration.”

You say: “ Well as a woman, pay equity is certainly important to me.”

**STEP 2** Present a contradicting fact or facts in a clear but non-abrasive way.

(Example: You continue: “But I’m concerned that Obama hasn’t done what he says he would do as President in his own Senate office. CNSNews reported recently that in Obama’s office women were paid \$6,000.00 or more below the average for a man in his office. But in McCain’s office, women were paid \$3,000.00 more than the men!

**STEP 3** Personalize.

(Example: You continue: “Obama says a lot of things that sound really wonderful, but on this issue and some of the others, he just doesn’t have a record that corresponds to his words. I’d rather work in McCain’s office and I’d rather vote for a candidate who has not just words, but a long record that shows me who he is and what he will do.

These steps may overlap a little. That’s fine. You may personalize in step 2 and find something to agree with in step 3. That’s fine. Just get it all in.

### 3 Step Response Worksheet -- Example

#### Objection to McCain

Gas is over \$4.00 a gallon!  
We need a change.  
Republicans just support big oil companies.

#### Contradicting Fact(s)

It is our dependence on foreign oil ( Iran gets >\$66 billion a year!) and competition from countries like China and India that threatens not just our economy, but also our national security and our environment.

John McCain supports development of the huge energy resources we have in this country. He has an energy plan that includes safe nuclear energy.

McCain has no history of ties to the oil industry.

#### 3-Step Response

**Step 1.** Who would have thought gas would be \$4.00 a gallon!

**Step 2.** But you know – even though we hear it sometimes – I’m not sure it’s the oil companies. Our dependence on foreign oil scares me. 2/3 of the oil we use is coming from countries like Iran! AND we are competing for it with countries like China. John McCain supports responsible development of the huge oil and coal resources we have in our country. He also has an energy that includes safe nuclear energy. I think McCain makes a lot of sense when it comes to energy. And he doesn’t have any past ties to the oil industry. In fact, he has a really strong record of being independent of special interests.

**Step 3.** I like that a lot.

# 3 Step Response Worksheet

**Objection to McCain**

**Contradicting Fact(s)**

**3-Step Response**

# Sample Agreeing or Neutral Statements

1. You know we hear that so much in the press.
2. You've hit on one of the most important issues in this election.
3. I know. We all want \_\_\_\_\_. (Fill in the blank: our troops home, cheaper gas, better healthcare, etc.)
4. I understand.

## SOFT QUESTION Formula for Initiating a Conversation

This formula can be used when there is a difference of opinion (Obama vs. McCain) and you want to initiate a conversation about it. It includes the 3 Step Response, but only after several other steps. In the following example, Sue, a Republican with a McCain sign in her yard, wants to talk to her neighbor Mary about the Obama sign in Mary's yard.

### 1. Small talk:

Example: Sue is picking up her newspaper and sees Mary in the yard. She says: "Hi Mary. Is it hot enough for you?" They talk about the weather for a minute.

### 2. Observation:

Gesturing toward the signs in both yards, Sue says: "I see we are viewing the election a little differently."

### 3. Soft question:

You know Mary, we've been neighbors and friends for a while now and I know you've thought it through. Do you mind my asking what it is about Obama that appeals to you?

### 4. Listen:

You say nothing! Really listen. Concentrate on what is being said, not what you are going to say next.

### 5. 3 Step Response:

If, for example, Mary says she is supporting Obama because she wants the troops home, You use the formula and say something like "I know. We all want the troops home. And that's actually starting to happen. I just heard that the President has ordered shorter tours of duty for our soldiers. He can do that because the surge is working. And Obama was against the surge. It was McCain that stood up for it against a lot of strong opposition. That's what I like about McCain. He's seasoned. He has experience and a solid record."

### 6. Be prepared for neighbors comment:

Mary's response may be positive ("That's a good point.") neutral (Well, I'm no expert on the surge.) or negative (My mind's made up. I don't want to talk about it.)

### 7. Appropriate Reaction:

End this conversation in a friendly, positive way:

Mary says: "That's a good point." You can say: "Thanks. There are a lot of things to consider. The great thing is we are both taking an active role in the political process."

Mary says: "Well, I'm no expert on the surge." You can say: "Neither am I. I'm basing that on what I read and hear on the news and from some soldiers I know. Anyway, the great thing is we are both taking an active role in the political process."

Mary says: "My mind is made up. I don't want to talk about it.." You can say: "Fair enough. The great thing is we are both taking an active role in the political process."