

TAMING LIONS

A Technique in Human Relations

If you saw many lions in the course of your daily work, you'd soon learn the basic rules of lion taming — or else! But you do meet *human* lions — the people with whom you deal who are upset, disturbed or angry. To handle them, why not take a few ideas from the professional lion tamer, a person who really knows about lions?

In the first place, notice the lion tamer's calm, matter-of-fact approach. He or she doesn't intend to let a few roars interfere with the job at hand.

Notice, too, the air of quiet confidence surrounding a lion tamer. You can tell he or she has dealt with lions before. No matter how big the lion or how fiercely it growls, you get the feeling the tamer has the situation well in hand.

When anything goes wrong, you'll see the lion tamer immediately pick up a light chair to provide a barrier against the lion. You have a chair, too — your professional attitude. Keep it between yourself and the lion.

Also, remember that the lion isn't roaring at you personally. It's snarling at you in your official capacity, the same as it would at anyone else in your job. Just play your role — keep a professional attitude and don't leave your feelings out where they'll get clawed.

No matter how hard the lion snarls or roars, the lion tamer doesn't roar back. Instead, he or she displays pleasant confidence. Anything else would interfere with the act. A tamer's business is to tame lions, not out-roar them. If a tamer was drawn into a roaring contest, the lion would win every time.

Also, notice that a lion tamer isn't vindictive. He or she doesn't hold a few harmless roars against the lion. Furthermore, there's never a question of provoking the beast except as part of the act — and that's strictly window dressing. Between acts, the tamer makes every effort to win and hold the lion's affection.

Taming lions — little or big — is part of your job. Tackle it with a calm, matter-of-fact approach. Show no emotion but pleasant confidence. Be a professional — act your role and keep your personal feelings out of it. Don't try to out-roar the lion. And never intentionally provoke the animal. — *Author Unknown*

This popular metaphor has been a favorite of mine throughout the years and a frequent request for reprints. I think you'll enjoy its message!