• DON’T THREATEN
This may be interpreted as a power play and increase fear or prompt assaultive behavior.

• DON’T SHOUT
If the person isn’t listening, other “voices” are probably interfering.

• DON’T CRITICIZE
It will make matters worse; it can’t make things better.

• DON’T BAIT THE PERSON
into acting out wild threats; the consequences could be tragic.

• DON’T STAND OVER THE PERSON
if he is seated. Instead, seat yourself.

• AVOID CONTINUOUS EYE CONTACT OR TOUCHING

• COMPLY WITH REQUESTS
that are not endangering or beyond reason. This gives the person the opportunity to feel somewhat “In control.”

• DON’T BLOCK THE DOORWAY
But keep yourself between the person and an exit.

**BENEFITS OF USING A CIT OFFICER**

• A decrease in arrests and use of force

• The ability to identify mentally ill persons and provide them with appropriate care

• A decrease in patient violence and use of restraints in the ER

• Better trained and educated officers in verbal de-escalation techniques

• A decline in officer injuries during crisis events

• An increase in officer recognition and appreciation by the community

• Fewer victimless crime arrests

• A decrease in liability for health care issues in the jail

• Cost savings
CALL 911 FIRST
Ask for a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officer:

- When a difficult person has made an attempt on his or her life; assaulted another person; or has destroyed property

- Behaves in a manner that may be considered dangerous to him or herself or others

WHEN TO CALL TRUMAN CRISIS SERVICES 888-279-8188:

When a person is in a mental health crisis such as:

- Expressing suicidal thoughts
- Signs such as inconsolable crying, panic, bizarre behavior

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

There are some actions that can diminish or avoid disaster. You need to reverse any escalation of the psychotic symptoms and provide immediate protection and support to the person in crisis. Remember: Things always go better if you speak softly and in simple sentences.

Seldom will a person suddenly lose total control of thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Warning signs include: sleeplessness, ritualistic preoccupation with certain activities, suspiciousness, unpredictable outbursts, etc. During these early stages a full-blown crisis can sometimes be averted.

The more psychotic the person, the less likely you’ll succeed. Trust your feelings. If you are frightened, take immediate action.

Your task is to help the person regain control. Do nothing to agitate the scene. The person is probably terrified by the subjective experience of loss of control over thoughts and feelings. The “voices” may be giving life-threatening commands; messages may be coming from the light fixtures; the room may be filled with poisonous fumes; snakes may be crawling on the window. Accept the fact that the person is in an “altered reality state” and may “act out” the hallucination, e.g. shatter the window to destroy the snakes. It is imperative that you remain calm. If you are alone, call someone to stay with you until professional help arrives.

Avoid patronizing or authoritative statements. If necessary, call the police (ask for CIT officer) but instruct them not to brandish any weapons. Explain the behavior that the individual is displaying and that you have called them for help.