

PROTECTORS

The following are suggested protectors against the inmate con game. Following these suggested protectors will enhance your ability to maintain a distance from being identified as a potential target for an inmate con game. They are:

1. Understand the definition of a “professional” and strive to act and perform your duties as one every day.

Employees who conduct themselves as a professional will be seen as “fair, firm and consistent” and command the respect of the inmates placed in their charge.

2. Learn to recognize the steps to a setup and take appropriate action to prevent such steps from occurring.

The sooner a possible setup is recognized, the quicker it can be prevented. When an interaction is based on con games, constructive interaction is forfeited.

3. Understand the communication consists of a sender and receiver.

Many times in a confined society, messages are not what they appear to be on the surface. Learn to listen, but not always participate.

4. Learn to say “NO” and mean it.

People like to know what the rules are and can accept “no” when it appears to be consistent and fair in your interaction with confined people. They can respect one who is “firm”, “fair”, and “consistent”. A whimsical person invites and is a potential target for con games.

5. Be in command of your area.

People in a confined society feel you are more able to help them if you show skills in running your own work area. This strength must be seen as coming from the person, not from the uniform or title adjoining the person.

6. Check the confined person's central file.

When you need to confirm information from someone you are trying to help, the central file can provide the kind of clue to aid the person. When special help is requested, the need should be verified.

7. Be knowledgeable of prior institution/agency procedures relating to avenues confined people can pursue to acquire needs not covered in the institutional policy manual or post orders.

People asking favors already know if you can grant them or not and judge you harshly if you give something you should not, or do not give something you should or could.

8. Keep everything in the open.

This advice is perhaps the most important. Many employees credit this action, in hindsight, as being the key to preventing or stopping the setup process. Manipulators do not want detection because an astute onlooker may expose the process to the proposed victim or the administration.

9. Do not form a "You/me" situation.

A secret or "privileged knowledge" between two people gives one or the other the advantage of taking liberties if the secret is to be kept. Never say or do anything with an inmate you would be embarrassed to share with your peers or superiors.

10. Intended victims should let someone know they feel or believe they are being cultivated for a setup and let the inmate involved know you told someone.

Silence or inaction in the confined society means approval whether approval was intended or not. If manipulators can "get aware with it" they have no reason to stop. Taking action to show them you do not want this inappropriate attention lets them know where you stand.

11. Put it in writing.

When all else fails, and you still believe the manipulation is in process write about it. Recorded information has the effect of stopping a setup immediately, at least by the named inmate(s). A sample informational report could read:

“Inmate Smith, B-3974, comes to my office on a daily basis requesting favors such as.....He is not assigned to this area and I have told him on several occasions not to come here. He refuses to heed my warnings so on this date I gave him a direct order not to be in this area. Failure to comply this next time will result in a disciplinary report.

Some testing processes violate minor rules that may not be serious enough for strong disciplinary action but are too serious fro an informational report. A sample of this would be:

“Inmate Doaks, B-0026, has recently requested a series of small favors and has been inquiring into my personal life. Although he has not violated any rules to policy, his requests seem headed in that direction. To date, he has jokingly hinted at my giving him cigarettes, gum, pencils, and he has asked about my financial affairs. I neither appreciate nor desire the attention and if it does not cease, I will take stronger action.”

When a confined person’s request or action is an obvious violation of institutional/agency rules, a disciplinary report is recommended. An example might be:

“On January 1, 2004, at approximately 11:00 A.M., Inmate John Doe, B-0006, requested that I bring in a bottle of wine by smuggling it through the main gate of this institution in my lunch box and presenting it to him when I assume my post in D-unit. He stated that my failure to comply would result in a statement from him and other inmates attesting to the fact that I have already smuggled in cookies and candy. He said he has the evidence in his cell and exposure would result in the loss of my job. It is true I made an error in judgment and on occasions shared items from my lunch box that I did not care to eat. I am willing to accept

whatever disciplinary action is entailed as a result of my mistake, but that does not alter the fact that Inmate Doe is in violation of institutional rule 3008, and I am hereby citing him for that violation.”

12. Know what to do in a crisis situation.

One must have a working knowledge of the institutional/jail “Emergency Response Manual” or other crisis management orders. Often when a crisis occurs, if you do not know what to do, you will become anxious and may make a mistake. When you do, the inmate will remember and attempt to blackmail you and/or use that information to set you up