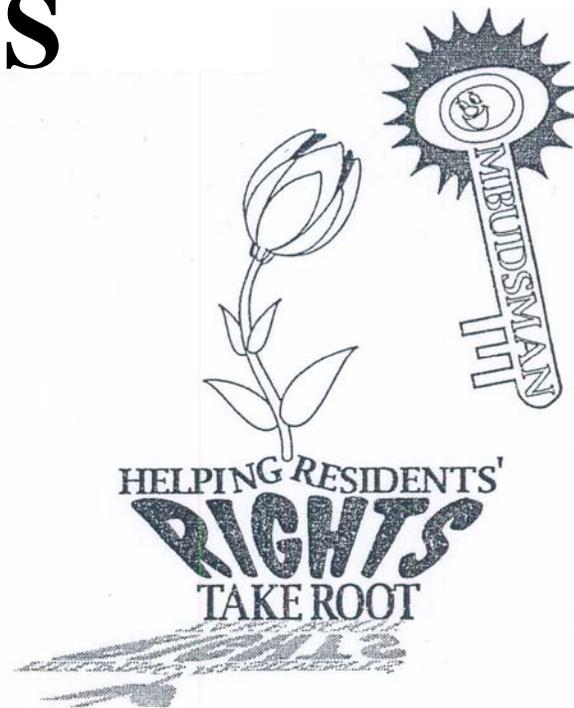


SCRIPTED ROLE

PLAYS



Depicting Ombudsman in Typical Situations

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This collection of skits represents a joint creative effort of the State Ombudsman staff and the Regional Ombudsman staff in Missouri. The skits were used at the state-wide Ombudsman volunteer training conference in April 1995.

Ombudsman volunteers in Missouri had asked for more chance to practice their skills at the state-wide training conference. A reluctance to participate in role playing was anticipated by the Regional Staff, so the idea of scripting the role plays into skits was suggested. Presentation of the skits with accompanying discussion stimulated the desired interaction among the Ombudsman volunteers.

Role play scenarios were collected from many sources around the country. We are grateful to Carolyn Waner of the National Ombudsman Resource Center for gathering and sending these scenarios. These were used as a basis to develop the scripts for the skits. Thanks to all of the State Ombudsman whose materials were in the resource center for our use.

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We hope that you will find these skits useful for future training sessions for your volunteers.

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CALL LIGHTS

OBJECTIVES:

1. To reinforce the resident's right to quality care and to complain.
2. To model ways to work on a problem when the resident doesn't want his/her name used.
3. To model ways to follow-up a problem from week to week.
4. To brainstorm ways to get the call lights answered in a more timely manner.

CHARACTERS:

Ombudsman
Mr./Mrs. Phelps, a resident
Narrator

Narrator: The Ombudsman (male or female) on his regular Tuesday afternoon visits with a male resident, Mr. Sam Phelps. Mr. Phelps is laying on his bed (two chairs end-to-end) and Ombudsman sitting in a chair next to him.

Ombudsman: Looking forward to seeing your grandkids this afternoon? It is Tuesday afternoons they try and visit isn't it?

Mr. Phelps: Yes. Missy said she and the kids would try and stop by about three. They weren't up last week. Apparently one of the kids had to go to the dentist. Something about a tooth ache.

Ombudsman: Perhaps you will hear about a tooth fairy leaving money if a tooth gets pulled!

Mr. Phelps: (Chuckles a little bit with that remark while he fidgets and starts shifting in his bed.)

Ombudsman: Has your room been cleaned today? (Says this as crunches up nose sensing an odor never noticed in visits before.)

Mr. Phelps: (Slightly embarrassed and pauses before responding) Well yes, the room was cleaned but...lately I've had some accidents. (Displays some frustration as he says this with voice and arm movements).

Ombudsman: What's the problem Mr. Phelps?

Mr. Phelps: It seems to take forever before somebody comes in to help me. I don't need help with much. Just some assistance to the bathroom. They tell me I'm not supposed to try to get there by myself but call them when I have to go. HA! Call them. I keep punching the call light and nobody comes! I hate that this happens. It's so degrading.

Ombudsman: From your comments, I sense this has happened before?

Mr. Phelps: Yes, several times. I take a nap after lunch and when I wake up I have to go to the bathroom. I punch the call light several times and have even hollered for help but I'm ignored until it's too late.

Ombudsman: Would you like me to go get someone to change your clothes?

Mr. Phelps: It's so embarrassing and uncomfortable, please if you would.

Narrator: Before the Ombudsman leaves the room, he/she tells Mr. Phelps goodbye, then makes a mental note to him/herself to remember to ask him about the call light problem the next time he/she visits with him. A nurse aide changes him and the immediate problem is solved.

Narrator: Now it's the following week, Tuesday.

Ombudsman: How was your family visit last week? Were the kids able to make it?

Mr. Phelps: Yes. Everybody's doing fine. (In a better mood this time, no fidgeting.)

Ombudsman: I was concerned in our last visit as you seemed very distressed with no one answering your call light in time. Have you had any problems since then?

Mr. Phelps: Yes. When I have to go to the bathroom after my afternoon nap, I can never get anyone to assist me. I get quick responses in the evenings and mornings when I need to go to the bathroom, no complaints there, but the afternoons seem to be when they don't come quick enough.

Ombudsman: I'm sorry to hear that you continue to have this problem with the call light. It would be an embarrassing and uncomfortable situation for anyone. Perhaps there is a way that we can keep this from continuing to happen. How would you feel about going with me to talk with the staff?

Mr. Phelps: I have complained so much already that I don't think they even hear me now.

Ombudsman: I can understand that, but I'd be with you...(pause-waiting for Mr. Phelps to say something) Well, how would you feel about giving me permission to look into why this is occurring and without mentioning your name, find out if other residents are experiencing this same problem too.

Mr. Phelps: Okay. Sounds alright. I don't want any trouble out of this. As long as you leave my name out of it.

Narrator: With some investigation during visits with other residents, the Ombudsman has discovered that other residents indeed have the same problem as Mr. Phelps.

Instead of making his/her visiting rounds, the following Tuesday, the Ombudsman remains out in the hallway and monitors the call lights as they come on, noting the amount of time that passes before a staff person responds to the call light. It is clear to Ombudsman that no one is paying attention to call lights as the staff is preoccupied visiting with one another as they come and go with the afternoon shift change.

Narrator: It is the next Tuesday.

Ombudsman: Did you miss me last Tuesday afternoon?

Mr. Phelps: I did. Is everything alright with you?

Ombudsman: Yes, and I've discovered that you are not the only resident with this problem. Many other residents also have concerns like yourself about the slow response they are receiving with the call lights in the afternoon. I have also observed myself, that the staff sometimes takes up to 30 minutes to answer a call light once it comes on. This is how I spent the 2 hours or so I usually spend visiting here last week. With your permission, I want to help you to reduce the probability of this from happening to you or any of the other residents again. Here are some of my ideas.

Narrator: (to the audience) If you were the Ombudsman in this scenario, knowing what you know, how would you solve this problem?