Summary of Verbal Judo as presented by Captain Greg Butler
June 19, 2013 for Work-Life Balance

IUPD is available for on campus 24/7 and response time is most often faster than 911, so dial 855-4111. (See the detachable information card in the Work-Life brochure for this and other emergency phone numbers.)

Police officers are available for non-emergency situations:
- Consulting with departments on how to address potentially dangerous or threatening situations
- Attending or standing by during potentially confrontational interactions, such as terminating an employee

Be aware in the work environment, particularly if your job is the first point of contact with employees, students and guests.
- A person’s intention can often be predicted by observing their hands—where they are, what they’re carrying, and how they are held. Be observant.
- Set up your work area with access to exits and a means to create a barrier if needed.

Pay attention to body language—it can tell a lot about intentions.

Anticipate and plan for safety in your work environment; for example, have a process to alert co-workers when you need back-up.

When involved in a confrontation:
- Don’t react emotionally. Expressing anger and frustration won’t get the results you want.
- Always maintain a courteous and respectful manner.

If you’re uneasy about a situation, trust your instincts and take appropriate precautions by delaying, removing yourself, or calling for help.

A recommended reading is Gift of Fear: And Other Survival Signals That Protect us From Violence by Gavin de Becker.

Use these five steps with examples for managing a resistant person:

1. Ask for cooperation. “I need you to lower your voice and have a seat in the waiting area, please.”
2. Explain the reason for the request. “You don’t need to shout for me to understand your question. I need a few minutes to give your issue the attention it deserves. The sooner you comply, the sooner I can address your issue.”
3. Present options and consequences and let them choose. “If you don’t lower your voice and wait quietly, I can’t help. I’ll have to ask you to leave and make an appointment for later. If you don’t comply, an incident report will be put in your permanent record.”
4. Confirm. “Is there anything else I can do or say to help you comply with my request?”
5. Act. Follow up with the consequences you described: call the police, inform a supervisor, write an incident report.