

## DEALING WITH A TOUGH CO-WORKER



Even though you might love your job and the company you work for, it does not mean that you love your co-workers just as much. When you have to suffer through the workday with a lousy co-worker, your productivity and quality of work could take a hit. This could lead to you being reprimanded or losing your job if you don't speak up about the problem. It is understandable that you might not want to 'rat out' your co-worker, but something needs to be done to rectify the situation. When we speak of a lousy co-worker, we mean someone who has a bad attitude, uses foul language, slacks off at work and talks down to his or her co-workers on a regular basis. The longer this person acts inappropriately, the more likely it is that bad morale will spread throughout the office. The reason for this is that strong employees will dread coming into work each day, causing them to watch the clock and their work will suffer. It is almost like having an office bully. Experts warn that the issue needs to be resolved as soon as possible in order to avoid bad morale and a change in the workplace environment. Beth Sears, the president of Workplace Communication, told the Wall Street Journal, "By not responding to inappropriate behavior or communication, you're reinforcing that behavior. You're actually telling that person that it is OK to communicate with you in that manner. You should address issues as they happen." If possible, attempt to fix the problem on your own. Sit down one-on-one with the person causing the issue in a private setting, away from wandering eyes and nosy ears. By confronting the person in a calm and comfortable setting, you might be able to diffuse the situation without getting your superior or human resource manager involved. If push comes to shove, and nothing can be fixed privately, you will need to involve supervisors. Make sure you don't discuss the meetings with other co-workers because this could cause further issues in morale and relationships within the office. For instance, even if you complain about an office nuisance, you might be hurting your relationships with others in the office. You never know if the other person is actually well-liked by others, which means they could also turn on you, affecting your reputation. Do all you can to diffuse the situation on your own and only involve supervisors if absolutely necessary.