

HOW TO DEAL WITH THOSE DIFFICULT COWORKERS



Summary: Dealing with difficult coworkers does not need to be such a stressful event, especially when it is handled with professionalism and thought.

Every office has an employee or four that are just difficult to be around. It may be their **personality or lack thereof**. Some days it may feel like the way to **making it through your job** and staying professional is to know how to deal with those kinds of coworkers with class. Here are some tips on how to deal with the difficult coworkers that keep ruining your day and career.

Self-control: You can't control another person's actions or attitude. Don't focus on how you can change your coworker. Focus on what you can change or control such as your words, actions, job performance, etc. You are the only person you can control.

Cool: Keep your temper in check so that you don't become the problem person. Learn anger management skills or de-stressing techniques before reaching the middle of a conflict.

Gossip: Keep your problems with the other coworker between yourself. Don't start complaining about them in the break room or even let other coworkers complain to you about someone they have a problem with. Gossiping won't resolve the conflict, it will only escalate things.

Evaluate: Don't immediately start your action plan yet. Look at the situation and make sure you are choosing the correct way of handling the issue. The problem may not even be your business.

Basics: Avoid always/never statements, limiting your conversation to a specific and current complaint. Use "I" statements instead of "you" so that you aren't putting them on the defensive. There is always the chance that you are overreacting to the situation and misinterpreting the information that you have. You may actually be part of the problem.

Conversation: Whenever there is a problem, face it in person instead of over email. Written word is harder to interpret correctly than actual human interaction.

Positive: You work with this person you are having problems with and will most likely keep working with them. Try your best to stay positive and find positive attributes about them to get rid of the negative aspect of your working relationship.

Backup: Going for a supervisor or superior should only be a last resort. If you exhausted every other avenue to make the situation work for both people but nothing has improved, reaching out is the last step. When finally seeking that backup, approach them calmly and professionally. Account for your own behavior in the mess.

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