

## KNOW HOW TO SURVIVE A TOXIC WORKPLACE



**Summary:** *There are workplaces you may experience that are toxic so learn about how to know when they are dangerous and what to do about it.*

There are all kinds of factors contributing to hardship at work. You may struggle because the projects are lacking inspiration or excitement or the vending machine is filled with only salt and vinegar chips. You may dread going to work because your boss is downright awful or your coworkers do nothing all day but gossip, take breaks, and cat nap. Whatever the reasons may be, they all contribute to a toxic environment that makes it so nothing gets done and no one enjoys being there.

Having just one bad thing to deal with at work is manageable but when there are multiple factors, it can get hard to hang around for long with your job. Toxic workplaces are a disaster for your mental state. In toxic workplaces there can be bullying, unclear policies, lack of recognition for hard work, and health problems from the stress of being forced to deal with the hostility.

Sometimes things can be turned around with the change of management but that is out of your control. If the time comes that you find yourself in a workplace that is toxic, you will need to be able to work through it until you can change your circumstances by finding a new job. Getting to the point of understanding if you are in a toxic environment that can't be fixed is one of the hardest parts. Here are five tips to help you understand what can be done about your situation or not.

1. You have a bad boss

While a supervisor might not always create the toxic workplace by themselves, they are aiding to it. Look for a boss with no boundaries, weak communication skills, and issues expressing their anger and disappointment. Working for a boss that is down-right mean and out for power will make each work day drag on while putting your stress levels at all-time highs. It may be hard not to take their inappropriate comments personally but you have to remind yourself that they are the problem, not you.

2. There is a lack of communication

Nothing can get done without communication. The better the communication, the easier it is to get things done correctly. When you get good communication from your boss, you will understand how to do your job, what is expected of you, and what needs to be improved. When this desperately needed communication is nonexistent, work relationships break down and become dysfunctional. When communication is a problem at work, all you can do is do your best to keep communication open since you can't force anyone to be direct with you. Keep record of the emails or memos you do receive so that when someone tries to go back on their word, you can point out what they actually said.

3. There is a lack of responsibility

While no one wants to be in the position where they have to take responsibility for something that has gone wrong at work. In a perfect world, nothing would wrong but we don't live in a perfect world. Our reality is filled with ideas that don't pan out and good intentions. When things don't go as hoped, stepping up and taking responsibility is required. Unfortunately, a lot of people don't want to throw themselves under the bus and don't even think twice about doing so to another person. While you may not be the one being thrown under, you likely notice blame being placed on outside sources or someone else in the company. Those who are responsible for the problem end up exhausting greater energy on placing the blame on someone else instead of fixing the problem. Career expert Stacia Pearce said, "When there is no accountability, order is lost and productivity is stifled." When no one is willing to step up and fix the problem, work comes to a standstill. Find a way to mentally distance yourself from the blame game so that you don't get dragged down. Keep inspirational quotes at your desk, repeat a positive mantra to yourself, or start attending some meditative yoga classes every evening.

4. You are undervalued

Do the promotions seem random at work? Does your work seem to get belittled by your supervisors? Do you take on extra work from your colleagues but still don't get any acknowledgment? Is the only feedback you get on things that you have done wrong? Undervaluing an employee's work in combination with a narcissistic boss and lack of communication is the perfect example of a toxic workplace. The signs that your work is underappreciated may be in the form of a lack of verbal acknowledgment or your supervisor taking credit for your work. Keep record of what you are doing so that you have proof when it is needed that you are going above and beyond to get the job done.

5. Your coworkers are like a high school clique

No one wants to go back to high school so why would you want your workplace to be like high school. We all know how horrible high school can be without friends, now imagine that same experience every day at work. Having at least a couple friends at work can make bad environments bearable. While it is normal to not be friends with everyone at work, there should be a couple people that you can turn to. It is also normal for there to be some tight knit cliques of friends at work. The big problem is when these cliques are not willing to let others in or work with others outside of their group. The worst cliques will even be hostile towards outsiders. Don't resort to their level to get accepted because eventually it will bite you in the butt. The best thing you can do in this type of toxic environment is to be kind and courteous to everyone.

Have you ever worked in a toxic environment? Share your experiences with us in the comments below.

**To learn more about bad situations at work, read these articles:**

- [How to Deal with These 5 Types of Toxic Employees](#)
- [How to Beat the Sharks at Work](#)
- [Harvard Business Defines "Toxic Worker"](#)

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