



HUNDRED LIFE DESIGN

10 WAYS TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULT COWORKERS

Ever had to deal with someone who made you want to tear your hair out on a regular basis? Most of us will endure annoying or frustrating coworkers at least once in our lives, but you can improve your work environment by learning to deal with them effectively. Here are ten ways to help you upgrade your patience and people skills, and your ability to put up with your coworkers' drama at work.

DIFFICULT COWORKERS

MANAGE GOSSIP

The office watering hole helps you keep in touch with what's going on, but it can also be a source of toxic conversation, and confrontations. Tempting as is, make sure you don't gossip behind coworkers' backs, and make it clear that you don't want to hear others' dirty laundry either.

STAY CALM

If you lose your temper when they lose their temper, the situation is worse for everyone. Instead, take a deep breath and do your best to keep your cool, even when you'd much rather slap them.

LISTEN TO THEM

Following the tip above: every person is the hero of their own personal narrative, meaning (crazy as it sounds) your coworker must believe their actions are good. Try to understand their motivations, and you might be able give them what they really want, or at least compromise.

TAKE INITIATIVE

Sometimes, we just want to let problems slide. But when an issue with a coworker is a chronic cause of stress and frustration, it's important to stand your ground. Take the initiative by reaching out to your coworker for a candid (and polite) discussion about their behavior.

EXPLAIN YOURSELF

Sometimes, we assume everyone else understands our perspective—but this isn't always the case. Don't expect your coworkers to be mind-readers! Explain why you want what you do, and maybe you'll find yourself on the path to getting it.

BE RESPECTFUL

If you treat your coworker as if they're ignorant or simple-minded, they'll resent your words, and you'll have a much harder time dealing with them in the future. Treating your coworker the way you'd like to be treated might just help keep you both on even ground.





GET BACKUP

If your other colleagues or even supervisors have experienced similar situations in the past, you might be able to get some valuable advice on mitigating the issue.

KEEP IT SECRET

As tempting as it seems, the last thing you want to do is go public with your grievances. Any issues should remain between you and your coworker, with your manager optionally added in as well. This makes it easier to put the past behind you when it's all over, and it helps everyone save face when you have to work in close quarters again later.

TALK TO YOUR SUPERVISOR

You don't want to jump to this option right off the bat, but if you've been playing the role of a diplomat with no results, it might be time to bring out the big guns. Sit down with your manager to report your coworker's behavior—with documentation, ideally—and see what can be done.

IGNORE THEM

If you've done your best to resolve the situation, and you've followed all the steps above without results, the best way to retain your own peace of mind might just be by ignoring your colleague entirely.

HOPEFULLY, THESE TIPS WILL HELP YOU RESOLVE EVEN THE MOST DIFFICULT SITUATION WITH YOUR COLLEAGUE. AND NO MATTER THE OUTCOME, TRY TO ENSURE THAT TOXIC WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR DOESN'T AFFECT YOUR PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH: LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO STRESS OVER FRUSTRATING COWORKERS!

For tips specific to your work environment, connect with a **BUSINESS LIFE DESIGNER TODAY.**