

WILY MANAGER

*Just-in-Time
Management
Advice*

Dealing With Difficult Employees



This is one of a series of booklets available at www.wilymanager.com

Leaders and managers in today's business environment face a number of challenges on a daily basis that affect their ability to execute their plans. While plant, property and equipment can and do require managerial effort and time, **dealing with people** is by far the most time consuming and important part of a leader's job.

No employee is more time consuming than an employee exhibiting difficult behavior. How a leader deals with (or fails to deal with) difficult behavior will determine not only the success of the business, but also how the manager will spend his time and effort. In today's knowledge intensive business world, a leader must be well equipped to deal with

difficult behaviours.

Leaders in all organizations experience similar **types of difficult employees**. Participants are encouraged to learn more about dealing with specific types of difficult behaviors using the approaches outlined in [Appendices A-I](#).

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When Have YOU Been Difficult?

When leaders deal with difficult behavior there is often a silent wish that accompanies the reaction – ‘why could everyone not just behave rationally and reasonably?’ An honest sentiment, to be sure – dealing with difficult behavior is not one of the more enjoyable aspects of leadership. In reality, however, **all of us are difficult** at many times during our lives.

Sometimes we are difficult as the customer in the grocery store when the item we specifically came in for is not there. Perhaps we are over-competitive on our recreational sports team after a more difficult day at work. Some people become difficult to deal with as soon as they get into a car. Others reserve their difficult behavior for the workplace.

The bottom line is that *everyone* is difficult at one point or other, both in their professional and personal lives. Why do we become difficult at

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times? Quite simply, in many circumstances, **being difficult works**. It usually gets us what we want. If we complain loud enough, the hotel clerk will upgrade our room. If we don't back down, our spouse will give up and we will get what we want.

In progressive organizations, it is the leader's job to create a different path to problem resolution than enabling difficult behavior. As long as difficult behavior will get employees what they want, then managers can expect to have to deal with even more difficult behavior. If employees can be shown that difficult behavior will not only fail, but will create other unwanted consequences, then the behavior will end.

This is the leader's challenge and the leader's responsibility.

The leader must ask himself, “Would I deal with this behavior the same way if it was a different person”?

Why Bother to Deal with Difficult Behavior?

As noted above, failing to deal with difficult behavior breeds *even more* difficult behavior. Therefore, dealing with the problem behavior does not become optional unless you want to be entirely consumed by it. However there are even more compelling reasons to effectively and consistently address problem behavior.

Most businesses **rely heavily on people** to get things done. In developed countries, businesses have become increasingly knowledge intensive, which means the workers are skilled and likely in short demand. Unfortunately, it is quite likely if you have a regularly difficult employee that you need that person to perform well. If you have a few problem employees, it is likely that you need all of them, and that your business may not be viable without them.

Dealing with difficult behavior is an issue of key business competitiveness.

Guidelines for Dealing with *any* Difficult Behavior

Specific examples of difficult behavior (along with the individual methods for coping with them) are described in detail in the [Appendix](#). However there are a few guidelines to keep in mind regardless of what type of difficult behavior you encounter.

Focus on the Specific Behavior, Not on the Person or Personalities

It is easy to be caught in personality conflicts. The leader must ask himself, ‘Would I deal with this behavior the same way if it was a different person?’ Every effort must be made to remove personalities from the situation.

Identify the Type of Behavior, and Build a Coping Strategy BEFORE Reacting

Often when we react, we do so without premeditating potential consequences of our acts. When confronted with difficult behavior, a leader’s first job is become analytical as to

Continued on next page

Guidelines for Dealing With any Difficult Behavior, continued

the reason and the timing of the problem. By identifying the behavior, and using some of the techniques described here to plan a response, a manager is much more likely to be successful. A leader may choose to go away and deal with the problem behavior an hour later, or perhaps just take a couple of minutes to build a coping plan in his mind.

Attempt to Understand the Root Cause of the Behavior

Why would this person react this way at this time? To guess at the possible root cause of the problem will assist in forming a coping strategy. The easiest way to quickly conduct a root cause analysis is to ask why, and to the answer you give, ask why again. To the answer to the second question, again ask why, and so on until you believe you have reached the root cause.

A fishbone diagram, or other methods of root cause analysis can also be of help here.

Avoid Public Showdowns

When emotional conflicts play out in front of an audience, there is rarely a winner. At times, leaders will have to deal with difficult behavior in front of others; if that is the case, it is extremely important to be respectful and allow the other person to 'save face'. A manager can be far more effective at dealing with difficult behavior if s/he can deal with the problem employee one on one.

Determine if the Conversation Can Continue at That Time.

If you do find yourself in a highly emotional situation, whether it be in front of others or not, you do have the option of terminating the conversation at that time, and following up when it is more appropriate. It may be as easy as saying something such as, "I am quite upset right now, and I think you are as well. It may be better for both of us to reflect on this and carry on this conversation at the end of our shift today". It is then imperative to follow up when you have said you will.

Continued on next page

Related Wily Manager Topic Bundles

"You're Fired!" – How to Fire an Employee

Conflict Management

The Conflict Dynamics Profile – A Conflict Assessment Tool

Hidden Conflict – How to Surface Conflict so You Can Deal With It

Team Conflict Resolution

Giving and Receiving Feedback

How to Get Good Information From Others: Asking the Right Questions

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Guidelines for Dealing With Any Difficult Behavior, continued

Be aware of the Impact of the Behavior on You.

A leader should be self-aware at all times, but particularly when dealing with difficult behavior. If you know you are prone to anger, then you need to understand the warning signs that you are becoming angry. Sometimes the negativity of a problem employee will transfer to you if you are not aware that it is a risk and that it may be happening. A manager needs to insulate herself from difficult behavior to be better able to correct the problem.

Don't Make Excuses for the Person.

Oftentimes leaders will tacitly approve of poor behavior because of the person involved. Everyone knows a brilliant technician who regularly has temper tantrums at work. When confronted, the leader may say, "Oh that's just the way Larry is." This type of thinking signals to all others that difficult behavior is acceptable. It also puts the manager and the organization at great risk if Larry's behavior ever escalates into violence.

Choose to Do Something.

Another way to tacitly approve of difficult behavior is to do *nothing* about it. There are times when it may be more prudent to delay your response, but a good leader will not ignore difficult behavior.

Not all the Turtles Make it to the Sea

Nature is merciless. As humans living in the developed world, we are often sheltered from the harsh realities that face other humans and virtually all other creatures on the planet. In organizational life, we are even more sheltered because historically, if things do not work out well, the organization will shuffle a person to a different portfolio or cover for them in some other way, so that difficult decisions never have to be made.

At what point however, should an organization make the decision to sever its relationship with an individual? When, should a poor performer be fired? This is obviously a highly subjective question with no single right answer that would work in any situation. Every organization should choose for itself, however, when it must let people go.

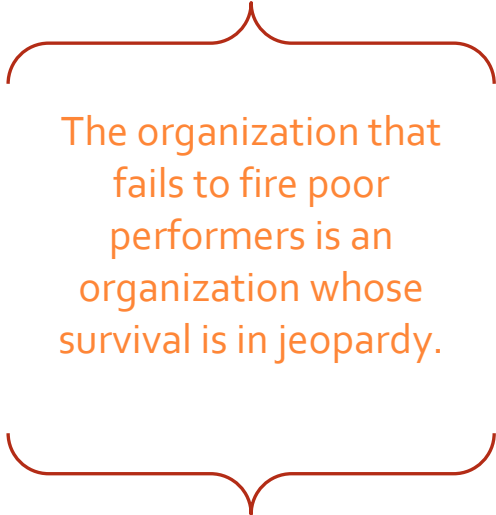
For many companies, there are labor laws and union agreements that will have much to say about the circumstances of terminating an employee. However, as a leader, when do you make the decision to terminate a poor performer? Organizational leaders have a responsibility to maintain and improve the health of the organization. In the most progressive workplaces this is done through the effective management of human effort where both the organization and the individual benefit from a symbiotic relationship.

Even in high performing organizations there will occasionally be an individual who does not perform as required. A good leader, like

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Not all the Turtles Make it to the Sea, continued

a good teacher, will devote extra time and effort to the individual to help him improve his performance. Clear performance expectations are put in place and confirmed with the individual. The individual is consulted on the performance criteria and specific milestones of what must be accomplished. Regular feedback, both formal and informal, is regularly and professionally given. Skill gaps are identified, and training and development offered to assist the individual improve their performance. Employee and Family Assistance Programs are well established and accessible to the individual in case something from outside the workplace is affecting his ability to perform. Any and all successes are celebrated and positively reinforced. The consequences for both positive and negative performance are both real and understood. **The leader has given the individual every opportunity to succeed.**



The organization that fails to fire poor performers is an organization whose survival is in jeopardy.

Sometimes, however, even if a leader has done everything correctly, and done his best to enable the employee to succeed, the employee fails and must be fired.

The employee must be fired out of fairness to everyone else that works in the organization and *does* perform well. The employee must be fired out of fairness to the shareholders who have risked their capital and pay the manager to use that capital well. The employee must be fired out of fairness to that individual employee who may have a real opportunity to be successful in an alternative line of work. The employee must be fired in fairness to his immediate coworkers who have had to compensate for his poor performance daily.

The employee must be fired because not **all the turtles make it to the sea.**

An organization that fails to fire poor performers is an organization whose survival is in jeopardy.

Related Topic Bundles

[“You’re Fired!” – How to Fire an Employee](#)

[Conflict Management](#)

[The Conflict Dynamics Profile – A Conflict Assessment Tool](#)

[Hidden Conflict – How to Surface Conflict so You Can Deal With It](#)

[Team Conflict Resolution](#)

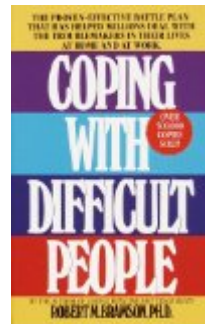
[Giving and Receiving Feedback](#)

[How to Get Good Information From Others: Asking the Right Questions](#)

Wily Manager Picks

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Robert M. Bramson



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Appendix: Tools and Resources

- A. [How to deal with people who love to ARGUE](#)
- B. [How to deal with with people who feel unreasonably ENTITLED](#)
- C. [How to deal with people who think they KNOW IT ALL](#)
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- I. [Recommended Resources](#) – where to find out even more about dealing with difficult employees

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Appendix A

How to deal with people who love to ARGUE

Symptoms

Arguers are those people that can be consistently counted on to throw up roadblocks for any and all courses of action. They will argue whether or not they agree or disagree with the issue at hand, and may take opposite positions on the same issue at different times if it suits them.

Arguers may range in competence from the absolute top of the range to grossly incompetent. They almost always have disrespect for authority, or at the very least the one they are arguing with. The Arguer works hard to ensure that s/he always has the last word.

Motivation

The goal of the arguer is to win or to gain attention for oneself. It is not to improve the situation. It is not to suggest an alternative course of action. The arguer wants to win, and preferably to win in front of an audience. It is important to understand this motivation because there are other employees who will question things constructively attempting to make things better. A good leader will encourage people to question things, but the motives behind the questioning are entirely different than that of the Arguer.

Dealing with Arguers

Dealing effectively with Arguers puts Leaders and Managers in the difficult position of having to stand up to the Arguer *without* getting into a fight. Listen calmly to the case the Arguer is presenting, and then paraphrase what you have heard back to her. Make sure you do NOT agree with the arguer or defend your position, especially in front of others. If you are conducting the conversation in front of a crowd, tell the Arguer that you will follow up with him individually afterwards so as not use everyone's time.

Prior to meeting the Arguer in private, make sure you get all the details and facts of the issue that they have brought forward straight. Once you have the Arguer in a one on one setting, repeat that you have heard their complaint without apologizing or defending. Ask them for their desired outcome. Often they will not have one, because it is the Arguers' desire to argue, not to move to resolution on an issue. S/he may say something such as, "It's not my job to come up with solutions, that's your job".

Such comments you should ignore, and ask again what would solve the problem for them. If they offer a viable solution, accept it. If they offer an unacceptable solution, reject it and explain why it is not feasible.

Once the Arguer is in private, and you have not gotten any response from them in terms of alternatives, you may want to consider confronting them with the fact that you believe they were more interested in arguing than in solving a problem. They will, of course, deny such a claim, but you will have made your point, and the Arguer may think twice before being difficult again.

Appendix B

How to Deal With People Who Feel Unreasonably ENTITLED

Symptoms

The entitled are much like a spoiled child on Christmas morning: no matter how much they are given, they will want more. These attitudes are particularly ingrained in many governmental organizations where profit and production imperatives are not well understood. In an entitlement culture, people do not see the link between their own greed and the overall health of the organization.

Motivation

The entitled do not think logically or rationally about the nature of their entitlement mentality – they simply want more. Lecturing the Entitled on the cost of things is not likely a successful strategy in dealing with them, because they are not rationally motivated.

Dealing with the Entitled

In many ways dealing with the Entitled is the most challenging of difficult behaviors. You can imagine a spoiled child that has never heard the word, “no” before, and what his or her reaction to it would be. Sometimes a parent or authority figure would say, “We can’t afford that!” The spoiled child after a lifetime of entitlement would of course not believe such a claim, even if it were true.

Entitlement is much more than a difficult behavior. It is a deep-rooted attitude that can take months and years to correct. The best method is one of prevention in not allowing entitlement mentality to develop in the first place. However for those who exhibit the behavior, there are steps that can be taken to identify and begin to modify it.

First, when a statement of entitlement is made, do not react to it. If it is a statement made in passing then it can likely be safely ignored indefinitely. If it is a statement of demand, then paraphrase the demand back to the Entitled. Next ask the Entitled why they want what they do. Likely, you will not get any better reason than that they want what they are asking for. Next, you want relate the situation back to the larger picture, where giving them what they ask for would necessitate doing the same thing for everyone else. The entitled has very little interest in anyone other than himself, and will tell you so. Your last, best, and final answer must be “no”.

Until you break the cycle of the spoiled child, the Entitled’s behavior will not change. Again, this is a long journey, and very little will change with only one or two conversations. As a leader in your business, it is your responsibility to change behavior for the good of the business longer term.

A conversation between a leader and the Entitled may look like the following:

“ So you want the GI Joe with the Kung Fu Grip?”

(Continued on next page)

Appendix B (Continued)

How to Deal With People Who Feel Unreasonably ENTITLED

“Yes”

“Why?”

“Because I’m entitled to it. If I don’t get one, it’s because you’re trying to screw me out of it”

“Actually, that’s not true, but it is my job to be fair to everyone, and it’s not reasonable to buy a GI Joe with a Kung Fu Grip for the entire plant-site”

“Then just buy me one.”

“I’m sorry, I will not do that.”

“I’ll grieve”

“That’s your option, if you choose to do so, but the answer is still “no”.”

Appendix C

How to Deal With People Who Think They KNOW IT ALL

Symptoms

The Know it All is similar to the Arguer in so far as s/he will challenge authority. However, rather than arguing for its own purpose, the Know it All will bring facts and data to support his arguments. Sometimes the facts and data are reliable, but other times they are embellishments or opinions that are made to look like facts and data.

Know it Alls are often highly competent, yet are very resistant to feedback. Occasionally a Know it All actually knows very little, and in such a case is very easy to deal with if you know what you're talking about.

Motivation

The Know it All is motivated largely by the need for attention, like the Arguer. Unlike the Arguer, the Know it All, may however, have a genuine desire to improve the situation. The Know it All often feels undervalued or under-appreciated.

Dealing with a Know it All

First you must determine whether the Know it All you're dealing with actually knows what he's talking about. If s/he does not, you need to get the Know it All alone, gently give him the correct facts and then refocus him on the task at hand. It is much easier to deal with one of these "Know it All wanna-be's".

One of the reasons an actual Know it All is difficult to deal with is because they are often correct. Therefore, the first part of coping with a Know it All is to ensure you have your facts straight. If the Know it All has greater expertise in the area you are discussing, you are at a disadvantage. You should seek out the help of someone who is equally as knowledgeable as the Know it All.

Second, you must allow the Know it All to be heard. Because they feel they are undervalued, the act of genuinely listening to them will go a long way in diffusing the situation. To reinforce with the Know it All that s/he has been heard, paraphrase what they have said back to them in neutral language. Ensure that you do not repeat or add any emotive words to their statements.

Next, allow the Know it All to feel like somewhat of an authority by phrasing your objections in the form of a question. Such a technique is as confrontational, and you are legitimately recognizing their expertise in the area.

After considering the Know it All's perspective, agree on a way forward. Ask the Know it All for his

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Appendix C (Continued)

How to Deal With People Who Think They KNOW IT ALL

support of that plan. If it is what s/he suggested, support will be easily won. If it is not exactly what the Know it All wanted, then support will be more elusive.

If the Know it All is in a position of leadership then it is critical that his support be in place. It is not acceptable in any situation for a leader to go back to his direct reports and not support a decision that has been made higher up. People should be encouraged to raise questions and objections and then lobby for their viewpoint. Ultimately however, as leaders, they must support the final decision.

It is a leader's job to execute the strategy of the organization. If a Know it All is unwilling to do so, then s/he should be removed from any position of leadership.

Appendix D

How to Deal With Chronic PESSIMISTS or BLAMERS

Symptoms

The Pessimist is the one who will always find the cloud in the silver lining. They are always negative, and usually highly resistant to change. The Pessimist can be both suspicious and subversive. At his worst, the Pessimist is merely apathetic, at his most extreme s/he can undermine and even sabotage the business. Cynicism is usually a key component Pessimists' repertoire. Often the Pessimist will be a constant complainer, and is rarely accountable for her own behavior. If the Pessimist can find someone else to blame for her own mistakes s/he will usually do so.

Motivation

The Pessimist feels absolutely powerless about her surroundings, and works hard to ensure that all others s/he has contact with will feel equally powerless. Ironically, the Pessimist tries to achieve power by trying to convince others of their own powerlessness. The Pessimist also has a great fear of being accountable for anything, and will work hard to avoid taking responsibility for anything.

Dealing with Pessimists

As a leader, you may or may not be able to change a Pessimist. Often their negativity is deeply ingrained into their person, and will not be changed. The most important job of the leader is to not allow the Pessimist to affect the others in the workplace. It is important for the leader not to be influenced himself by the negativity, and to deal with the Pessimist before s/he infects others with the negativity disease. The best a good leader may be able to do is to control some of the symptoms of the Pessimist to minimize the damage they are able to do in the workplace.

When dealing with a Pessimist in general, a leader needs to be very proactive. There will always be a number of excuses for why work is not done, which the Pessimist will always claim is beyond his control. It is important to have consistent one on one meetings with the Pessimist to have detailed conversations about the progress of his work. Ask them to set clear objectives and deadlines for achieving those objectives that you will sign off on. Listen carefully to the Pessimists many objections, and make sure that you mitigate any legitimate concerns. When the Pessimist fails to achieve a mutually agreed upon task however, then the consequences must be real and clear. The Pessimist must understand that regardless of his negativity, he will be accountable.

In dealing with a specific symptom of the Pessimist, a leader must quickly diffuse the situation. It is imperative not to argue with the Pessimist because this is what she is hoping to achieve. Ask the Pessimist for an alternative course of action without being sarcastic or condescending. You may have to ask more

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Appendix D (Continued)

How to Deal With Chronic PESSIMISTS or BLAMERS

than once, as the Pessimist is used to just being critical of plans as opposed to offering alternatives. Ask the Pessimist what the worst thing that could happen by going ahead as suggested. In most circumstances the worst-case scenario is really not bad.

Next try to give the Pessimist a specific assignment that relates to addressing the objections s/he raised. Remember the Pessimist will resist any form accountability at all costs, so her performance will have to be very carefully managed.

One thing you do not want to do with a Pessimist is tell them to “think positive!”, and all their worries will disappear. This is disrespectful and not helpful advice to the Pessimist. The Pessimist has become that way after a lifetime of conditioning, and one comment will not turn his life around. Pessimists can best be helped by guiding them to achievement and assisting them in overcoming barriers so they can begin to understand they are not as helpless as they think they are.

Appendix E

How to Deal With People Who DON'T WANT TO WORK

Symptoms

It is important to differentiate those employees who legitimately cease work for the appropriate reasons as opposed to the frivolous abuse of the rules that the Show Stopper will engage in. When referring to 'Show Stoppers' below we will be talking about the abusive, frivolous behavior, not the conscientious employee with a legitimate safety or other important concern.

Show Stoppers are those who will go to whatever length is necessary to stop any work from happening. Sometimes this is done through gross exaggeration of a circumstance, while other times it is by derailing a meeting or a plan to ensure that by the time things are set right again, there will be no time to work.

Sometimes the Show Stopper will use safety, union or other company rules to stop work. A good leader must know the difference between a legitimate stoppage of work for appropriate reasons, and the irresponsible acts of a Show Stopper.

Motivation

Show Stoppers want to avoid working. Often they could be categorized as lazy. Using safety, union or other organizational rules to hide behind is also a play for power. They feel powerless, and this is their one opportunity to have some power, which they desperately crave.

Dealing with Show Stoppers

Leaders dealing with Show Stoppers must know the rules of their game better than the Show Stopper does. If the Show Stopper has used safety rules to stop work before, then the leader must come prepared with a better understanding of those rules than the Show Stopper. However, once armed with good information, the leader must be very careful not to end up fighting with the Show Stopper.

After the Show Stopper makes a statement regarding stopping work, the leader must resist the overwhelming urge to tell the Show Stopper the way it actually is, and that s/he should get back to work. Instead, the leader should take the Show Stopper's concern seriously, and make sure that the Show Stopper is aware that s/he is being taken seriously. The only exception to this step is if the scenario were so ridiculous it would be beyond reason to be treated as serious.

Next, the leader should manage the conversation in such a way that the Show Stopper is engaged in the correction of the problem that s/he brought forward. Suggest a plan by which the situation could be addressed. Agree on what needs to be done immediately, and what can be deferred to a more appropriate time.

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Appendix E (Continued)

How to Deal With People Who DON'T WANT TO WORK

If the situation is completely unreasonable, then the leader should ask to speak privately with the Show Stopper. Once in private, the leader should confront the Show Stopper with the fact that situation s/he has created is completely unreasonable. If the Show Stopper still refuses to work it becomes an issue of subordination in which case the progressive discipline process must be followed.

In the case where a unionized Show Stopper threatens to grieve the requirement to do the work as directed, a leader should recognize her right to do so, but not allow her to avoid the work. A conversation with a Show Stopper in such a circumstance may go as follows:

“I won’t paint that wall green, because I only paint with blue paint”

“It’s not your choice as to what colour to paint, you are a painter, and as such you are required to paint.”

“I only ever paint with blue paint, and if you make me paint that wall green, I’ll file a grievance.”

“You certainly have the right to do so, however right now you are required to paint that wall green, as you’ve been instructed to do. If you feel strongly about it after you have finished, you can grieve it then.”

If there is any doubt in the leader’s mind as to the validity of situation at hand, then it is imperative that the leader takes no action without further clarifying the situation or requesting expert help from other parts of the organization.

Appendix F

How to Deal With the Unmotivated

Symptoms

Employees who are unable to get things done fail to do so for one of two simple reasons: either they are not competent to get the work done; or they are uncommitted to getting the work done. The assumption when talking about the Unmotivated is that they are able to do more and better work, they are simply unwilling. A leader's first priority when dealing with under performers, however, is to make this determination. Do not treat a poor performer as unmotivated, if all they need is some training to bridge a skill gap.

The Unmotivated are simply those who will do the absolute minimum required of them without getting fired. They offer no extra or discretionary effort, and when the boss is not looking, they will do even less. The Unmotivated are never accountable for anything, and while they may not actively sabotage the business, they will do their very best to sail far below the radar.

Sometimes the unmotivated are merely putting in time until they move on to the next phase in their life or career. Other times they are simply slow and apathetic.

The challenge for the leader is to determine whether s/he can affect a change in an Unmotivated employee and whether or not the effort is worth the time that it will take to turn that employee around.

(Un)Motivation

Contrary to much of the hype in pop-management literature, behavioral scientists have proven that motivation is intrinsic to people. In other words, a leader cannot actually motivate his or her people, but rather only create conditions under which people will be motivated.

The Unmotivated are obviously not high performers, but in many cases they may not be the lowest performers in a leader's work group either. The Unmotivated are usually willing to do the minimum required to get by, whereas other difficult behavior types may fail to meet this minimum standard.

How to Handle the Unmotivated

The first thing a leader should try to discover when dealing with the Unmotivated is the nature of the condition. How long has the person been unmotivated? Has a recent change contributed to the behavior? Do you see them actively engaged in some tasks, while entirely disengaged at others?

If a leader can pinpoint one or more sources that may be contributing to unmotivated behavior, then s/he may be able to address those conditions. For example, if an employee is entirely unmotivated in one part of the job, yet performs well in another aspect, the leader may be able to assign work in

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Appendix F (Continued)

How to Deal With the Unmotivated

the area that the employee shows more inclination. It is also possible that lack of motivation has been brought on by some change in the employee's personal life. In such a case, EFAP or other resources can be recommended to assist the employee.

Other times, employees seem to be perpetually unmotivated. Regardless of the underlying reasons, the Unmotivated need to have their performance carefully managed and well monitored. First, a leader must make sure that the expectations are absolutely clear. Rather than tell the Unmotivated to do this, then do this, and so on, it is important to have more of a dialogue. Give the Unmotivated a sampling of the things you need them to do, and ask them what they think is most important. If it is possible and practical, have them choose some part of the work they will do. Ask the Unmotivated to commit to reasonable timeframes for completion of tasks. The Leader must then hold them accountable for meeting those time frames. Give the Unmotivated plenty of feedback, and ensure there are consequences in place for both good and poor performance.

Appendix G

How to Deal With a BULLY

Symptoms

A Bully is someone who does his or her best to intimidate others. These people aim to win at any cost. Bullies is easy to identify because they are usually loud, aggressive, and often hostile. They have a need to have a high degree of control in every situation. Bullies are concerned with the power dynamics in any situation, and usually try to manipulate things to give themselves as much power as possible.

A Bully behaves very impulsively and rarely thinks through the consequences of the behavior on herself or others. They are highly suspicious and generally do not trust anyone, nor are they trusted by anyone else. A Bully may react to a threatening situation by behaving in a way described as either Fire or Ice.

Fire:

The Bully who reacts like fire will explode when s/he is threatened. The explosion is accompanied or characterized by tantrums, threats, shouting, anger and intimidation. The behavior is highly emotional and uncomfortable for others.

Ice:

The Bully who reacts like ice is far less emotional than the fire reaction. This Bully will react to a threat by making sarcastic comments, sabotaging a meeting, belittling others, and they often deliver their abuse with a smile.

Both types of Bullies will use facts selectively to reinforce their arguments.

Motivation

The Bully is entirely motivated by power, control, and fear. The Bully wants to be in absolute control in all circumstances, and has great fear of not having this control.

How to Handle Bullies

The first determination a leader must make when dealing with a Bully is whether the behavior could be classified under guidelines for violence in the workplace. Certainly any physical intimidation or conflict would fall into this category, but it is worth being familiar with the definitions of violence in the workplace as they are described in your jurisdiction. If the behavior qualifies as such, then the specific steps that have been articulated for your company must be adhered to.

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Appendix G (Continued)

How to Deal With a BULLY

For other aggressive behaviors that do not qualify as violence in the workplace, there are coping methods to deal with the Bully. To deal with the Bully, you must carefully balance not allowing yourself to be intimidated by him, with ensuring you do not escalate the situation by being overly assertive.

It is important to stand up to the Bully, and not allow yourself to show any sign of weakness or fear, because doing so will allow him to accelerate his attack. This can be accomplished by carefully focusing on the issue at hand, and by controlling your own urge to react.

Dealing with Fire:

This Bully is prone to highly emotional behavior. To effectively deal with these conditions, leaders must detach themselves from their own emotional urge to react. Also, as with any highly emotional behavior, a leader must make the determination as to whether to continue the conversation at that time or to defer it until tempers have cooled.

When a leader addresses the Bully, she must acknowledge his issue without conceding any ground. This can be done by repeating the argument back in neutral language. You should do this without evaluating their position (either positively or negatively), and without sarcasm or embellishment.

Another coping step for dealing with Bullies prone to fire is to simply let them run out of steam. By sitting quietly and listening to their argument, a leader can likely better diffuse the situation than by attempting to either defend or refute the Bully's position. When you do decide to speak, it is advisable to use open-ended questions such as the following to help diffuse his anger:

“How would you suggest we handle this?”

“What do you think would happen if we did that?”

“How do you think others would react to such a course of action?”

“Are there any potential risks or downfalls to your suggestion?”

Dealing with Ice:

The Bully who becomes very cool when on the offensive, should be confronted directly about his behavior. This type of Bully will make jokes or seemingly ambivalent comments that carry an undertone of dissent. It is important for leaders to surface these undertones.

This can be done by stating calmly and clearly that you believe you are under attack and then asking the Bully to confirm or deny it. If he affirms the attack, then you have an invitation to discuss the actual issue at hand in a calm and professional manner. If the Bully denies the attack, then s/he will likely be much more careful about her comments to avoid being exposed again.

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Appendix G (Continued)

How to Deal With a BULLY

When dealing with both Fire and Ice it is important to take the feedback seriously and carefully consider the Bully's position. S/he may have an important contribution to make, but merely have difficulty in articulating that contribution. Secondly, it is important to have all the facts and relevant information available when dealing with a Bully. He will selectively use facts to help make his case. A leader must make sure s/he is equally prepared, and even defer the confrontation if necessary in order to gather the relevant facts.

Appendix H

How to Deal With People who ALWAYS AGREE and people who can NEVER MAKE A DECISION

Symptoms

Agreers and Undecideds are two similar types of difficult behavior that often stem from a lack of competence. Both of these behavior types are typically people that are very easy to get along with and are generally well liked. Often both these behavior types will take on far more than they can handle due to their inability to say “no”.

The Agreers will never speak up if something is bothering them. Often quiet by nature, they simply want to keep everyone happy, and will avoid any potential for conflict. Ironically, this avoidance of conflict often has the opposite effect for Agreers – by trying to keep all people happy all the time, everyone ends up being disappointed.

Undecideds are also avoiders, but not necessarily of conflict. They are highly risk averse, and will put off making any decision or taking any action as long as possible. Much like the Agreer, this behavior has the ironic opposite effect -- by trying to control every aspect of a decision, and agonizing over every detail in order to avoid risk, they expose themselves to a great deal of risk by failing to take action. They do not understand that taking no action carries some inherent risk.

Agreers and Undecideds are two difficult behaviors that often go unaddressed because the symptoms only appear over time, and the individuals are generally well liked. However, if a leader fails to deal with this type of difficult behavior, the results are every bit as damaging as more evident difficult behaviors.

Motivation

Both Agreers and Undecideds want to avoid conflict at all costs. They hate to say “no”, and want people to like them. The Agreer has a very high need to be liked by everyone. Undecideds will often have an obsessive need to gather data and facts to avoid taking any risks.

How to Handle Agreers and Undecideds

Agreers and Undecideds are generally positive people, and as such will likely respond positively to feedback. They will then go back to doing what they have always done – consistently fail to deliver upon expectations. Both these behavior types require careful management of performance.

The Agreer will need to have feedback extracted by a leader. Their default position is to tell you that everything is fine. It is important as a leader to not accept this. Ask specific questions to try to get the

(Continued on next page)

Appendix H (Continued)

How to Deal With People who ALWAYS AGREE and people who can NEVER MAKE A DECISION

Agreer's true opinion. Another technique is to give the Agreeer a binary choice between two alternatives and force them to choose between the two. Again, left to their own devices, they will agree to both – even if they are opposites.

A leader can use similar coping strategies for the Undecided. These people have learned that decisions left long enough need not be made – an ideal outcome for them. It is important to set specific deadlines for Undecideds to get back to you by. It is even more important to hold them accountable for those deadlines. It is the leader's job to help the Undecided understand that by making no decision, they are choosing a course of action, and it may not be the right one.

Both these behavior types are easy to overlook, due to the more subtle nature of the difficult behavior. However, it is critical that leaders address these behaviors, and hold people accountable.

Appendix I

Where to Get More Information

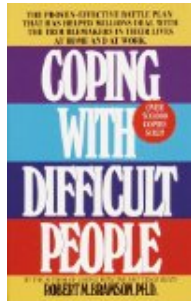
Coping with Difficult People: The Proven-Effective Battle Plan That Has Helped Millions Deal With the Troublemakers in Their Lives at Home and at Work

Robert M. Bramson

Bosses, friends, family members, they've made your life hell -- until now! Based on fourteen years of research and observation, Dr. Robert Bramson's proven-effective techniques are guaranteed to help you right the balance and take charge of your life. Learn how to:

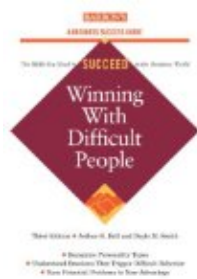
- Stand up to anyone -- without fighting
- Blunt a sniper's attack
- Get a clam to talk
- Cut off a Sherman tank at the pass
- Manage bulldozers
- Get stallers off the dime
- Move a complainer into a problem-solving mode.

Learn the six basic steps that allow you to cope with just about anyone. Reclaim the power the rightfully belongs to you in any relationship!



Winning With Difficult People (Arthur H. Bell and Dayle M. Smith)

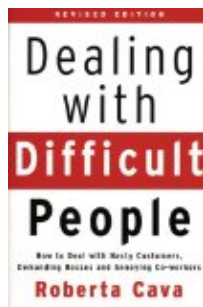
"The authors point out twelve difficult personality types that can be found in business environments, then offer tips to help readers understand what makes them tick and how the rest of us can best cope with them. Advice includes methods for transforming potential problems into "getting-ahead" advantages."



Dealing with Difficult People: How to Deal With Demanding Customers, Nasty Bosses, and Annoying Co-Workers

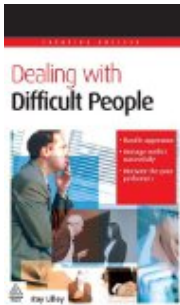
(Roberta Cava)

"Difficult people are the ones who: - Make us lose our cool - Force us to do things we don't want to do - Prevent us from doing what we want or need to do - Use coercion or manipulation to get their way - Make us feel guilty if we don't "go along" - Make us feel anxious, upset, frustrated, depressed, jealous, inferior or defeated - Make us do their share of the work. A difficult person, in short, is someone who creates difficulties for others. Dealing with Difficult People is the revised and updated edition of



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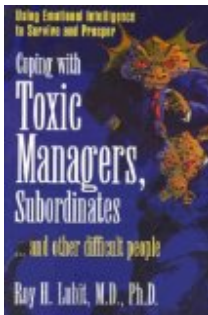
Appendix I, continued



the international best seller, updated to reflect recent changes in the workplace and designed to benefit anyone who has ever had to deal with angry, rude, impatient or aggressive people."

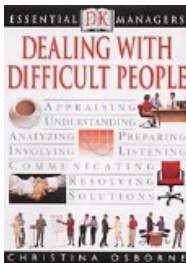
Dealing With Difficult People (Roy Lilley)

"Suitable for anyone who has to deal with difficult colleagues or the public. It will help you to enjoy difficult people: unlock them, influence them and improve their performance"



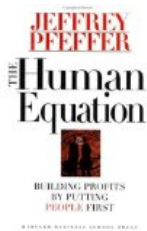
Coping With Toxic Managers, Subordinates...and Other Difficult People: Using Emotional Intelligence to Survive and Prosper (Roy H. Lubit)

"Some people are toxic: narcissistic, aggressive, inflexible, unethical, ready to scapegoat, capable of transforming any workplace into an unending nightmare. How do you cope with such individuals, while protecting both your career AND your sanity? Simplistic, cookie-cutter solutions don't work. In Coping with Toxic Managers, world-renowned psychiatrist and organizational consultant Roy Lubit shows you techniques that will. Drawing on his extensive experience as both a mental health professional and an organizational consultant for PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Lubit offers concrete, proven advice for subordinates, colleagues and superiors alike. You learn what's really driving your toxic manager or subordinate... how to cope with the emotional stress of dealing with them... and how to create a strategy that reflects their individual personality, while drawing on today's powerful new insights into emotional intelligence. The techniques Lubit teaches apply to personal relationships with toxic individuals as well."



Dealing with Difficult People (Christina Osborne)

"In this work, bite-sized chunks of information equip managers with the skills to meet new challenges, improve efficiency and be successful. "Dealing with Difficult People" offers practical solutions for solving disagreements between colleagues, supervisors and customers."

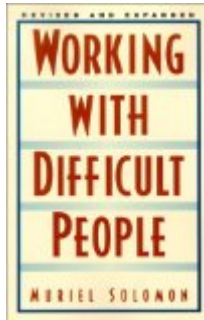


The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First (Jeffrey Pfeffer)

"Jeffrey Pfeffer argues that instead of cutting costs as a means to increase profits, companies should focus more on building revenue by relying on solid people-management skills. Through dozens of examples, Pfeffer demonstrates that successful companies worry more about people and the competence in their organizations than they do about having the right strategy. Pfeffer contends that the strategy part is relatively easy--it's the day-to-day execution that's hard. Companies that understand the relationship between people and profits are the ones that usually win in the long run."

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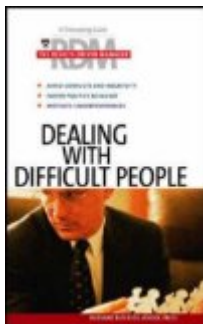
Appendix I, continued

**Working with Difficult People** (Muriel Solomon)

"Have you ever agonized over how to handle a bully in the workplace--with pie-in-the-face retribution or a saintly smile? "The 100 people you'll meet on these pages," Muriel Solomon teases in her introduction to this hard-hitting and entertaining guidebook, "should be founding members of E.O.O.--Equal Opportunity Offenders. They show no bias. They are as obnoxious to their bosses as they are to their bookkeepers." But the teasing segues into practical advice for those seeking to do their work in--if not kind circumstances--at least unthreatening ones.

Designed as an at-a-glance reference tool, this 10-part guide describes 10 kinds of culprits, from tyrants, bullies, and sadists to the pushy and presumptuous to connivers and camouflagers. Each type is first defined, allowing for a peek inside the heads of both victim and victimizer and offering a helpful strategy for facilitating tactful dialogues that serves as excellent advice for diffusing workplace tensions and hostilities.

You may recognize these types as thorns in your side or--worse--real threats to your sense of well-being and work performance. This reference book packs a wallop, not only restoring your self-esteem but allowing you to create better relationships with the people at work who make your life miserable. Working with Difficult People may not disarm the despicable, but it will supply you with the ammunition you need to put the control back in your camp."

**Dealing with Difficult People** (Harvard Business School Press)

"This guide will help managers develop the skills to deal with difficult people and personalities and learn to work productively with them. Readers will learn to manage anger and negativity in the workplace, understand how to use feedback to improve a situation and know when and how to hold people accountable for their actions. It helps you: avoid conflicts and negativity; foster positive behaviour; and motivate underperformers".

Articles

Frost, Peter; The Toxic Handler: Organizational Hero – and Casualty Harvard Business Review, July/August 1999 (Harvard Business School Press).

Morris, Mark; Genius at Work: A Conversation With Mark Morris (Harvard Business Review, October 2001)

Waldroop, James; Managing Away Bad Habits Harvard Business Review, September/October 2000 (Harvard Business School Press)

Weeks, Holly; Taking the Stress Out of Stressful Conversation, Harvard Business Review, July – August 2001 (Harvard Business School Press)