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3 Strategies to Managing Rude Co-Workers by Jimmie Flores

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The pressures of work can take a toll on us. Some people are unable to handle the pressing deadlines or the increased workload, and soon they channel their frustration and anger to co-workers. Of course, there are some individuals who donâ€™t require an excuse to be rude, but the pressures of day-to-day activities often trigger unprofessional and inconsiderate behavior.

No one has a right to insult you, and you should never put up with it. How you handle the situation is important. In some cases, you can ignore a rude comment, but most cases require that you confront the problem. We are more likely to respond inappropriately when caught off-guard, but there are strategies to handle an acute episode. Good advice is to avoid reacting too quick to the event. Even taking 10 seconds to consider the intent of the comment will allow you to formulate an effective response.

Letâ€™s discuss three strategies to managing rude co-workers:

#1: Consider the source.

Youâ€™re sitting in a product development meeting, and your boss says the following to you: â€œChristina the reason youâ€™re having difficulties managing the team is because youâ€™re a poor planner. Didnâ€™t send you to leadership training? You should be prepared by now?â€• Obviously, this comment coming from your boss is hurtful, especially when said in front of colleagues.

Given that your boss is the source of this comment, you have to make sure that your response is professional. Try this one: â€œJack, the team is having a few problems, and I take full responsibility for their performance. We are making good strides, and I expect all deliverables will be met. Regarding my performance â€¦ I will schedule time on your calendar to discuss.â€• Christina assumed responsibility for any shortcomings, but she also emphasized that the work will get done. She is right to suggest a private meeting to discuss performance issues. In addition, she will make it clear to Jack that she will not tolerate being embarrassed in front of the team.

#2: Be prepared for the unexpected.

There are some people in your organization who constantly make off-the-wall comments. In some cases, these comments are unprofessional, and unrelated to oneâ€™s work. For example, â€œLarry, youâ erratic in your decision-making. Iâ€™m sure thatâ€™s why youâ€™re having marital problems.â€• Oneâ€™ matters are just that â€“ personal.

Hereâ€™s a good response to this comment: â€œFelicia, Iâ€™m unsure of why you made this comment, donâ€™t appreciate it. Please note that all future discussions between us must be business-related.â€• If Felicia fails to honor your request, you have the option contact your line manager or go directly to HR.

#3: Avoid falling in the trap.

Regardless of the rude comment, make sure that you think it through before responding. Leave the great one-liners to Hollywood. When someone makes a comment that you consider unprofessional, consider the source and the intent. You must process the information before reacting.

Itâ€™s often more effective to show confusion and bewilderment regarding the rude comment than

reacting with anger. You can ask the following questions: â€œDo you really mean what you said?â€• â€œW do you think that of me?â€• â€œWhat specifically did I do or say to make you feel that way.â€• Of course, y should also make it clear that you will not tolerate rude comments, particularly those made in a public setting.

Rude people are here to stay, and we must be prepared to manage unprofessional situations. You canâ€™t go wrong by sticking to the facts, and avoid falling into a trap where you respond with a negative comment. This approach is counterproductive. A leader understands that itâ€™s much better to identify the root cause of the problem, and do whatever possible to prevent it from occurring in the future.

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