

## Quick Question-Any adult

Describe to me the most toxic person you ever worked with. How did you handle it?

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## Worksite Reflection

What was something that happened at work this week? (an event, a problem, an interaction, a success, etc.)

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## Administrative Questions

Is your phone number the same? YES NO  
 Do you have active phone service? YES NO  
 Is everything at work satisfactory? YES NO  
 Are you getting enough hours? YES NO  
 If you selected NO, explain:

	POINTS	EARNED	On time	Late
Journal	5		Date turned in:	
Scenario	5		Weeks late (points off):	
Question	5		Final Score:	
Reflection	3			
Admin	2			

## What if You're The Toxic One?

Toxicity can change a pleasant worksite into one where productivity and morale suffers. The toxic ones are usually easy to spot.

What if your company is full of awesome people? You might have lucked out, or perhaps your worst fears are true: What if you're the toxic one?

If the following list sounds like you (even just one or 2), you might be the toxic coworker.

- No one wants to be around you.
- You're successful and no one else is.
- You're judgmental of others' errors.
- You are always involved in drama.
- You consider yourself to always be the victim.
- You hang out and chat all the time.
- You're selfish and have no empathy for others.
- Your coworkers naturally expect the worst from you.
- People always have to help you with your work.

## Good News!

You can work on any and all toxic behaviors and become a productive, respected coworker.

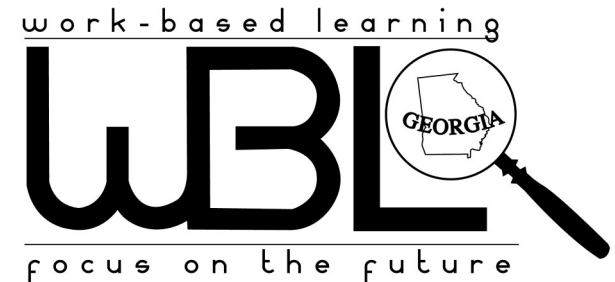
Usually, you'll have an idea that you're disliked, but you may not have self-awareness of why. Step back and look at your behavior and identify some areas in which you could improve. That might mean working on your leadership or social skills, which are valuable anywhere in the job market.

It's best to focus on one or two areas at a time so you don't overwhelm yourself. It could just be being positive and offering more praise to others, but your coworkers will see and appreciate your effort.

Ask others you trust their honest opinions. Be prepared to hear hard things—constructive criticism is supposed to make you work harder and do better. Change takes time, but is worth the effort.



# How to Work With Toxic People



## Toxic People You Meet in the Workplace

The people you work with have a major influence on the way you feel about your job. Your relationships with your coworkers can bring you up or down. You'll meet some who are difficult to get along with.

### **BOSSY BERTHA**

Some coworkers act more like your boss giving orders and correcting your behavior. If you work with someone like this, let her know that you are equals and will ask for advice when you need it. Be polite, but direct. If she continues, you may have to speak to your boss and explain how you've tried to fix it and ask for ideas.

### **NEEDY NELLY**

Coworkers help each other, but there's a difference between helping and covering for incompetence. Someone who requires constant help will drain you. Give hints that you resent the time you're spending on her. Shorten your answers. Take longer responding to requests. If something is a problem, you need to say it.

### **GOSSIPY GAIL**

A little gossip is natural when people work closely together. Some coworkers take gossiping way too far. No one wants to be whispered about. Resist the urge to gossip because it will hurt your relationships. Set a good example to stop it.

### **NEGATIVE NANCY**

Some people complain about everything which is toxic to listen to. You might join in just to be friendly, but it can cause the same negative feelings in you. Keep your distance. It's important to be kind, but don't spend too much on people who always have bad days. Be positive and show a better way to act.

### **FRIENDLY FIONA**

Friendships don't always develop the way you want them to. Sometimes after getting to know someone, you may not want to be friends. If you want some space, keep a professional distance. Set and stick to boundaries by keeping all talks professional.

### **CHATTY CATHY**

Distractions happen especially if you work in an open space with many people. Most conversations are background noise, but sometimes a chatty coworker will interrupt you when you're in the middle of something.

Be direct and tell her that you need to work. (You might even have to interrupt her). Move to somewhere else.

### **LIMELIGHT LUCY**

Some coworkers will do anything to impress the boss. They'll take credit for things they think might get them ahead. Calmly and directly, set the record straight. Say that the idea was yours, and you're glad she's excited about it. Follow up with your coworker privately if needed. It's possible that she acts this way because no one has ever faced her. It may resolve quickly once you do.

### **JEALOUS JENNY**

Sometimes people are jealous of your success. They want what you have and act out of insecurity. Limit your communication and try to remain polite. Keep emotion out of conversations. If things escalate and you can't do your job, consider talking with your manager.

### **INCONSIDERATE IRIS**

You helped a new co-worker get adjusted to the worksite and now she won't stop bothering you. This coworker takes advantage of your time. Apologize and say that you have too much of your own work. Suggest that she ask someone else for help.

### **BULLY BRITTANY**

Bullies get what they want by embarrassing or damaging you. Keep a record of any interactions in case you need to report it to HR. Put space between you and the bully. At some point, you will need to stand up for yourself and be assertive without sounding angry.



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

A study by the AMA shows that being in a relationship with a toxic person increases your risk of having heart disease, diabetes, and metabolism issues.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Journal**

Do you recognize any toxic behaviors at your work? What are the behaviors? What can be done to improve them?

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## **Worksite Scenario**

Stephanie, your dramatic friend, likes to be center of attention at work. If she isn't, she cries, yells, or acts inappropriately until she is. The boss has had it with her and has asked you, as her friend and manager, to speak with her. What would you say?

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