Psychopathy in the Workplace

Everyone has a bad day at work now and then. But there’s a big difference between aggravating incidents and a full-blown toxic work environment.

A toxic work environment is one wherein dysfunction and drama reign, whether it’s the result of a narcissistic boss, vindictive co-workers, or an absence of order, among others.

We all have different personalities and ways we like to do things. When things don’t go our way, it can cause problems among coworkers.

Additionally, some people have sociopathic tendencies. This can make for a toxic work environment.

Toxic work environments can cause:

* Resentment
* Gossip
* Inter Office Relationships
* Psychopathy
* Toxic Work Environment

Resentment

* Communication is the key! – no one knows unless you say it
* Holding it in only makes things worse
* Best way to grow closer to your coworkers is to talk

Gossip

* Toxic work environment
* Often untrue or at least distorted truth
* Management can fix anything if you just whine and complain
* Just plain vulgar
* Not what this company is about

Interoffice Relationships

* Not forbidden but must be reported to Office Manager
* You’re here to work, not make new friends, not find a spouse, not hook-up.
* Complicates office productivity
* Can cause harassment issues
* Stimulates gossip
* Can make others feel awkward

Psychopathy

* Psychopath – someone who expresses certain antisocial characteristics, and who is incapable of expressing normal emotional and social traits due to a congenital developmental defect in parts of the brain
* Born that way – brain architecture
* Not caused by abusive childhood
* Can be caused by TBI
* Amygdala

Biology

* Amygdala recognizes emotional reactions to another
* Psychopaths have low functioning amygdalae – no fear, no emotion
* Low functioning to prefrontal cortex and prelimbic system. Regulates and controls behavior – makes you stop and think before you speak or act.
* Amygdala & its connection to prefrontal & prelimbic cortexes
* Some Characteristics:
	+ Excessively complimentary to higher ups, flattering
	+ Gossips, particularly in an undermining of another who is an obstacle
	+ Tailors what is said, how they act based on nonverbal cues
	+ Controlling, assuming authority where none is
	+ Condescending to equals or lowers
	+ Charming, engaging, seducing
	+ Egocentric, Narcissistic
	+ Manipulative

Psychopathy in the workplace = Toxicity in the workplace

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Toxic Work Environment

A toxic work environment is one wherein dysfunction and drama reign such that it interferes in customer service, customer care, and general staff morale, among many other things.

Signs of a toxic work environment:

* You feel anxiety or a pit in your stomach as you enter into the workplace.
* You feel stressed at the thought of encountering a certain person and actively do things to avoid having to encounter that person
* You feel good, but after being at work you feel bad due to an interaction with a coworker or supervisor.
* You’re afraid at work of losing your job, getting in trouble, or other retaliation.
* You are being told to do things outside of your job description
* You are being told to do things out of your level of training, license, or certification
* You are being bullied or harassed
* You are subjected to other coworker(s)
* Your manager yells and rants
* Your manager is degrading, always finds fault with what you are doing with out any constructive means for you to improve.

How you can stop a toxic work environment:

* Do not participate in toxic behaviors
* Do not tolerate being subjected to toxic behaviors
* Speak up – say “This is not acceptable” “I do not deserve to be treated this way.” “Please change your tone.” “Please rephrase the way you are speaking to me.” “Please tell me how I can improve and correct the issue.”
* If direct communication fails, inform your manager.
* If your manager is the issue, inform that person’s manager
* If it continues, file a formal grievance.
* If the grievance does not create a resolution, meet with administration or executives.
* Consider getting an attorney.
* Report to labor board, OSHA, and to other relevant governing organizations
* When all else fails, quit.

How the company can stop a toxic work environment:

* Provide clear expectations at the start of any new hire
* Have clear policies in place for codes of conduct
* Follow through with investigations and discipline
* Address complaints and grievances quickly
* Provide adequate staffing
* Provide breaks at appropriate times to avoid mood changes due to hunger
* Provide functioning equipment and adequate resources for staff to perform jobs to avoid frustration and building of resentment
* Have resources for staff undergoing personal stress events
* Encourage communication

Administration to contact:

[*Name of Administrator*]

Job Title:

Email:

Phone:

Office Location: