



# DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE

Difficult people in the workplace come in all forms.

If you have ever dealt with a particularly difficult colleague, you may have found yourself creating any means possible to avoid them. Dealing with difficult workplace personalities can take a toll on your health and well-being so ignoring the problem in the hope they will go away, or leave is not the best option.



**TORUS**  
WELLBEING CLINIC

# Five Of The Most Difficult Workplace Personalities

## 1. The Gossip

Office gossips often behave this way out of their own insecurities to create drama to entertain themselves or to deflect attention away from their own bad traits (e.g., poor work performance). Gossips may also hold the misguided belief that their gossip is a way to connect with other co-workers with whom they share their gossip

- Top Tip: Let go of the idea that gossip within the office can be controlled and instead focus on your own behaviour and setting a good example for others.

## 2. The Blamer

"Blamers" are those who constantly shift responsibility away from themselves and onto others whenever things go wrong in the office. Rarely do they acknowledge or apologise for their own misgivings, mistakes, bad decisions, or poor performance, and often they stretch the truth to convince others that their version of events is accurate and factual even when it is not.

- Top Tip: Try redirecting their attention away from blame and toward facts that are verifiable.

## 3. The Victim

This is the person who is often a constant complainer and attempts to draw people's attention to their problems (or perceived problems) every day. For example, they may complain about their work duties and try to convince everyone that they are not treated fairly and have more work than everyone around them. Or they may play the victim when something goes wrong on a team project and claim that they were left out of important conversations.

- Top Tip: Maintain your own boundaries during conversations and do not let them suck you into constant complaining about the same topics e.g. "I know this is important to you and I'm sorry I don't have time to listen more, but I must go back to my desk and get some work done now".

## 4. The Control Freak

This difficult workplace personality is the type who is often critical of others who do not do things their way. Such people may have traits of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) even if they do not have the disorder itself. They often feel the need to control the outcome of seemingly everything and everyone around them and may even step over appropriate boundaries and attempt to control situations that are not relevant to their own job duties. They may also be perfectionists and have impossibly high expectations due to their high attention to detail.

- Top Tip: Try letting go of control at times when the situation or task does not matter as much to you or will not have an adverse effect on your performance.

## Five Of The Most Difficult Workplace Personalities

### 5. The Passive-Aggressive Type

Often difficult to spot as others but can-do real damage. They behave in phoney ways — for example, hiding their true feelings by pretending everything is okay when they're actually upset — and have a tendency to appear calm, cool, and collected at all times since they keep their negative feelings pushed deep down. However, a classic sign of this type is the fact that they may do things to sabotage the work or performance of others.

- Top Tip: Use direct communication to communicate the impact of their negative behaviours on you, your co-workers, and the office environment.

## General Strategies to Deal With Any Difficult Person In

- Do not try to change a co-worker's personality, instead improve your communication skills.
- Be flexible in your style of communication. Some adjustment on your part is a factor you can control and may help you connect better with a co-worker.
- Consider the positive aspects of your co-workers' personality (if you can identify any) and point these out during conversations in order to help communicate more effectively with them, especially when delivering criticisms.
- Never assume anything or jump to conclusions about a situation until you have had a chance to communicate directly with a difficult personality in your office or verify information. Just because a person is difficult to deal with, does not mean that your assumptions about a situation are 100% accurate every time.

### Further Information

For further information and a thorough assessment, contact the Torus wellbeing book an appointment email: [info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk](mailto:info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk)



Elgin Chambers, 24 Cemetery Road, Shelton, Stoke on Trent, ST4 2DL

Tel: 01782 273314 | [info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk](mailto:info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk) | [www.toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk](http://www.toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk)

Owner/Founder: Dr Nicola Brough PhD, RCST