



Southern Building Material Association's



Human Resources Newsletter

January 2012

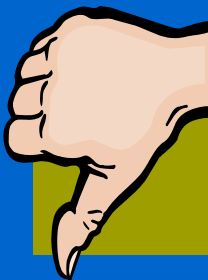
"Membership Pays."

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- **7 Negativity Carriers Who Decrease Morale in the Workplace.**
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Gloomy pessimists who consistently point out potential negative outcomes of any action or decision.

7 Negativity Carriers Who Decrease Morale in the Workplace

Negativity can cause a snowball effect on morale in the workplace. Have you ever noticed how just one negative person can bring down everyone else's mood? Effective employee communication and positive employee attitude can make all the difference in your productivity levels. So, how do you recognize the signs of workplace negativity and stop it in its tracks?

Here are seven types of negativity carriers you might see:

1. **Whiners and complainers** who talk at great length about whatever is making them unhappy at the moment. These people are never happy and let people know it. They're very verbal about being unhappy.
2. **Constant critics** who point out the errors or flaws in others' work, but never admit mistakes of their own. These people are very discouraging to others. This is very demotivational for employees and certainly decreases morale in the workplace.
3. **Tattletales and gossips** who love to "spread the news" with little regard for whether it is actually true. These people like to feel important and special; they feel this way when they have news to spread. They may also be overly dramatic and like to stir things up.
4. **Rabble-rousers** who try to get people "stirred up" about anything they think is wrong or unfair. These people often have authority issues, and they put themselves in charge of monitoring the environment and looking for any sign of unfairness or something that is not right. Frequently they are frustrated leaders; they want a leadership role, and they've not been given one.
5. **Office bullies** who intimidate others by becoming verbally – and sometimes physically – aggressive. Bullies typically want to control. They often have a lot of anger and frustration at work. This is often expressed verbally through to attempt to control other people.
6. **Gloomy pessimists** who consistently point out potential negative outcomes of any action or decision. These people will tell you the negative side of anything and will rain on any parade. This will bring down the entire emotional tone of the office.
7. **Stealth attackers** who appear positive when talking with management, but try to stir up trouble behind the scenes. These people are two-faced. You may not know that they're there, as they may be positive to you.

Negativity and decreased morale in the workplace obviously drags down the mood and productivity of any workgroup. One of the reasons this happens is because negativity easily spreads. Psychologists have identified a phenomenon called emotional contagion. Simply stated, if you put one person who is experiencing extremely negative emotions among other people, those emotions are going to spread to the people around them. It works for positive emotions too, but negative emotions spreading eventually can lead to hidden costs like reduced motivation, lower productivity, absenteeism, and turnover.

Got problems with morale in your workplace? In a related article on this topic, McIntyre provides 6 strategies to improve morale in the workplace.

The above information is excerpted in part from a BLR webinar titled "How to Stop Workplace Negativity: Signs, Causes and Cures," with expert Marie G. McIntyre. For more information on stopping workplace negativity, order the webinar recording. To register for a future webinar, visit <http://catalog.blr.com/audio>.

Marie G. McIntyre, Ph.D., operates Your Office Coach®, a training and consulting business that specializes in helping people work together more effectively. (www.yourofficecoach.com) McIntyre conducts workshops related to leadership and teamwork, does individual career coaching, and offers a variety of individual and organizational assessments.



Federated's employment practices resources can help you minimize the costs associated with hiring mistakes.



Encourage Curiosity.

“Bad” Hire – Higher Costs

From SBMA’s Sponsored P&C Carrier – Federated Insurance

A business owner hired a friend’s daughter who recently graduated from college. Her application looked great and the job interview went well. He waived her background checks she was hired as a sales associate.

A few months later, other people in the department began complaining about the young woman, claiming she was moody, demanding, and rude to the clerical staff. She also expected other salespeople to handle service calls when she wasn’t in the office, which was often. One long-time employee became frustrated with the working conditions and left the company.

In this example, reference checks could have revealed that the employee had been fired from a prior part-time job for the same type of behavior. In addition, a drug test would have uncovered a substance abuse problem.

Business owners can purchase employment related practices liability insurance to protect themselves from lawsuits alleging discrimination and harassment or wrongful termination. However, insurance coverage can’t compensate for the lost productivity, worry, and embarrassment that can result from a regretful hiring decision.

Hiring the wrong person can lead to employee injuries, employment-related lawsuits, and higher employee turnover. Federated’s employment practices resources can help you minimize the costs associated with hiring mistakes. Information and sample materials are also available on proper procedures and documentation needed for terminating employees who don’t work out.

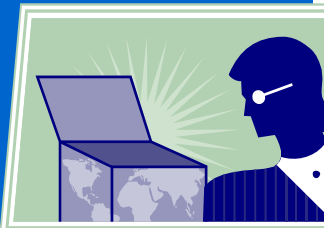
3 Ways to Empower Your Employees – And Produce Results

Empowering Your Employees Doesn’t Have to Be Difficult.

By following some simple steps, you can empower your employees, and encourage them to take ownership of their positions and results.

Step 1. Encourage Curiosity

Technical skills and experiences are an important part of any position, but in some companies, they can pigeonhole employees and narrow their focus. Often times, employees have ideas that fall outside their areas of “specialty,” but don’t raise the thought because of fear. Foster a culture where asking questions and making suggestions are encouraged. You have the power to create an environment where employees feel comfortable, even excited, to learn more and offer ideas. **Next month step 2.**



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