

How to deal with difficult people

Let's face it. We all have that one person at work we just do not like.

We secretly wish they would quit, find another place of employment or just call in sick for a day and give us a break, right?

Avoiding these people is not an efficient way to work, whether your difficult person happens to be your boss or you happen to be the boss. What if you could learn to deal with Mr. or Ms. Annoying and turn your frustrations into fruitful conversations? Christine Hemp, award-winning writer, facilitator and consultant, has some tips on how we can deal with the difficult people in our lives.

Hemp was the featured speaker at a recent Three Rivers Entrepreneurial Network meeting in Richland. She has worked with Horizon Airlines, Harvard University Extension School, Navy, National Park Service, and England's London Brixton Police Department and Crime

Prevention Trust.

Hemp says there are three things we must do to deal with difficult people. The first is to "Know Thyself."

We are whole people and should not hide the parts of our lives that make us who we are. We can't change someone else, but we can change our own perceptions and behaviors. By wanting to change things, it puts the power back in our hands.

The second thing Hemp says we must do, is "Know Thy Difficult Person."

We must understand that difficult people are not problems to be solved; they are people to be understood. As

the saying goes, until you've walked a mile in someone else's shoes, you can't know what their life is like. So we can't be afraid to try on the shoes of those difficult people. ...the key to their unhappiness may be as simple as a sick child or the loss of a beloved pet.

The last thing that Hemp says we must do in dealing with difficult people is to "Know Thy Tactics."

Begin by looking for clues as to what motivates your difficult person. Look at their desk, do they have pictures of their kids or a pet, or is their desk empty? An empty desk may say that they are not interested in sharing their private life with co-workers.

Try to actively listen to your difficult person, then do what is called listening back. An example of this is to pretend your difficult person says, "I'm swamped, I have a deadline and my wife can't pick up the kids." Your response could be, "So I hear

you saying that you have too much to do at work and you have personal pressures that are adding to your stress level." Once you have acknowledged the person's issues, you can work to find a solution that will benefit everyone.

Now that we have the key to understanding ourselves and what motivates Mr. or Ms. Annoying, we can begin to make positive changes in how we deal with the difficult people in our lives. It's important to remember that businesses rely on productivity for success. As we develop the skills to deal with the difficult people around us, we put ourselves and our companies on the road to success.

You can learn more about Christine Hemp by visiting her website at www.christine-hemp.com.

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