

Connie Podesta Presents...

Leadership • Communication • Teambuilding • Innovation • Relationships



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& Human Relations
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Do you have someone in your life who absolutely drives you out of your mind? Probably so. Most of us work, commute, socialize, and even live with people who are not the easiest to be around. In fact, most of the stress people experience, both personally and professionally, centers around other people and the often frustrating, confusing and even contentious relationships we have with them.

In order to deal with difficult people, however, we must first learn more about ourselves. Then we need to understand why they act the way they do and why we react the way we do.

Remember, difficult people:

- Know what they are doing
- Get some satisfaction out of being difficult
- Treat many people this way - not just you
- Have probably been acting this way for a long time

We often give difficult people:

- Permission to treat us badly
- Satisfaction in knowing they can control us and our reactions
- A reward which causes them to continue their negative behavior

Difficult people have been trained and taught to act the way they do. In fact, they have been rewarded for their negative behavior. If someone is consistently behaving towards you in ways that are inappropriate or unacceptable, the first question to ask yourself is: "How is my reaction contributing to and even rewarding their behavior?"

What do difficult people want?

They want to do their own thing, in their own time, in their own way and without any interference from us. And they will use any form of manipulation to accomplish their goal.

The two emotions used most frequently to manipulate are HURT and ANGER. HURT can be used to make us feel guilty and inadequate, and ANGER can be used to make us feel powerless and afraid.

COMMUNICATION/BEHAVIOR STYLES

In order to successfully interact with difficult people, we must first understand the four basic styles of communication and behavior. Only by learning how and why people behave and communicate the way they do will we be able to avoid manipulation and the ensuing feelings of guilt and fear which cause us to give in and ultimately reward the difficult person and their inappropriate, unacceptable behavior.

The four communication styles are:

Assertive: Communicates openly and honestly. Takes into account others' wants, concerns, and feelings. States their own needs and wants. Does not wait for others to "read minds." Takes charge and is responsible for personal choices and actions. Is respectful of others and expects to be treated with dignity and respect in return.

Passive: Avoids conflict and confrontation at all costs. Does not express personal needs and feelings. Has difficulty saying "no" without feeling guilty. Wants to please others, even at their own expense. Has trouble setting boundaries.

Aggressive: Needs to be in control of all things: people, themselves, and situations. Uses **HURT** and **ANGER** to manipulate others into feeling guilty or afraid so they will give in. Does not take "no" for an answer. Will use abuse, sarcasm, humiliation, put-downs (**ANGER**), whining, complaining, blame, hurt feelings, and guilt (**HURT**) to get what they want.

Passive-Aggressive: Gets even. Uses trickery, seduction, and manipulation to get their own way. Not as open as the aggressive. Will often be nice to your face and use behind-the-back techniques to get revenge. Gets control by using silent treatment, withdrawing affection and attention, gossiping, tattling, and refusing to cooperate. When asked what's wrong they often say, "Oh, nothing."

Remember: We CHOOSE what style we use to communicate our needs, ideas, and concerns. We also CHOOSE which style we use to communicate when reacting to other people. Often, our reactions (tears, yelling, withdrawal, compliance, silent treatment, etc.) are exactly the reward the difficult person was looking for.

We are usually treated exactly the way we feel we deserve to be treated.

Stress • Productivity • Change

*"Character is defined not by how we act when life is running smoothly, but rather how we **CHOOSE** to behave when life is not going as planned." Connie Podesta*

Connie Podesta continues to hear the same frustrated comments from her audiences: "What does my organization (school, hospital, etc.) **REALLY** want and expect of its employees?" In response, she launched a national survey and interviewed approximately 500 business owners, CEOs, managers, and human resource directors and asked them that very question. Over and over again the same eight high-performance behaviors kept emerging as the ones most likely to influence decisions to hire, fire, and retain employees. According to the country's top decision makers, your success in your current job, as well as future employment opportunities, will depend on your ability to:

- 1. TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR PERSONAL LIFE** - As one CEO said, "I want people working for me who come to work ready to get the job done - people whose personal life is stable and healthy enough that they can direct their attention and energy to their work, their customers and their colleagues."
- 2. DEMONSTRATE VALUE ADDED** - Employees have to recognize that every one of their decisions, ideas, actions, and plans must be linked to the long-term financial stability and growth of their company. According to a business owner, "We are looking for employees who not only understand the need for us to remain financially sound, but who are actively involved in finding ways to help us do that."
- 3. HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR COMPANY, CUSTOMERS, AND COLLEAGUES** - Employers do not have the right to evaluate our inner attitudes, beliefs, and feelings, but they **DO** have the right to evaluate how we behave and perform on paid work time as a result of those attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Employers expressed an overwhelming preference for employees who model a positive attitude through their performance and behavior.
- 4. EMBRACE AND INITIATE CHANGE** - Change can be frightening and change can be exhilarating. But one thing is certain: change has become a permanent and necessary fixture in today's business environment. Employers will keep employees who can adapt to all the changes their organization is going through with professionalism, determination, and optimism. They need employees who are resilient enough to face change boldly without resorting to complaints, apathy, anger, or fear.
- 5. WORK SMARTER, HARDER, FASTER, AND BETTER** - One manager stated, "Which employee would I keep? Why, of course, the one who can get a quality job done - on time. I need employees who aren't afraid of hard work, who can be counted on to do the job right, and who don't need constant reminders or supervision. They know what needs to be done and they do it - it's as simple as that."
- 6. COMMUNICATE OPENLY AND DIRECTLY** - Employers want people who can most effectively communicate their needs, preferences, ideas, and feelings to their customers, co-workers, and management team without manipulation and game playing. In order to achieve this level of assertive, open, and honest communication, however, a climate of trust and mutual respect must exist throughout the company.
- 7. LOOK FOR LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES** - "Which employees would I keep?" One business owner replied, "The ones who are willing and able to assume a leadership role and take charge when necessary and appropriate, regardless of their job title." Good leaders are positive role models and relationship builders who can be counted on to be trustworthy, resilient, optimistic, enthusiastic, and visionary.
- 8. COMMIT TO LIFE-LONG LEARNING** - Employers will keep the employees who are constantly learning and willing to help take their organization into the future by keeping their knowledge and skills up-to-date. In today's business climate, no one's job is completely secure. Your skills may be necessary today, but that does not mean they will be necessary tomorrow. Employees must be flexible.

***Are you a person your company or organization would FIGHT to keep?
If so, you must be able to answer "yes" to these questions:***

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Would your co-workers and customers say you have an engaging, positive attitude? | <input type="checkbox"/> Would people say you are honest, dependable, and trustworthy? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are you the kind of person others look to for advice, information, and leadership? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you treat others respectfully even when you are angry, frustrated, or impatient? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are your skills and expertise up-to-date in today's highly competitive world? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you avoid whining and complaining and look for solutions instead? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you take ownership and pride in your organization's goals and vision? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you view yourself as a role model, always aware that people are influenced by how you communicate and behave? |

To find out how you rank among the best and most successful employees today, go to: www.conniepodesta.com

Go to Connie's homepage and click on: **QUIZ** *How To Be The Person Successful Companies Fight To Keep*



A WEALTH OF **FREE** INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Connie has written several articles you can download and use immediately to improve the quality of your personal and professional life. This information should help make your life just a little bit easier!!! Topics include: change, leadership, balancing personal and professional life, productivity, attitude, communication, and tons of information about how to deal with people who literally "drive us crazy."

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