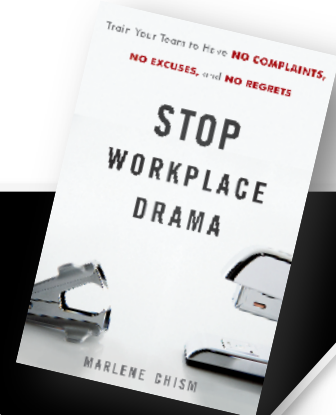




Four Things the Workplace Bully Can Teach You

by Marlene Chism

Stop Workplace Drama Articles



Some of the best lessons of my life have been from people I didn't necessarily like. I've had bosses who had no people skills and even an occasional friend or colleague who is skilled at blindsiding or offering a painful jab at your most vulnerable moment.

In my ***Stop the Workplace Drama Training Camps*** I refer to this person as the Persecutor, the upper left position on the [Karpman Drama Triangle](#). What I want to talk about here is the three things the persecutor in your life, whether that be a sarcastic co-worker, jealous friend, or even a workplace bully can teach you about yourself, about workplace relationships and about workplace conflict.

1. What is not Acceptable

Until you experience the pain of a rude comment, a public humiliation or a blindsided sarcastic jab, you may not even think much about how you want to be treated. The good thing about experiencing unwanted emotions is you get to claim what is totally unacceptable. The only problem is when you continue to allow the behavior to continue. This leads to the second lesson the workplace bully or persecutor can teach you.

2. Where You Need to Speak Up

If you are allowing the behavior after, let's say two times, you need to look inward. Why is it OK with you to let it slide? Are you afraid of a fight? Were you taught in your family not to make waves? What I have learned is that we handle conflict the way we first learned to handle it...from the original organization we were a part of and that is our family. Personal growth is about healing the past and learning new ways to cope instead of using the excuse, "that's not the way I was raised."

3. What Skills You Need to Learn

If you are not speaking up or not reporting the bad behavior, I have a hunch it's because you don't feel confident about the skills you need to avoid "biting the hook." Perhaps you've tried speaking up before and what you get is "You're just too sensitive," or "I'm just teasing." One of the skills you need is to [release resistance](#) and simply say, "Perhaps I am too sensitive, however I'm asking that you discontinue (the unwanted behavior). If you have learned some of the skills then it stands to reason the problem is how you see yourself, which leads to my fourth point.

4. The Way You See Yourself

If you see yourself as helpless, that means you identify with the [victim role on the triangle](#). In my book, [Stop Workplace Drama](#), I talk about this in the fourth principle of "Reinvent and Realign." The way you see yourself has everything to do with the way you lead, the way you respond to others and frankly the BS you allow in your relationships. Start seeing yourself as a powerful creator who is relationship oriented and that viewpoint alone will start to change your style of communication. Yep, that's even without taking all the communication courses and learning about "I messages."

If there is a bully, a sarcastic co-worker, a rude boss, or a game player, look at that person as a wise sage who came into your life to teach you. When you have learned those lessons you can up your leadership game, gain strength through authentic communication and be more of who you showed up in this world to be.

Points to Ponder

1. Who is in my life that triggers a drama response within me?
2. What are my options about speaking up or setting a boundary?
3. Why do I resist confronting the problem or speaking to this person?
4. What skills do I need to learn to deal with this situation?
5. What is the best growth that could happen for me and for this person?