

## **Tips for Dealing With Occasional Negativity in your work environment**

- Listen to the employee or coworker's complaints until you are certain that they feel heard out and listened to. Sometimes people repeat negative sentiments over and over because they don't feel heard. Ask questions. Make sure you listen actively.
- Decide if your coworker has legitimate reasons for their negativity. Ask if they'd like your help to solve the problem. Provide advice or ideas for how the coworker can address the reason for their negativity.

Short term advice that points a person in a positive direction is welcome. But, your role is not to provide therapy or counseling. Refer your coworker to EAP if necessary.

- Sometimes, the coworker just wants to complain to a friendly, listening ear; they don't want your advice or assistance to address the situation. Listen, but set limits so the coworker does not overstay or over-talk his or her welcome. Long term complaining saps your energy and positive outlook. Walk away if you need to. Tell the coworker you'd prefer to move on to more positive subjects.
  - If you listen to the coworker's negativity, and decide the concerns are not legitimate, practice personal courage and tell them what you think. Tell the coworker you care about their concern and about their happiness at work, but you disagree with their assessment of the situation.

Back gracefully out of additional conversations. Constant negative interactions will eventually permeate your interaction with your workplace.

## **Tips for Dealing With Negative Coworkers**

Deal with genuinely negative people by spending as little time with them as possible. Just as you set limits with the coworkers whose negativity you believe is baseless or unwarranted, you need to set limits with genuinely negative people.

- Avoid spending time with a negative coworker when possible. Avoid providing a sympathetic audience for the negativity.
- Suggest the negative person seek assistance from EAP.
- If all else fails, talk to your own supervisor or human resources staff about the challenges you are experiencing in dealing with the negative person. Your supervisor may have ideas, may be willing to address the negativity.

**For a confidential EAP appointment call 1-888-244-0680**