

How to work with people who get under your skin

1. Discuss the following quotations from a video you're going to watch. What do you think they mean? Do you agree or disagree with them? Give reasons for your answers.

"We all have this colleague who, we hope, quits his job so everyone in the office is happy. If you don't know any such person, quit your job."

"I told all my colleagues at work that I have a twin so that when I see them in public I don't have to talk to them."

2. Discuss the questions.

- How well do you get on with your colleagues?
- Have you ever experienced a difficult relationship with a colleague? What happened?

3. Match the phrases in the following sentences to their definitions.

- a) His constant complaining really **gets under my skin**.
 - b) When you have a problem with someone at work, you have to be able to **cross the divide**.
 - c) It's important to **develop coping mechanisms** for stress and anxiety.
 - d) Everyone's got too much work to do! We're **all in the same boat**.
 - e) A manager must know how to **build rapport** with their team.
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- 1) find ways to manage painful or difficult situations
 - 2) establish a relationship and build understanding with someone whose views are different to yours
 - 3) develop trust, liking and friendship with someone
 - 4) irritate or upset someone
 - 5) be in the same or a similar situation

4. Replace the words and phrases in the sentences below with the correct form of the phrasal verbs in the box.

freeze out

give off

point out

put off

- a) She keeps **postponing** important phone calls.
- b) I think he's just shy, but he can **emit/produce** a snobbish vibe.
- c) My colleagues keep **excluding me** from discussions.
- d) My boss never praises my work but he's always quick to **draw attention to** my mistakes.
5. Discuss and agree or disagree with the following statements. Circle the number which is true for you (1 = absolutely agree, 5 = absolutely disagree). Compare and give reasons for your answers with a partner.
- I tend to put off difficult tasks and conversations. 1 2 3 4 5
 - I don't mind if a colleague points out my mistakes. 1 2 3 4 5
 - I have good coping mechanisms for stressful situations. 1 2 3 4 5
 - Sometimes I give the wrong impression to other people. 1 2 3 4 5
6. You're going to watch a video giving advice about relationships at work. Predict the following:
- What kinds of behaviours can cause problems between people at work?
 - Tips for resolving problem relationships at work.
7. Watch the [video](https://youtu.be/F1F-7cDOX2I) [https://youtu.be/F1F-7cDOX2I] and find out whether any of your ideas from ex. 6 are mentioned.

8. Watch the [video](#) again and complete the following sentences.**TIP ONE: FACE THE PROBLEM**

- a) Most of the time, we find that people want to with the other person, because they dislike them.
- b) ...a difficult, but open and honest conversation, with the person you dislike can bring a

TIP TWO: CHECK YOUR NARRATIVE

- c) Think about what you
- d) ...nobody is getting the benefit of their different

TIP THREE: GET THEIR PERSPECTIVE

- e) Ask questions and seek to understand the
- f) If you show that you're open to listening to the other person and genuinely want to understand where they're coming from, you'll have a much more

9. Discuss the following questions. Give reasons for your answers.

- What kinds of bad habits at work really get under your skin?
- How do good managers build rapport with their team?
- Have you or any of your colleagues ever been frozen out at work?
- Can you give an example of when you crossed the divide with someone at work?



10. Watch the final part of the [video](#) again (from 03:31) and correct the following statements.

Remember...

- a) It's probably personal.
- b) You don't have to learn to like the person that you're in conflict with, you just have to tolerate them.
- c) Be willing to stick to your assumptions and then learn from that.
- d) Offer your own ideas and approaches.
- e) Be yourself. Be open, be honest about your own faults and weaknesses.

11. Discuss the statements in ex. 10. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers.

12. Role play! Work with a partner. You are going to have an open and honest conversation about some issues you are having with your colleague. Read your card and talk with your partner. Try to use some of the strategies and vocabulary you have learned. Can you resolve the issue?