

A Benefit For

BEST CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



EAP Notes

Is a Bully Lurking in your Office?

We all know that schoolyard bullying exists. Fortunately schools and teachers have made taming this behavior a priority. Unfortunately, we often don't escape this immature behavior by simply reaching adulthood. The schoolyard bully has morphed into the office bully and may lurk around the workplace for several years before being detected. A bully's primary motive is hiding his or her own incompetence and inadequacy by shifting the focus to someone else.

Spotting a Bully

Bullies are clever and excel in deception. Characteristics that describe a bully include:

- Displays a great deal of self-assuredness
- Uses charm to compensate for lack of empathy
- An overbearing belief in their leadership qualities
- When called to account, aggressively denies everything
- A narcissistic need to portray themselves as wonderful
- A Jekyll & Hyde nature
- A convincing, compulsive liar
- Is a control freak
- Has a compulsive need to criticize

Types of Bullying

There are several types of bullying that occur in the workplace. The two types most likely to be encountered are Serial bullying and Gang bullying.

- **Serial bullying** occurs when the source of dysfunction can be traced back to one individual. The bully picks apart one employee after another. Departments with a serial bully often have a high staff turnover, high absenteeism rate, increased stress levels and a large number of employees seeking early retirement.
- **Gang bullying** is a serial bully with friends. A common tactic is for the serial bully to tell everybody a different story in order to play everyone against each other. Serial bullies gain a great deal of gratification from watching others engage in conflict. Colleagues may join the serial bully to feel power and control as well as enjoy the friendship, protection and reward the bully informally offers.

Why Me?

Jealously and envy fuel the bully's fire. Targets often have the following qualities:

- Excelling at their job
- Being the person others come to for advice
- Having a strong sense of integrity
- Being popular with colleagues, customers, etc.
- Having a well-defined set of values
- Refusing to join an established clique

Source: www.bullyonline.org

What to do?

If you're worried about the bully lurking in the next cubicle, seek assistance immediately. Contact your supervisor or Human Resources department. Your Best Care EAP can help you cope with the stress and other obstacles involved. For a confidential appointment please call, (402) 354-8000/800-666-8606.

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