

## 7 types of colleague you never want to be



We spend more time with them than family and friends: our co-workers, colleagues, managers and bosses.

Each day, relative strangers sit side-by-side, as they do some key-tapping, meeting-doing, phone-calling and idea-having – all in the name of work.

Yet, whilst the majority of UK workers get on – we're British for goodness sake – some colleagues end up at each other's throats.

It could be your co-worker's over-zealous typing, your boss' braggadocio regarding their weekend drinking exploits or the milk thief who just won't buy their own semi-skimmed (or lactose-free alternates).

Despite the obvious dangers of exploding in rage at someone you work with Tania Coke, Senior Mediation Consultant at Consensio, told HR Grapevine that often workplace conflicts can be exacerbated by denying that they exist in the first place.

She said: "I heard of a company whose leader declared: 'Conflict? We have no conflict in our organisation'. This sends out a message that conflict is always a bad thing.

Employees who hear their leaders speaking in this way are less likely to admit to having conflict or to ask for help.”

Importantly though, Amanda Steadman, a Professional Support Lawyer at Addleshaw Goddard, noted that if conflict does arise employers should be mindful of mediating correctly.

She added: “Each situation will turn on its own facts, now more than ever, employers must emphasise the importance of having a working environment in which different views can co-exist and where everybody’s dignity is respected.”

To help avoid these potentially damaging disputes, we’ve collated a list of seven types of co-worker you don’t want to be.

### **1. The political, religious and topical-issue know-it-all**

Speaking to Business Insider UK, Rosalinda Oropeza Randall, an etiquette coach and author of “Don’t Burp in the Boardroom” said that to comment, or group, a person by their belief is unprofessional.

She said: “To negatively comment about any group is unwise and unprofessional, and it could get you in trouble for harassment.”

Those who want to ‘educate’ others on every aspect of current affairs and the news are also deeply annoying and potentially divisive. Its advised you don’t fall into this category.

### **2. The ‘Are you pregnant’ asker**

There’s nothing to be gained by such a question. A co-worker might not be pregnant – if so, you’ve insulted them. If they are: it’s their business to share or not. Accusation of pregnancy can also lead to discrimination claims – if you’re prying into whether that employee is a good choice for potential promotion or not.

### **3. The Salary Inquirer**

Speaking to BI UK, Randall says: “This question is not only unprofessional, but awkward. Why do you want to know? Will you complain to your boss if you find it inequitable? Or will you speak to your boss on your co-worker’s behalf insisting they get a raise?”

### **4. The ‘I-can’t-wait-to-get-a-new-job’ guy**

If you share this with colleagues and managers, they may feel let down – especially if you’re working on a long-term projects or expansion. It could also affect team morale or might get other colleagues feeling they could get a better deal elsewhere.

Furthermore, if they unintentionally leak this information to higher-ups you could get a poor performance review and that P45 much quicker than you expected.

### **5. The Idea Stealer**

If someone gave you an insight into a difficult project, they’re probably going to be miffed if you present that ideas as your own. If you’re working on a collaborative project, or you give a colleague a quick heads-up, and that idea gets presented as their own, it could cause colleagues to fall-out.

Cite your colleagues hard-work, even if they’ve just contributed support during a project, it will help you in the long-run.

### **6. The Life Bragger**

The majority of workers face the morning alarm with soul-shuddering dread – getting out of bed is never nice. For the few amongst us that are up at five am, drinking green smoothies and doing marathon training, bragging about that afterwards will only spark ire, scorn and envy from colleagues.

The best co-workers will be interested in their colleagues lives too – asking questions, sharing self-deprecating anecdotes and not shouting about their 3-minute miles and 15-vegetable breakfast boost drink.

Or how they cured some tropical disease on their four-month sabbatical in some far-flung place.

Or how they gave set-up a maternity centre in a village that previously didn't have one.

Or how, whilst on a weekend in Dubai, they had drinks with Pharrell, Trudeau and Mother Theresa. No-one's really that interested. We promise you.

## **7. The Over Sharer**

Intimate details about personal relationships can be too much for your colleagues to handle.

Randall advises: "If it doesn't enhance your professional image, or enrich workplace relationships, you should keep it to yourself."

If you're tempted to tell others how that weekend in Paris with your boyfriend didn't go as planned, because of the face he pulled at that meal, in that restaurant, and the tip he left embarrassed you – potentially, think again.