

## DTD Episode 79 Show Notes

### 3 Tactics You Must Use to Thwart the Workplace Whiner

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Your plugging along working and feeling productive with a vision of an on time exit from work when you look up to see the Workplace Whiner standing in your doorway.

Oh No!! Not now! Not today!

The energy-zapping, soul-sucking minutes that can drag into an hour. Time you can never get back. You want to scream or slam the door in their face but you don't want them to feel bad.....or walk around complaining about you!

Years ago when I worked in an office full time we had an employee who walked around with a coffee cup for hours every day. We called the mug his "decoy". He'd make it appear as though he was just out on a quick jaunt to refill but this was obviously not his true mission. Office by office he'd stop to chat, sharing tidbits he'd heard along the way. He was also known as the department spy. The workplace whiner can take many forms. They can be frustrated about co-workers or personal injustices. Whatever the topic, they are breeding drama wherever they go.

Many of my clients struggle to avoid the workplace whiner. Here are some of the key strategies I share with them. Pick the one that feels right for you and your circumstance.

1. This one is the least direct but usually yields a good result. A quick excuse stated as you focus intently on your screen or head out the door. "I'm so sorry. I'm on a deadline so can chat for 5 minutes but no more. What's up?"

I don't condone lying. So, I'm not really suggesting that you say you are on a deadline when you aren't. I just think it's safe to assume that there is always a priority looming when you are at work. You are there to be productive, after all. And just fill in the blank with the actual time frame or leave it out altogether if you prefer to make an instant get away.

2. This option is one that will achieve your end result over time. Ultimately, the workplace whiner is looking for the sympathetic ear. That person who will commiserate with their opinions and validate their misery. They are intentional about their targets. It's no fun to whine to someone who is coming back at you with butterflies and sunshine. They aren't looking for a new perspective they seek someone to join them in their funk. So, I suggest that you begin sharing ideas about the more positive perspective they might consider as they describe their negative view. Or, share how wonderful you think that situation sounds or how they might improve the situation with a proactive approach. You won't be the chosen one for long if you don't empathize or commiserate.
3. No beating around the bush with this one. The more direct approach that will earn you the quickest retreat is to simply state that you have made it your personal goal to remain focused on all things positive. You've given up watching the news and will be happy to engage in problem solving activities but are committed to steering clear of complaining or any other negative, low energy inputs.

It will be immediately obvious to even the most self-absorbed whiner that you are not the ideal target. Some will put up a bit of a fight but stand your ground. 'If you have any positive news to share I am all ears. If not, I need to stop you right there and get back to my work.'

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