

We're all on the same team ... aren't we?

For all the talk of teamwork in corporate America, your co-workers should be oozing with collaboration. Right? Yet that's often not the case. Administrative professionals often feel the sting of office politics, or feel a lack of support from workplace peers.

For example, we recently heard this disturbing story from an administrative professional whom we'll call Cathy: When Cathy tries to set up meetings for her boss, one of her co-workers (who supports another exec) routinely ignores her e-mails.

The result: Cathy feels frustrated by the silence, and worries that it makes her appear incapable of arranging a meeting.

What do you do about another administrative pro who gives you the cold shoulder? How do you draw more collaboration out of that co-worker?

Invest in relationship-building. "The best advice I can give for this type of situation is to develop a relationship with this person," writes one executive assistant on the [Admin Pro Forum](#). "Call to say hello. Show interest in her personally. Ask how her day is going. Show understanding regarding her busy schedule."

Ultimately, being comfortable with employees benefits the boss and the entire team. But it takes an effort to build relationships. Take the first step by inviting her to lunch, or offering to pick up a coffee for her when you take a break.

Reconsider your communication style. "Are you calling, speaking to her directly or e-mailing?" asks admin Jurney. Though it may seem more time-consuming, a phone conversation may save time in the end. Try calling or walking over to her desk.

Get tough. Several admins on the Admin Pro Forum advocate liberal use of the cc line. Exposing a lax co-worker may feel gratifying, but be careful about cluttering a boss's inbox unless you've exhausted other possibilities.

"I work with an admin that behaves the same way," says Christine. Having grown frustrated with her co-worker over time, Christine now cc's her boss when she e-mails her co-worker with requests. "If she does not respond within the deadline I've provided, I resend the original e-mail—and this time I cc *her* boss. She moves very quickly now and rarely withholds information from me."