

# Manage an eavesdropping co-worker

Did you ever have a co-worker stop what he or she is doing and listen to your discussions or, worse, comment on discussions you are having with others? Often this happens in open offices. Here's how to fix the eavesdropping problem:

First, focus on specific situations. If you assume someone is eavesdropping, you may have a hard time stating your case. You'll have an easier time addressing the issue if the person has barged into a conversation uninvited or actually commented on something you've said. Be firm and direct so that the co-worker knows you mean business.

Say: “, earlier when you corrected me during the middle of that call with my customers, you disrupted the call and caused some confusion for the customer. While I appreciate your help, please don't answer questions or offer your feedback when I am talking to someone else. You don't have a full understanding of what the conversation is about, and it just causes confusion.”

— Adapted from “[Eavesdropping Co-worker](http://workplacedr.comm.kent.edu),” Tina Lewis Rowe, Ask the Workplace Doctors, <http://workplacedr.comm.kent.edu>.