

How to handle a liar at work



We all tell lies and are lied to on occasion. Many times they're insignificant untruths that can be ignored, but what do you do when you catch a co-worker in a whopper? You need to understand your employer's rules and the consequences of calling out a liar before you act, Travis Bradberry writes at Ladders. He offers these suggestions for handling a liar.

Ignore the lie. Sometimes it's best to leave it alone. If the lie has no impact on your company and the only thing that will be hurt by you coming forward is your relationships at work, do nothing.

Use humor. If the lie is too big to ignore but too small for serious action, you can jokingly acknowledge the untruth. Laugh and say, "I saw your sales numbers for last month and they were more like xyz." Give the impression that you think the other person is joking to give them an out.

Ask a lot of follow-up questions. If you're in a group setting when you catch the lie, pretend like you've forgotten all the facts and ask a bunch of clarifying questions. This way you can draw the truth out and give the liar a chance to save face.

Call out the liar. Sometimes brushing it off is a bad option. Choose the best way to approach the situation, and avoid your temptation to verbally attack the liar. Be sure you have evidence to support the truth, and talk to the person privately.

Go to a superior. Only choose this option if you, colleagues or the company could be hurt by the lie. It's not wise to report the lie just because you're mad.

Protect your own interests. Whether you call the person out or ignore it, make sure you look after yourself. In the future, only talk to the person through writing or with witnesses so you have backup in case a bad situation arises. And, of course, watch what kind of trust you give the person.

— Adapted from ["4 things to do when you catch a liar,"](#) Travis Bradberry, Ladders.