

Beware the sullen co-worker's sinister quicksand

Q: “Ever since I came to work here a year ago, I have gotten nothing but attitude from the woman in the next cubicle. I keep trying to be nice to ‘Mandy,’ but she refuses to develop any kind of relationship with me. Sometimes she doesn't speak to me at all.

“Mandy seems to resent the fact that I have a more responsible job than she does. After my position was upgraded, she didn't talk to me for several days. Whenever I tell her that she has made a mistake, she completely ignores me. I am constantly cleaning up her errors, which takes time away from my own work.

“Our supervisor told us that we needed to work on our communication problem, but that didn't help at all. I believe he's getting tired of Mandy's behavior, although he doesn't seem to be doing anything about it. I have considered transferring to another department, but I don't see why I should be the one to leave.

“This situation has me ready to explode, but I know that getting angry will only make me look bad. What should I do?”

A: Since this unpleasant woman obviously doesn't want a relationship with you, I think you should just go about your work and leave her alone to sulk in silence. When you allow yourself to get bent out of shape over Mandy's frosty demeanor, you are giving her way too much power to affect your life.

Unless monitoring Mandy is part of your job, you should also stop pointing out her mistakes. By acting like her supervisor, you are overstepping your boundaries and increasing her resentment. More importantly, if you continue to fix her errors, management will never learn about her shortcomings.

While your boss may indeed be growing tired of Mandy's moodiness, you would be wise to note that he has attributed this "communication problem" to both of you. If you are unable to get a grip on your emotional reactions, he may soon tire of your attitude as well.

Unfortunately, we sometimes encounter coworkers who have a destructive agenda. Here's how to evaluate the situation and respond appropriately: [How to Handle Enemies & Adversaries](#).

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