



Ten Ways To Tick Off Your Coworkers

By Kurt von Schleicher

Let's face it, not everyone of us get along all the time perfectly at work. To be successful in your work, you at least need the respect and support of others—your customers, suppliers, coworkers, and management. But sometimes, despite your best efforts to win their support, bad habits creep into your daily work life and simply drive others crazy. Here are ten surefire ways to make sure your efforts to win their support don't backfire. If any of these sound kind of familiar, you could be leaving your coworkers fuming.

“Do for others as you would like them to do for you.” – Jesus Christ [Lk 6:31].

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, But also to the interests of others” –Paul, [Phil. 2:4 niv].

1. Is it always all about you?

Are you talking about you too much? Are you preoccupied with your own career path and looking good at the expense of others? Do you tell jokes at others expense or put others down while you pump yourself up? Are you always the hero in your stories, or do you share some mistakes you've made. If so, conduct yourself in such a way that other people will want to see you succeed– let their genuine support and admiration of who you are pull you to success. You will not enjoy great success in any field, unless a lot of people want you enjoying it. Do not be tardy, that's often due to pride or disorganization - it says my time is more important than yours.

2. Answering cell phone calls during meetings.

There is a time for cell phoning and a time to refrain from this. A surefire way to aggravate people is to consistently respond to calls in their presence, or to emails and pagers when in conversation with others. This sends a message that they are less important than the caller. Let the calls go and return them when your current conversation is over. If you are expecting an urgent call, alert those present beforehand. They will appreciate that you value their time and that you stay focused on matters at hand.

3. Sending voicemails that go on and on and on.

At the end of a voice message, replay it and hear how you sound. Difficulty in getting to the point? Just like giving a speech - state your objective or main message first and follow it with brief, supporting sub-points. Some people prefer voicemail, some email - each workplace has its own expectations.

4. Acting like a bureaucrat when you should be acting like a real Christian.

Do you drag out turnaround times and play control games? Do you create obstacles or barriers for others to do their work? Do you love rules and regulations more than people? Do you major on minors

and minor on majors – straining out a gnat only to swallow a camel? Hey, we all have our blind spots, but some have them so big you could drive a semi truck through them. The Pharisees of Jesus' day did these things and Christ called these religious hypocrites, ***"Blind guides! You strain out a gnat and swallow a camel"*** (Matt. 23:24 liv). Making mountains out of molehills is a surefire way to alienate people. Teach people how to navigate your organization efficiently, knowing when to stick with the rules and when to break them.

5. Hammer away on the top your laptop like it's a conga drum during training sessions.

Do you like to read the newspaper on company hours? Do you draw sketches of waves while in meetings? I used to in high school so I can relate. Yes, there are way too many meetings and you've got more important things to do. Yet doing non-relevant tasks when there is a set agenda sends a clear message that this event or these people are unimportant to you. Instead, be fully and prayerfully focused Christian - chances are if you completely engage, you will make important contributions while you show you are a committed team player.

6. "I'm like, ya know . . ."

You are what your words reveal more than you know. What do you talk like and about most? You may be communicating with people worldwide who know you only by the sound of your voice or the tone of your emails. Be careful with local slang. It has its place, but it doesn't translate as far as you want your positive influence to reach. Keep it simple enough for people to understand. Become conscious of how you use language and stop communicating in ways that cause you to sound inexperienced or unprofessional. Ask those who are constantly around you – those you trust and respect for feedback on this. Communication is so important! ***"You'll only hear true and right words from my mouth; not one syllable will be twisted or skewed"*** (Prov. 8:8 mess). ***"The more talk, the less truth; the wise measure their words"*** (Prov. 10:19 mess). ***"The speech of a good person clears the air; the words of the wicked pollute it"*** (Prov. 10:19). ***"Well-spoken words bring satisfaction"*** (Prov. 12:6 all vs frm Message).

7. Doing all your bills at the office.

Whether you are paying your bills, doing your nails, calling about your golfing hobby, planning your wedding, or placing an online order for a special gift, avoid doing them during your work hours. People understand short personal calls and respect emergencies, but they don't appreciate seeing you get paid to manage your personal life.

8. Skirting around the dress code.

A friend once told me it wasn't a skirt he was wearing, it was a kilt ...but looking at that Scottish thing still made me think he was skirting the issue. You know the apostle Paul talked about becoming all things to all people that he might win them. I think that would include your attire. Ask ten companies to define business casual and you'll have ten different definitions. In most places, dressing for work has never been more complicated - especially if you work at multiple locations. Hawaiian shirts are always in season at my work place, so I can't gripe. We Christians aim to please people short of sinful compromise, yes without being people-pleasers. We want to be modest and not draw attention to ourselves. We also don't want to be a dork at work that no one respects. Somewhat matching your typical customer's dress code I think is a good start at entering their culture to befriend them. And if you are visiting more than one client/customer on a given day and the codes conflict, don't make a big deal of it. Just go for a classic, neutral look and be prepared to flex - adding or losing a jacket or tie between locations. Represent your company or church well as unto the Lord. Consistently comply with your boss' rules though and know that the condition of your heart is far more important than the condition of your wardrobe. ***"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ"*** (Rom. 13:14 nkj). What does the world think when they see you? ***"The people came to take a look, not only at Jesus but also at Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead"*** (Jn. 12:9 Mess).

9. Taking it too easy on telecommute days.

Run a few errands and throw in a load of laundry? Hey, you're a hard worker and deserve work-life balance. Telecommuting can be a tremendous win-win but if you stretch it to its limits, you may blow the privilege – the policy for yourself and all the others. Maybe you're saying to yourself, but I don't telecommute. Well, most of us have certain privileges at work where we have total freedom out of the sight of delegated authorities and this principal of "doing your best even when others aren't watching you," still applies. Meet your deadlines, be readily available during business hours, and do excellent work – skip the temptation to make it appear like you are working but you're really not. God sees, so do it as if He was there with you – because He is. Be a good witness with your work habits. The Apostle Paul challenged us saying, ***“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”*** (Eph. 6:5-6). ***“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: ²³And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men”*** (Col 3:22 kjv).

10. Acting Flat-out unethically.

Make sure you are clear on your organization's ethics policies and have the courage and conviction to righteously uphold them. Force yourself to learn the employee manual etc. It's easy to draw the line on major violations but watch for the subtle ways you may be pulling others in the wrong direction to achieve goals—massaging numbers or data, violating copyright laws, or providing misleading information. If you find it too easy to negatively compromise then you just need to be saved, ...or you are not spending enough time in prayer and the word. Ask God for a heart to obey it. Hold high the standard for holiness before the watching world. Yes, raise the ethics bar high and hold yourself and others to it (in that order).