

A Toxic Work Environment hurts productivity, here is how to fix it

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What is a toxic work environment?

A toxic work environment is one in which discord and chaos prevail, whether the result is a jealous manager, vindictive co-workers, lack of discipline, and so on. Harder et al. (2014) define a toxic work environment as an environment that negatively impacts the viability of an organization. They specify: "It is reasonable to conclude that an organization can be considered toxic if it is ineffective as well as destructive to its employees"

A toxic work environment can cause problems in the working life of an employee and can reduce his / her job performance. Unfortunately, toxic environments occur in many organisations and are often identified by a climate of interpersonal conflict complexities, given the knowledge that human capital leads to the sustained growth and innovation of any organization.

Enhancing productivity is a big concern of every company around the globe regardless of nature, processes, functions, region, and sector of the organisation, but, ' productivity ' varies depending on the organization's vision and objectives. If an employee feels negative about the organisation, he/she tends to compromise the level of productivity of his / her work,

In a study by Amna Anjum, 1 Ahmed Faisal Siddiqi and Samma Faiz Rasool³ in 2018, to determine the direct influence of toxic workplace environment dimensions which are harassment, bullying, ostracism and incivility on Job productivity. In their research they discovered that these dimensions have a significant negative effect on job productivity,

How do you see that you are in a toxic environment?

- You experience verbal abuse
- You are always stressed
- You are being overworked
- Gossips and rumours
- Increased turn over
- Your Work-Life Balance Is Out Of question
- People take credit for things they did not do
- There is poor communication
- There is a culture of sexual harassment.

Eradicating the toxic culture in a work environment:

1. Leading by example

It is up to the leadership, not the employees, to make sure that everyone respects the core values and feels valued at the company. Leaders must recognize their responsibility in encouraging and discouraging certain behaviours. When management demonstrates—walks and talks—a service attitude, the employees will do the same. When employees serve customers with this service attitude, customer satisfaction soars.

1. Morality

Everybody has their own moral foundation, but if employees are asked or ordered regularly to do things that violate theirs, you can rest assured that they will not stay long.

1. Stress reduction

Note the actual environment in which people work. Long workdays can lead to stress levels if spent without natural light or fresh air. Employees need an opportunity to step away from their responsibilities and refresh themselves. The amount of time spent recuperating during a holiday or long weekend almost always outweighs any potential productivity loss.

1. Recognition

Recognition is one of the most powerful ways to combat a toxic environment, although there are many workplaces where it is sorely missing. Convey positive messages to others. Employees should express appreciation for colleagues, members of the team, superiors and the work they do. Recognize that people like to feel appreciated in different ways.

As Josh Bersin mentioned in an article in Forbes outlining some of his research findings, "... our research shows certainly that 83 percent of the organisations we surveyed suffer from a ' recognition ' deficit, and these businesses are underperforming their peers." While remembering any great contribution to your organisation may seem a daunting challenge, both large and small, modern methods such as peer-to-peer recognition can take almost all the heavy lifting out of the equation.

1. Policies and Procedures

Establish and implement effective policies and procedures for communication that tackle toxic factors such as harassment and bullying. Companies rarely maintain specific language policies that clearly define a spectrum of banned behaviours. Once the policy is in place, the leaders must ensure that all employees undergo the training on how to recognise, react and report these toxic behaviours.

1. Transparency

People feel valued, trusted and part of something greater than themselves, when there's a culture of transparency. That's a powerful state of mind to put people in, and it starts with creating a shared

reality. A good way to show transparency is to gather employees once in a week to review your objectives, major events whether good or bad. Every employee should be free to ask questions and voice their opinion.

1. Try to concentrate on transforming a bad situation into a good learning opportunity.

The greatest personal growth frequently comes from succeeding in the toughest conditions. When employees work in a toxic environment, they should strive to pay close attention to the lessons he/she can learn from practice.

Even though one can function in a truly toxic atmosphere, a person should strive not to contribute to the work environment's toxicity and instead seek to be of use in eliminating the toxic factors from the workplace. When employees have a sense of social support, appreciation, and a positive work environment, they perform better.

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