BET & MPA
Coffee and Conversation Series
Managing Workplace Drama
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From software hacks to interpersonal employee conflicts -- whether you are facing a legitimate crisis or turmoil caused from workplace drama, situational understanding and management can lead to the effective resolution of the issue and the creation of a professional response to manage the risks in today’s workplaces.
If you think this session is about crisis communication or active shooter training, sorry to disappoint.

Managing Workplace Dramas caused by workplace crises is the topic for today and likely to be far more common ....
What is workplace drama?

*A response to a real or perceived negative work environment or incident*
Why does it matter?

- Drama costs time, money, productivity, morale and stress
- Drama can poison the team
- Drama can sabotage your career
- Drama can increase staff turnover rates

University of Warwick study found:
- Worker happiness led to a 12% spike in productivity
- Unhappy workers were 10% less productive
Who owns this?

* Is it a Management issue?

* Is it an Employee issue?
How do I know this is going on?
Situational Awareness vs. Understanding

* Situational Awareness – the 50,000 foot view
* Situational Understanding – the 360-degree view
* Not one best style of managing or leading
* Successful leaders are those who adapt their style to a given situation (or individual)
  * Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey
Management tools:

- Coaching
- Directing
- Delegating
- Supporting
Managers - Do your job.

- Supervisors set the standard
- Start setting expectations and providing direction from the beginning
- Respond immediately when issues erupt
- Reinforce positive behavior
- Take responsibility to provide corrective action when needed.
Types of Drama Personalities

- Complainer
- Cynic
- Controller
- Caretaker

Each type has its own unique management challenge
What is the impact of these types drama types on an office or team?
How Can Managers and Employees Do This?

* Get out of your own drama
* Know your own blind spots
* Get feedback from colleagues and friends and family
* Keep yourself in check
* Separate yourself from the situation
* Craft a consistent response for the varied types
How Can Managers and Employees Do This?

- Decide when best to address/confront the individual
- Stay calm, open, compassionate and firm
- Summarize the facts of situation and behavior observed
- Listen to the rationale given for behavior – 1 time only
- Clarify your understanding of the rationale
- Be clear about your expectations and how the behavior doesn’t meet them
- Summarize why it matters
- Get their commitment
- Validate and reward new behavior
- Don’t get hooked into the drama, play favorites
Are There Preventative Measures?

- Foster a climate of “good” citizenship and sportsmanship in the office
- Help people manage emotions
- Show respect and compassion when having “the” conversation
- Be aware of the possible triggers and manage team
- Be prepared to respond with appropriate management tool:
  - Coaching
  - Directing
  - Delegating
  - Supporting
- Reinforce positive behavior


Green, Alison. *How to handle Chronic Complainers on Your Staff.* 
https://www.inc.com/alison-green/how-to-handle-chronic-complainers-on-your-staff.html
References


