

3 Office Dragons and Weapons to Slay Them

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Dragons are huge, dominating, fictitious creatures. Medieval writers had vivid imaginations for big, scary things. For many people, work is like a dragon. It can be overwhelming and certainly dominates well over half of our waking hours. Sometimes the people we work with can be pretty “fiery” creatures to deal with, too. In dragon-fighting, the important thing to remember is that it’s a matter of the mind. Take care of your attitude today... it’s your primary weapon against office dragons!

There are many dragon species at work. Three of the most common perceived species are leaders, co-workers and self. Yes, you can be a dragon to yourself.

1 Leaders

Leaders can be dragons when they:

- don’t communicate on the employee’s level
- give poor direction
- don’t provide necessary information
- show favoritism
- don’t follow through on what they say
- set unrealistic expectations
- procrastinate
- don’t resolve conflicts
- are inflexible

There really are some dragon leaders, but most of the time, leaders are not dragons. They just appear to be that way to employees. People in management positions usually have

Ensure You Are Not a Co-worker Dragon

- Focus on your job.
- Cooperate as a team player.
- Avoid complaining.
- Show enthusiasm for your job.
- Keep confidential information to yourself.
- Show respect for co-workers.
- Avoid gossiping.
- Produce high-quality products.
- Assist co-workers when they need it.
- Walk your talk.
- Share necessary information.
- Skip “TMI” sharing.
- Follow company policies and directives.
- Be proactive, not reactive.

good reasons for taking certain actions and for making the decisions they make.

2 Co-workers

Co-workers can be dragons when they:

- gossip
- convey a bad mood at the office
- bring personal problems to the office
- don't perform their part of a job
- aren't a team player
- don't share necessary information
- complain
- have a "that's not my job" attitude

There really are co-worker dragons. We've all worked with them at one time or another. Throughout the rest of this workbook, you will learn tips and techniques to deal positively with co-worker dragons. You might have to try a variety of techniques depending on the dragon and the situation.

3 Yourself

You can be a dragon to yourself when you:

- don't focus on the job
- let others damage your attitude
- lack assertiveness
- don't see your own potential
- try to please everyone
- fall into dragon habits
- lack confidence
- take criticism personally

You can do more harm to yourself with negative thinking than any outside dragon. It is your thought process and attitude that controls your internal dragon. You have the power at any time to tame your dragon and put out the fire of any dragon-like qualities.

Take the "Are You A Dragon To Yourself?" assessment at <http://goo.gl/ctVUX>.

Weapons to win

There is one tactic that will truly slay dragons. Face them! Dragons won't go away unless you learn to face them in a positive fashion. Here are suggestions on how to face dragons professionally. Remember, this includes when you are a dragon to yourself.

Act... don't react

Reaction cycles never end. Only when you decide to think and act independently will you progress toward your goal. Reacting is responding to your immediate feeling. It puts you at the mercy of the dragon.

Acting is proactive. It's thinking through what is happening and taking positive steps. It seeks a win/win, not a win/lose. This makes you feel good about what could be a negative situation. You probably will respond differently to a situation if you act rather than react.

Educate the dragon

Some dragons don't even know they are dragons. Think about how, when and where you can approach the dragon to talk about his or her behaviors. Try to help the dragon see the negative impact of these behaviors, and provide positive techniques the dragon can use to combat them.

Confront the dragon

There are certain dragon species you have to confront head on. You have to be careful how and when you confront the dragon, and what words you use. You want the person to know you are serious and want the dragon-like behaviors to stop.

Keep in mind the following:

- Make sure you have all the facts about the situation.
- Have a plan before confronting the dragon face to face. Decide when and where you will talk to the dragon, how you will do this, and what you will say.
- Use non-threatening language. You don't want to lower your standards and be like the dragon. You can make your point by selecting appropriate words and being firm.
- Let the dragon know by your speech, body language and facial expression that you mean business.
- Make eye contact with the dragon.
- State your expectations for future behavior.
- If it happens again, confront the dragon again.

Focus on self-change vs changing others

A good first step is communicating with the dragon. Informing someone and offering suggestions can sometimes be helpful because people don't always see their negative attitude or behavior. However, in the final analysis every adult does as he or she chooses. When you can't change a situation or a person's behavior, look at changing your view about this person. You can still control your attitude.

Take control

Maybe you cannot control how much you work or what kind of work is given to you, but you can establish the priorities, the manner or format, and how you organize it. You can control how you accept responsibility. Can you rise to the challenge when given certain tasks, or do you complain? Being organized, knowledgeable and positive about work and people gives you a sense of control.

Make friends

You spend more time with co-workers than you do with your family or friends. People at work must become allies instead of dragons. The work relationship requires respect, honesty, confidentiality, appreciation, communication and energy.

Almost every organization has a dragon floating around. Is there a dragon you can help? Are there people at work you can be a friend to? Remember, even dragons need a friend or two.

We can't be successful by ourselves in the workplace; we must work together with respect and understanding. Success will come by your treating others with kindness and respect. No matter what dragon you are dealing with, using these weapons will benefit your career, makes for good business practice and opens your future possibilities:

- Increased peer synergy
- Building relationships/rapport with others

about the author



Joan Burge is known as the red-lipstick-wearing "Rock Star" of administrative and executive Assistant training and a successful entrepreneur who created a unique niche in 1990 by founding a training company that would provide sophisticated, robust educational programs and information to administrative professionals. Joan is an accomplished author (8 books), professional speaker, consultant and corporate trainer. She is the creator of: *Annual Conference for Administrative Excellence™*; *World Class Assistant™* Certification course; *Star Achievement Series®* Certification and Designation course; 30+ customized workshops, 200+ educational videos, 150+ articles and 900+ blogs for executive and administrative Assistants. Her company, Office Dynamics International, is a global industry leader which offers a broad range of solutions and provides high-performance, sophisticated executive and administrative Assistant training and coaching. For more information visit www.officedynamics.com.

