

ForeWord Reviews

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BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Bad Bosses, Crazy Coworkers & Other Office Idiots: 201 Smart Ways to Handle the Toughest People Issues

Vicky Oliver

Sourcebooks

978-1-4022-1253-6

Five Stars (out of Five)

“You wonder: can’t your boss get out early once in a while, get a life, get meds, get out of your hair, or maybe, oh please dear hiring gods, just get a new job?” Readers who are familiar with these pleas may enjoy this book about how to deal with “bosses from hell” and other neurotic coworkers.

Although the writing style is light and funny, the author provides serious advice about dealing with various personality types commonly found in a work environment. Not a formal personality analysis like Myers-Briggs, which gives a more comprehensive assessment and tools for adapting to basic personality styles, the book groups problem areas more informally into the categories of “Bosses from Hell,” “Colleagues from Purgatory,” and “When the Problem Lies Within.”

Readers may recognize descriptions of their least favorite bosses, and they will learn how to deal with the bullies, micromanagers, spin doctors, snoops, and more. Each type of bad boss behavior is accompanied by a suggested solution that contains one or two actions to try to mitigate the situation. One solution describes dealing with a new boss by acting as if one is starting a new job and preparing a report of accomplishments to review with the new boss as though for a job interview. The book offers specific advice for dealing with coworkers with particular personalities like the liar and the grumpy martyr, and general advice for getting along with difficult personalities, like not

taking anything personally, ignoring people's flaws, forgiving, and "feeling flattered by a coworker's jealousy instead of resenting it." Sprinkled throughout the book are golden rules and "Management Mantra" sidebars with advice and inspirational quotes.

The author encourages readers to identify the problem they're trying to overcome and go to the appropriate chapter for a more in-depth analysis and recommended solutions. However, the book is so entertaining that readers may want to read it cover to cover and will discover a lot of familiar personality traits that they recognize in their coworkers and themselves.

Oliver's best advice comes in the last chapter, the conclusion. She wisely cautions that leaving a job to escape a difficult coworker doesn't help if the same situation is encountered again in the future. She advocates being less sensitive to criticism and becoming more tolerant and less critical of others, while also dealing with the problem using the recommended techniques.

Featured on television, print, and radio, Vicky Oliver is a recognized authority on career development. Her first book, *301 Smart Answers to Tough Interview Questions*, won a 2010 Eric Hoffer Award. She also gives seminars on job hunting, networking, and other business topics.

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