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TOXIC PEOPLE

Decontaminate Difficult People at Work
Without Using Weapons or Duct Tape

By Marsha Petrie Sue

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*There are people who have been put on this earth to suck the life out of you.
Steamrollers, Zipper Lips, Know-It-Alls, Back Stabbers, Needy Weenies.
And worst of all: Whine and Cheesers.*



It doesn't have to be that way. Marsha Petrie Sue, known as "The Decontaminator of Toxic People," has learned how to deal with them, and shares her insights and ideas in **TOXIC PEOPLE (Wiley; \$24.95; 978-0-470-14768-9; October 2007; Cloth)**.

Toxic People must be decontaminated. Petrie Sue's approach to dealing with difficult people, poor communication and conflict is one that is unique, funny and practical.

Boredom is forbidden in Petrie Sue's **TOXIC PEOPLE**. She provides us with lessons for dealing with difficult people using personal vignettes, real life situations and a no-nonsense straight forward approach and sound advice.

- Stay in control every time and don't give your power away.
- Identify the six types of difficult people and how they make you feel.
- Win the blame game and stop "awfulizing."
- Manage unacceptable behavior and don't stoop to their level.
- Identify your toxic behavior and how to change it.
- Watch your mouth and body language.
- Take personal responsibility and stop making excuses.

You have choices: Take It, Leave It or Change It

Take it: The situation might not be perfect but it's livable – for now. There is a plan so the future will be better and different.

Leave it: Chose to step out of your comfort zone if you can't accept the way things are, and you can't change them. No risk, no reward. Give yourself permission to walk away.

Change it: Tackling what is going on right now by applying your skills or learning new approaches. If the other two options aren't an option, then this is the only thing you've got left.

Take a look around the office. Can you identify:

Steamrollers: Also known as exploders, tyrants, or bullies, they can be very intimidating. They like to remain in their position of power by attacking without warning, usually from a command post where they are safely out of reach from everyone else. Quick to anger, extremely judgmental and must remain in control; they don't care if they are liked as long as people fear them enough to leave them alone.

Back Stabbers: As many as one of every 30 people in high performing business situations was identified as a Back Stabber. They love to gossip and spread damaging rumors, take credit for other people's work, and blame others whenever anything goes wrong. Clever at identifying other people's limitations and using it to their advantage, they are interestingly also good at building allies and will try to gang up before attacking.

Know-it-Alls: Common among professionals such as doctors, attorneys, and engineers, these people like to appear "always right," even when they are only pseudo experts. They make up details to ensure you believe what they say, even when they might be leading you astray. Arrogant and aggressive, their tone is usually condescending; but the real telltale behavior is their refusal to consider anything but their own views.

Or perhaps your some colleagues may be **Zipper Lips, Needy Weenies** and **Whine and Cheesers**, as further defined in the book.

Petrie Sue gives clear examples, words of wisdom, survival tactics, but never strays from providing clear, practical advice on how to deal with these people. More importantly, she also includes a chapter on how to cure toxic infections, in case you recognize the signs in yourself.

- ❖ Energize yourself, and get out of the negative spiral.
- ❖ Nurture the spirit. Stay hopeful and take risks, find balance and learn to enjoy time with your family.
- ❖ Remain self-confident by accepting who you are.
- ❖ Stop making excuses and get proper rest, eat right, and exercise.

It's important to remember that you can't change the Toxic People, only your own relationship with them. Petrie Sue will help you develop the appropriate response, not reaction, to any dilemma so that you can look forward to tranquil days ahead, so put away the weapons and duct tape.

About the author

A successful professional speaker, Marsha Petrie Sue has been called "The Decontaminator of Toxic People" because she dares people to take personal responsibility for their communication, relationships and success. Her personal stories coupled with her business experience make her a unique commodity in the speaking industry. Her articles are published in a variety of professional newsletters and magazines including *Legal Management*, *The National Society of Orthopedic Administrators*, *Mortgage Bankers Association Campus News*, and many others.

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