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Eight Ways To Handle A Good Employee Who Causes Friction



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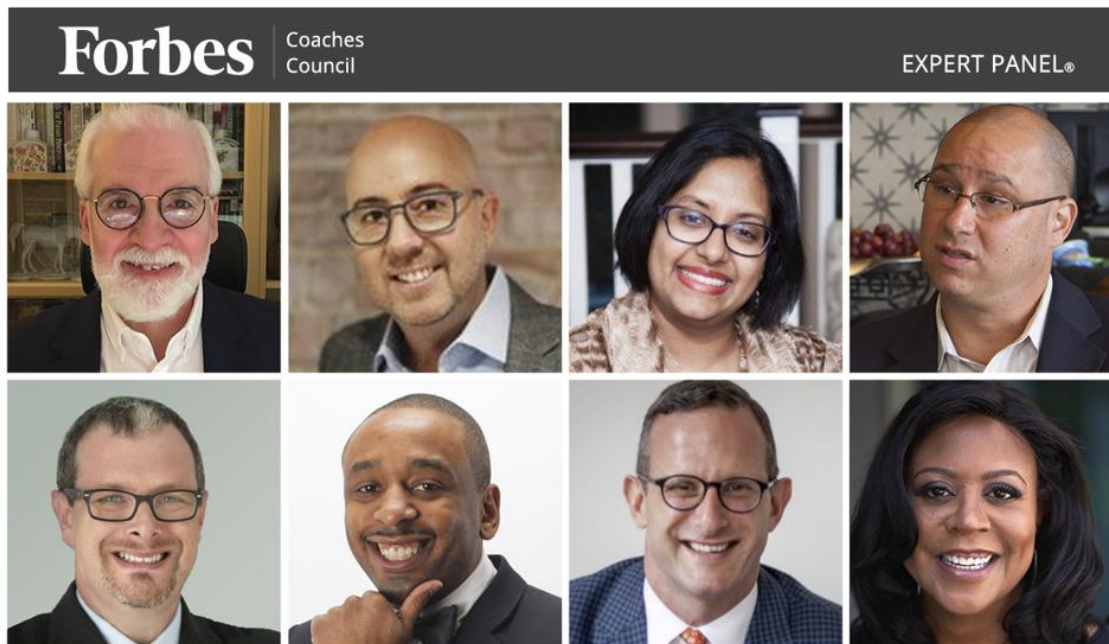
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Leadership

Occasionally, conflicts arise among the employees on a team. If one team member is a consistent source of friction and isn't contributing as much as they should be, management may simply decide to let them go.

However, if the person displaying poor behavior with their peers is also highly talented, dedicated and disciplined, the decision may not be so clear-cut. What can a leader do to reduce friction and retain such a valued individual contributor?

Here, eight members of [Forbes Coaches Council](#) look at methods for helping valuable yet problematic employees correct their behavior so that the whole team can thrive.



Forbes Coaches Council members discuss ways to deal with a good employee who is a constant source of team friction. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

1. Understand The Source Of The Behavior

It is key to understand the source of this talented team member's behavior. Do your best to understand the "why" behind it. Rather than try to deal with the consequences, look for solutions to the triggers that provoke friction that will go to the root of the cause. Helping this team member embark on a voyage of self-discovery and assisting them to understand the impact of their behavior will also be transformational. - [Luis Costa, Luis Costa - coach · facilitator · speaker](#)

2. Hold Them Accountable Before They Cause Damage

People skills are table stakes. They need to be held accountable for their behavior before they inflict damage. This person is an ideal candidate for coaching with a 360-degree feedback tool and an emotional intelligence assessment to help with goal setting. If you do not address the behaviors, they will begin to shape the culture

of your organization and reflect your own leadership skills. -

[Eugene Dilan, DILAN Consulting Group](#)

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3. Cultivate An Environment Of Understanding

Cultivate an understanding environment where teammates can engage and better leverage each other’s strengths. A consistent source of friction from a valued team member is indicative of specific, deeper issues, perhaps differences in working style.

Manage it with both direct, one-on-one conversations and team discourse on thematic areas of relevance. Tolerance and respect are gained through mutual trust. - [Arthi Rabikrisson, Prerna Advisory](#)

4. Introduce An ‘Objective Messenger’

In the process of creating awareness, I would introduce an “objective messenger” to help challenging team members “see” themselves versus just “defend” themselves. In my practice, I use behavioral assessments (a combination of DISC and motivators) for team building. Having this information allows me to be an “objective voice,” discussing the “pros and cons” of each behavioral style, which opens the door to one-on-one application and

coaching. - [Jeff Klubeck, Get A Klu, Inc.](#)

[Forbes Coaches Council](#) is an invitation-only community for leading business and career coaches. *Do I qualify?*

5. Find A Productive Way To Cordon Them Off

It's a fact that some people are great at working in teams, while others are more effective in silos. The best option is to explore whether there's a productive way to cordon off the person who is the source of friction by giving them their own projects that involve little peer interaction. If not, you may need to let them go; otherwise, they could drive other contributors away and leave you with a depleted, unhappy team. - [Scott Singer, Insider Career Strategies](#)

6. Have A One-On-One Conversation

Friction isn't always a bad thing, but if it's impacting the overall effectiveness of the team, then I would recommend having a one-on-one with the individual to see how they perceive their performance and cohesion with the team. There is a potential opportunity to make team-building part of their development plan. - [Mike Ambassador Bruny, No More Reasonable Doubt](#)

7. Level The Playing Field

Sometimes that "toxic" team member is a lightning rod of real issues worth exploring. Without singling anyone out, invite your team together to talk about what works and what doesn't, and to envision their North Star of what great teamwork looks like. This

creates a level playing field and an objective that everybody can aspire to together, and it might even help the challenging individual be more collaborative. - [Steve Salee, Wildfire Strategies](#)

8. Step Fully Into Your Role As Leader

Leadership comes with the good, the bad and, sometimes, the ugly. During challenging situations, you are being prompted to step fully into your role as leader. Step into your authentic leadership shoes courageously. Be transparent and invite a conversation by providing observations of the team member's behaviors that convey their capabilities, motivation and perspective. - [Sheila Carmichael, Transitions D2D, LLC](#)



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