

Bad Attitude? Who, Me?



by Adrienne Twigg and Tim Twigg

The day starts off fine. You kiss your spouse and kids goodbye and wish everyone a good day. Traffic isn't as bad as usual on your drive to the office. And then, as you pull into the parking lot, you begin feeling that feeling again. That feeling you get when you drive into the office parking lot and see that car, the one the employee with the bad attitude drives.

You think to yourself, "OK, I'm not going to let this person get to me today. I am going to be the thermostat and set the tone, as opposed to the thermometer that reacts to the mood of someone else." And then, even with your good intentions and positive, self-affirming talk, it happens. The ignored greeting, the eye roll, the terse response to a simple question sends your mood into a downward spiral.

Pete Luongo said, "Whether an organization succeeds or fails is determined by the people who show up for work every day. It is the people with whom the customers/patients/clients interact who make a difference. In fact, when your company's name is mentioned, it is the faces and/or performances and interactions of your people that your customers remember." This is true whether it's face-to-face or a telephone transaction.

Competency, skills, and task proficiency are key factors of successful performance, but attitude is really the make-or-break aspect of employment. Good leaders and managers realize that to maintain and/or build the trust and confidence with all employees, bad attitudes must be addressed and dealt with in a proactive and constructive manner. You can be sure other employees are watching to see how the leader or manager will handle the situation.

Will the leader simply pretend not to see the negative behaviors and thereby accept them, or will the leader address the negative behaviors with the employee in a fair and straightforward way? The operative word here is “accept.” As Michael Henry Cohen said, “what we accept, we teach.”

Sometimes leaders and/or managers will shy away from addressing situations involving employee conflict because they know they will have to continue to work with this same person tomorrow, and they fear a lingering negative effect of the conversation if it does not go well. They are not sure how to handle the conflict.

Effective leaders know there are times that dealing with conflict and confrontation are required to maintain the integrity of the organization or company and to remain in alignment with the vision and values of the company’s mission. They also understand it is critical to address these situations sooner rather than later.

How do we define the employee with the bad attitude? I came across this definition: “Someone who either consciously or unconsciously disrupts or hinders the advancement of productivity in the workplace.”

Dealing with an employee who is proficient in carrying out the job duties and responsibilities but is toxic to the team can be one of the most stressful aspects of the leader’s job.

By turning a blind eye and not addressing the negative behaviors, the leader is, in effect, accepting and approving of the negative behavior(s) being exhibited.

Strong leaders understand the concept of having difficult conversations with employees and addressing negative behaviors and deficient job performance. They understand that doing it firmly – while demonstrating and extending respect, calmness, and emotional intelligence – will ultimately lead to a stronger, more stable culture and work environment for all employees.

So, how do you begin the conversation with this employee? Here are ideas to consider:

- 1 Conduct conversation in a private, quiet area, where you will not be interrupted.** Make certain that you and the employee can talk through the issues at hand without interruption. The goal is not to embarrass or humiliate this employee, but to have a calm and constructive dialogue.
- 2 Recognize and remain focused on the employee’s negative behaviors and how these behaviors affect the team and customers/clients/patients.** This will allow the leader to address the problematic behaviors and avoid attacking the employee on a personal level. It is very easy to be drawn into an emotional standoff if you find yourself focusing on the person instead of the behaviors. No one wins in that circumstance.
- 3 Identify the negative or unacceptable behavior(s) with specifics.** Generalities will not work. Be ready to name the time, place, and events. This is another reason the discussion should take place as soon as possible after the behaviors are seen. By doing so in a timely manner, the facts of the event, as well as the urgency, can be maintained in a truer state. If necessary, give alternative ideas for how specific situations could be handled in a more appropriate manner by the employee.
- 4 Set a timeline and establish when you expect the behavior improvements to take place.** Most often, it will be immediately. If so, state that change is to take place immediately. If it is to be a gradual change or improvement, explain the details and the timeline.
- 5 Establish the consequences for negative behaviors that are not corrected.** Whether it be the employee is sent home and suspended for the day without pay or employment is terminated, the consequences should be stated and clear.
- 6 Extend an opportunity for feedback from the employee.** Be willing to listen to the employee’s perspective. Perhaps there is a specific reason for the negative behaviors being exhibited. Be prepared to listen and respond if there are ways you can help. John Maxwell, Leadership Coach, said, “Great leaders listen, learn, and lead.”

The word “conflict” in itself can be considered an amoral word. As an example, consider the word “fire.” Fire is amoral. It can burn down your house, or it can warm your food.

Many times, when we hear the word “conflict” it tends to carry a negative connotation. Is there really such an animal as positive conflict?

Yes, there is, and it takes a willingness to push past our insecurities and self-doubts to focus on the positive outcomes and positive results we so desperately want to see.



Employee turnover is costly. It carries not only a financial toll, but also an emotional toll. It can be a complete morale drain for the manager and the team. In addition, the tight labor market that exists today can add another level of urgency to retaining quality employees.

You cannot force a person to change their personality. You can, however, require and expect a certain level of professionalism and courteous behavior in the workplace. These “soft skills” should be built into the employees’ job descriptions and should align with the professional conduct code you have set forth in your values and vision for the company.

Make sure your employees understand that attitude and behavior are integral components of performance that support (or hinder) personal and organizational success. Written communication (personnel policy manuals, job descriptions, performance appraisals) and verbal communication, along with timely constructive feedback, are essential for successful performance management. When communication is linked to the organization’s vision and goals, it becomes more objective, less emotional and more beneficial for everyone involved.



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Ask the Consultant

Q: Can you please provide ADA codes for the following procedures?

- Coronally advanced flap
- Coronally advanced flap with connective tissue graft
- Coronally advanced laterally moved flap
- Apically positioned flap

A: **Coronally advanced flap:**
• **D4245 – APICALLY POSITIONED FLAP**

Procedure is used to preserve keratinized gingiva in conjunction with osseous resection and second stage implant procedure. Procedure may also be used to preserve keratinized/attached gingiva during surgical exposure of labially impacted teeth, and may be used during treatment of peri-implantitis.

Coronally advanced flap with connective tissue graft:

D4273 – AUTOGENOUS CONNECTIVE TISSUE GRAFT PROCEDURE (INCLUDING DONOR AND RECIPIENT SURGICAL SITES) FIRST TOOTH, IMPLANT, OR EDENTULOUS TOOTH POSITION IN GRAFT

There are two surgical sites. The recipient site utilizes a split thickness incision, retaining the overlapping flap of gingiva and/or mucosa. The connective tissue is dissected from a separate donor site leaving an epithelialized flap for closure.

With regard to the two remaining codes, additional details would be required in order to locate the proper CDT code.

Response provided by [Ramona Colbert](#).

FUN! Fact

Consumers in the U.S. buy **14 million gallons of toothpaste every year.**

In North America, people purchase over **3 million miles of dental floss every year.**



Quote-Worthy

“ Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work. ”

— Vince Lombardi

Service Savvy

Are You Making Changes?

Is your office making changes to your practice computers or Practice Management software?

If your office is planning to:

- Upgrade your Practice Management System to a new version
- Upgrade any workstations or the main server
- Convert to a new/different Practice Management System

Please contact Trojan's Software Support. Depending on your current or new Practice Management System, specific programs may need to be installed.

The Henry Schein (*Dentrix*, *Easy Dental software*) and Patterson (*Eaglesoft*) products do require a reinstallation of the Trojan integration. This software is not provided by Trojan; please contact your vendor for assistance.

PLEASE NOTE: IF USING DENTRIX AND THE OFFICE UPGRADES TO G6.2 OR HIGHER, FIRST YOU WILL NEED TO OBTAIN THE **DENTRIX TROJAN 6.1.45** INSTALL FILES FROM DENTRIX SUPPORT, BEFORE TROJAN CAN LOAD OUR BENEFIT PLANS.

Other Trojan programs that may require reinstallation:

- Trojan Benefit Service Program
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- Trojan Eligibility Program
- Trojan Dr Direct (Electronic Claims)
- Trojan Express Collect

If your IT Company is needed for any type of reinstallation, please feel free to provide them with the number to Software Support. Our representatives would be more than happy to speak with them.

If you have questions, or need assistance, please call Trojan Software Support at 800-451-9823, Ext. 1. Or, visit Trojanonline.com and click the Support Appt. button to schedule a support call time that is convenient for you.

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— L.F.D.

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