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# JERKS AT WORK

***TOXIC COWORKERS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM***

**By TESSA WEST**

*"West's simultaneously humorous and no-nonsense approach to collegiality is broadly applicable. Leaders and workers alike will find in West an astute and personable guide."*

**—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**

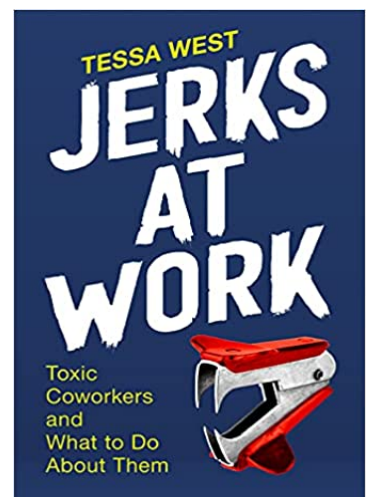
From open floor plans and Zoom calls to Slack channels, the workplace has changed a lot over the years. But there's one thing that never changes: you'll always encounter jerks. Social psychologist Tessa West reveals scientific-based strategies to dealing with—and ultimately breaking free from—the people who make work and life miserable, whether it's an overbearing boss, an irritating coworker, or sometimes, even you. Stressful work environments bleed into our home life and can take a toll on our mental health, so it's crucial to resolve workplace conflicts and learn how to cooperate with even the most problematic colleagues.

**JERKS AT WORK: Toxic Coworkers and What to Do About Them (on sale January 25, 2022)** is the playbook that you wish you didn't need but you'll always turn to, for anyone who's ever cried in the bathroom stall at the office or Googled "how to deal with a terrible boss."

Drawing on decades of original research on how people communicate with, perceive, and relate to one another, this effective and at times hilarious guide profiles the seven jerks you're most likely to encounter at work. West digs deep into each type's inner workings, motives, insecurities, and habits—and in the process lays out an effective game plan to dealing with and stopping each jerk in their tracks.

A few workplace archetypes are...

- **The Kiss-up/Kiss-down** coworkers are so endeared to their managers that, if you have to report them, do it in small doses over time--otherwise, you'll trigger cognitive dissonance in your brainwashed boss.
- **The Credit-Stealer** is a teammate who looks out only for the betterment of themselves and will betray your trust if your idea is good enough to steal.



- **The Bulldozer** often gains extra influence in meetings by making sure they're the first person to talk, even by saying "let's start by all sharing our names," which research shows portrays them as powerful. Don't let them speak first!
- **The Micromanager** develops compulsive habits due to poor managerial training and public shaming. They are under the false impression that the closer monitoring they do will result in better performance.

Many of us cope with difficult workplace relationships by venting to friends, distancing from the social scene at work, or gossiping in hopes that someone will hear what's happening and act. Rather than simply coping, West equips readers with the tools and knowledge to deal with jerks at work and resolve any lingering issues.

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## About the Author



Tessa West is an Associate Professor of Psychology at New York University, where she is a leading expert on interpersonal interaction and communication. She has published over 60 articles in the field of psychology's most prestigious journals and has received multiple grants from the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. She writes regularly about her research in the *Wall Street Journal*.

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## Praise for JERKS AT WORK

"Most of your happiness at work is based on personal relationships. Being able to manage those relationships when things get difficult is key to your success at work—and in life. Jerks at Work is a practical and engaging set of tools. Buy it."—**Scott Galloway, author of *The Four***

"Jerks at Work is a breezy and fun read for anyone who wants happier and healthier relationships at work. Tessa West puts a name to the types of jerks that can make your work life miserable, while also giving practical advice for how to spot them and how to disarm them. This a book you will refer back to again and again."—**Annie Duke, author of *How to Decide***

"You never know when a jerk is going to get in the way of your success, but with Jerks at Work you can finally protect yourself. This book is career insurance!" —**Vanessa Van Edwards, author of *Captivate***

"This book provides the key to working smarter, better, and happier, no matter who you're working with."—**Nir Eyal, author of *Hooked and Indistractable***

"This is one of those proposals you read and you wish you were clever enough to come up with it. Regardless of what industry you're in, how junior you start, or how senior you become, everyone has interpersonal challenges at the office. It's a fertile ground for a book with a wide audience and Tessa is the

perfect person to write it. She knows the relevant science (is a well-known, accomplished social psychologist) but also has enough practical experience to combine the science with engaging stories to help communicate the main concepts. Can't wait to read the entire book."

**—Professor Jonah Berger, The Wharton School, bestselling author of *Contagious* and *Invisible Influence***

"Tessa West is a star in the field of social psychology. She's a stellar thinker, writer, and speaker, and *Jerks at Work* is poised to be a hit. We've all encountered a kiss-up-kick-down coworker, a micromanaging boss, or a workplace liar, and West explains what makes them tick, and how to prevent them from making the majority of our waking lives a nightmare."

**—Professor Adam Alter, New York University Stern School of Business, bestselling author of *Drunk Tank Pink* and *Irresistible***

"Given the depths of Dr. West's insights and the pathos on every page, *Jerks at Work* will, I predict, be the best management book of the 2020s. Dr. West's ability to express the ideas with such verve can transform a brilliant book into a bestseller. And Dr. West's personal charm, which will make her a staple of the speaker circuit and the newsroom, can turn a bestseller into something closer to a movement. I stand ready and eager to promote her movement in any way I can!"

**—Professor Eli J. Finkel, Northwestern University, author of *The All-Or-Nothing Marriage***