

Interoffice soap operas

You'd think people would have gotten over this kind of stuff in third grade.

But there it is – in almost every office, there are “soap operas” going on – the collections of rumor, innuendo, half-truths and outright lies – all material that would be better off left on morning television, where it belongs.

Why can't people grow up? Because to the drones that inhabit every office, gossip and rumors are much more entertaining than work.

The news media gets into the act, as well, packaging rumor and gossip as if it was truth.

As an office leader, what should you do when these soap operas start playing out their nasty little plots?

Fight them with truth.

Truth is always going to be on your side. If you're a leader, demand the names of people who have made these assertions. When people actually have to put their name to an assertion, they tend to stop their little lies and slander.

Beyond that, follow through to stop the dissemination of further rumors. Make it clear that this petty little nastiness won't be tolerated in your work environment.

If you're one of the soap-opera stars, then get yourself on the wagon. Don't believe everything you hear. Until you have evidence to the contrary, choose to believe the best in people. Refuse to disseminate all the stuff – let it die with you.

In short, become beyond reproach, and earn the respect of the people you work with. You're never going to earn their respect if you continually talk behind their back.

Office soap operas belong somewhere other than the office – leave them outside, where they belong.

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