

A PROFESSIONAL'S GUIDE TO OFFICE DRAMA

Melissa's Top

10

Proven Replies

Say it right the first time,
instead of:

"I wish I would
have said THAT!"



Melissa's Top 10 Proven Replies



As a rising professional, you may be confronted by those who are determined to block your path or break your spirit.

When faced with negativity and criticism, avoid retaliating with the same style of language.

My challenge to you – and myself– is to mindfully pursue the high road.

Living honorably in these mean-spirited times isn't easy, but it's worth the effort.

Positive and people-focused leaders are valued – even if their business is struggling – because they possess the soft skills needed to develop teams, manage change and boost productivity.

Here's how to reply with power, regardless of the situation.

1 If someone discredits or condemns you ...

Offer a disarming comeback, such as “I wouldn't say that. Here's what I would say ...” or “Not exactly; let me explain.”

If the insults continue, simply say, “That's an interesting perspective,” and walk away.

2 If someone interrupts you ...

Be diplomatic but hold your ground. Say, “Please make your point when I've finished mine.”

3 If someone is taking credit for your work ...

Speak up but keep emotions out of it. Say, “I want to clear up a potential misunderstanding about how my contributions to this project are being conveyed. Perhaps you're unaware of my role in . . .”

Melissa's Top 10 Proven Replies

4 If your boss calls you a slacker ...

Never laugh that off. Say, "I'm going to need you to clarify that comment. In what way am I not meeting expectations?"

5 If you're hearing an echo ...

Some people have trouble articulating their point of view, so they'll repeat yours instead. When a copycat comment echoes in your ears, rather than say, "I just said that" try this: "Thanks for affirming my position."

6 If you're being pressured to badmouth someone ...

Never take the bait. Say, "My preference is to share my thoughts about [Heather] when she is present. Let's schedule a time when the three of us can sit down together and discuss this."

7 If you're unsure of how to speak up in a meeting ...

Avoid comments like, "No questions from me."

Demonstrate strength even if you're the junior person in the room by asking questions such as "What's at risk?" or "What is the specific outcome we need to achieve?"

8 If you're dealing with a name caller ...

Turn the tables by asking, "Can you give me an example of a time when you've seen me being [pushy, aggressive, or overbearing]? I want to make sure I understand how these characteristics are affecting my performance."

9 If you're not hearing back from a prospect ...

Offer them an "almost" goodbye: "If you've decided to go in another direction or need more time, please let me know so I can free up the resources I'm reserving for you."

10 Need to say "no" nicely?

Say, "I want you to be successful, and I wish there was a way I could pull this together for you, but with the additional requirements we'll need to engage another resource. Let me know what your timeline looks like, and I'll see if we can accommodate you."