

*I always arrive late at the office, but I make up for it by leaving early-* Charles Lamb

There was a lady who prided herself on being compassionate, helpful, and a warrior for people. This woman spent countless hours fighting for the rights of workers. She is a super person. Enduring countless nights alone as a single parent. She eventually found a new man. A drunk. On to the next salvation mission. To save him beyond herself. A work warrior.

Another man worked all his life. yet, at some point, his wife had had enough. They divorced and he found himself poor and alone. To make matters worse, he was very abrasive. It's stunning that he was ever married. Someone at work called him out about the smell. He proceeded to wear one of those pine smelly things we put in our cars. Eventually he got fired for stealing. Workmates are not always what they appear to be.

Finally, lets take a look at one other woman who was young and very pretty. She had made her way up the ladder. This girl decided to wear tight jeans and provocative clothing. Yet, she was divorced too. Her bitch-like attitude seemed to rub people the wrong way. This wonderfully horrible person took away many worker privileges and rights to gain a hardline control. Eventually the people revolted and stole her desk. They soaked her chair. Wet tight jeans might make you angry. Finally, she had to go on stress leave. I call her the work fighter.

Those are just a few of the stories I have from my time at Canada Post. I know work. There is not one single type of person I have not encountered. That seems like a bold statement but I knew one guy that ate stamps. Trust me I have met them all. I have worked at some fun jobs. Currently though, I work at a nut house. While sorting mail I have encountered bombs, fights, animal noises, and bigotry. I'm not sure how I have survived it. Work puts relationships to the stress test.

In my mind, there are two kinds of working people. The good kind and the bad kind. I could say lazy and hardworking kind too, but I have met good lazy people and horribly bad good workers. This guy I worked with was a really good employee. Yet, his social skills were missing. Actually, I think they ran away in fear. On the other side, I worked with a lady who made indents with her elbows on a conveyor belt. She hated work. Yet, she was one of nicest people I know. There are all kinds of workers, but it still comes back to good and bad for me.

There are good workers. We all have experienced bad workers. I have tried to love bad people. Good people are far and few between. Yet, everyone of these types of people work with us. It's scary to think a group of workers are like-minded. It takes a certain type of person to work in the medical field or Canada Post. I do think the work place draws in similar people. I just look around me at work, am I really like them? The same type?

My wife has worked at several different types of jobs. Eventually, she gained a certificate in the medical field. She has noticed a huge difference in atmosphere between a medical office and Walmart. It's not that Walmart is a bad company. It's just that certain bulbs draw certain bugs. The medical field is full of single-minded professionals. Walmart has variety. Canada Post is the Noah's ark of humanity. I also know that not everyone is cut out for Walmart or mail processing. Clearly, certain people gravitate to certain jobs.

There is an interesting correlation between the wife and I. She trains new medical staff. I train people too. Although both workplaces are vastly different, the ones that work hard and are smart seem to make it. The others, invariably seem lost. Those who are lazy and are looking for the easy job quit within weeks. My job is not for everyone, especially the lazy. I'm sure that very

few jobs fit the lazy. No matter the type of career, you will always encounter smart and lazy workers.

Hilton is a company that many of us know. I bet most people have stayed in a Hilton hotel at some point. This last year, they were ranked number one in employee satisfaction. Why? It's the attention to detail by the latest CEO. He made the uniforms comfortable. They changed the staff rooms to look like the lobby. Hilton provided daycare and more time off. The details were not bent towards the customer but the employee. What happened? Business goes through the roof. It's hard to get a job there. They probably attract good people.

Is it all about more pay, working conditions, and incentives? Yes, I think it is. Early on in this book I talked about being trained at home. One of the good things is learning the value of work. My mom is a tough example. She was a really hard worker. Yet, she had no issue taking advantage of sick time. Upon her death, we found several instances of her trying to fight for more compensation. I wondered if she was a good worker or hell on wheels? Maybe she was fighting for better working conditions? My mom always taught me to work harder and work better. I loved that about her. Yet, I know she preached a workplace that valued her as a person. That may not have sat well with management at times.

Family gives us the tools to function at work. I bet they give us some defective tools too. I have a friend who is a very smart person. They are also a hard worker. Yet, they don't function well in high pressure jobs. I wonder if the home life tweaked his working habits. His mother was a very stern and demanding person. I know he hated that part of family life. I really mean it when I say that family trains us. Our view of work is affected by our view on family. My friend can't handle being pushed at work.

People make up a place called work. We spend more time there than at home with loved ones. Our relationships within our family affect relationships at work. What kind of worker are you? What will you tolerate? Will you endure and compromise? I'm positive that people change the atmosphere at work. Yet, work changes people too.

There probably are good and bad examples of work places. Yet, my 32 years at Canada Post have made me an expert at bad workplaces. Canada Post is undoubtedly the bad kind. These types of companies invite in bad workers. It's like social welfare with wages. Terrible workers know that the Post office will hire them for one reason. Most good workers will not stay. If there is value in employees and customers at Canada post, they must have buried it pretty deep. I'm thinking in the earth's core. Bad hires bad. Bad attracts bad too. Makes me look good, right?

I don't take sick time very often. For a few years I had perfect attendance. After 5 years I got a bronze key chain. After ten years perfect attendance (I'm stressing that) I received the same key chain but it was colored silver. Its stunning that they held a special meeting to hand out key chains. In that last meeting one fellow inquired where his ten-year key chain was. They said he missed half a day once so he was not eligible. I took sick time after that incident. So, did he and several others.

In the past, Canada post gave out leather jackets to retiring employees. It was a coveted item to be sure. Most people worked there over thirty years just to get that jacket. A few years ago, they changed their policy. They now give out a framed picture of a stamp. I have witnessed several people not attend their retirement announcement. It's insulting and humiliating to get a big stamp in a frame. One training officer told a group of employees that any monkey could do their job. Another manager told a group that one sick day is suspicious. How many people do

you think took two days or more after that announcement? I could go on but you and I get the framed picture.

There are some great workers at Canada Post. There is also a slew of swampy people that found employment there. I swear half of them are union reps. The difference (besides the obvious) between Hilton and the post office is how complicated sick time, clothing, and relationships are dealt with. I have witnessed many a good worker turn rouge because of bad policy and announcements. It's a shame some very good people and workers turned militant because of bad management.

It's not like all the managers are terrible, or that all the employees need encouragement. Work is a gathering of vastly different people. Of course, people are people. In a family, we don't get to pick them. With friends we do. At work we are forced but not forced into the relationships we have. I chose to work at Canada post. So, the relationships I have are my choosing. Conversely, I don't pick who works there. If I hate it that bad, I should get another job. We all know it isn't that simple. Putting food on the table is not a choice. Work is all about enduring, compromise, and toleration in the name of pay.

*Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one-Bill Gates*

Sometimes we have to work. Other times we want to work. Yet, all the experiences we have gained in our upbringing are used at work. Some of the lazy classmates from school work with us. A few of the hardest workers come from great family backgrounds. Have you ever said "how did they become a boss?" Workers have a past that shapes their work attitude and success. My Ex has a great work ethic. She has spunk. In family and at work that has been a blessing and a curse to those close to her. I have often hoped she would become a Christian. That woman on

fire for the Lord would be a frightening but welcome thing. Workers are all over the board. Whether you must work or just simply enjoy working, we will have relationships with the people there.

You probably have no choice but to endure, compromise and tolerate at work. I just feel that the number of bad workers you have is directly proportional to how often you have to tolerate, compromise, and endure. A workplace that is a swamp of terrible relationships is probably not high on the list of best places to work. We need good people and good relationships to make work fun and effective. I would rather endure a great working environment than compromise on a bad one.

A business is a people hub. Some people shop at your work while others are the workers. There are shifts and days of operation. People are always coming and going at a work place. Don't you find it interesting that some people are trying to butt in line. They arrive early for a sale. A few customers argue the price. Conversely, workers argue over pay. At Canada Post you're not allowed to start work early, but you can arrive late. Don't ask! Then we have the workers who are trying to get ahead. Let's dig deeper on this one.

I love little themes. I feel that the ladder theme fits so well in a workplace. A work ladder has rungs. Where are you on the ladder? Some people bring their own ladder or way to survive work. I think there are at-least three types. In Dr. Seuss they used a tower of turtles. I like that too, but let's explore the ladder.

First there is the subjective ladder. It's where people climb to the top because of their sex, race, age, or gender. That's exactly why people question how they got there. The subjective ladder is vague and obvious on why someone is the boss. Does your workplace have that type of

ladder? A bad workforce and customer service always begin with a subjective ladder. People put in power for all the wrong reasons. It's subjective because your view on how to get to the top varies. Everyone has their own idea on how to rise up.

Inadvertently because of race, gender, or relation to the boss, some people create racism at work. It's a morale killer. Then we start talking around the water cooler. "Oh, I know how she got that job." "That's the boss's son." We have heard them all. Sometimes success does come from who you know. People need to know that the other workers are watching, analyzing, and dissecting why you got the promotion on the corporate ladder.

Secondly, a place like Canada post has no ladder. Imagine a union hating management. I'm sure they wish the bosses were better. Yet, they punish employees who try and become a manager. We lose our seniority. What a joke. So, the best people would not dare become a good boss. Further to that, who do you think do become managers? Those who have nothing to lose: the bad workers. Then bad workers tell good workers to work harder. A relationship swamp crisis ensues.

Why do I say no ladder? It's because most workers are inhibited in one way or another from moving up. Sometimes it's a family run business. The son who knows nothing about leadership is your boss. I know some managers that are good with employees. The guy above knows it too. They tend to keep good managers at the employee level because they have a way with people. The other side is that those people are better than the guy above. He knows that too. Take the ladder away and you're safe.

The third type of ladder in a workplace is the ones with opportunity. I know that Google encourages ideas. I have read about employee suggestions being used and that has created

healthy competition and innovative results. Who knew? When the good ones rise to the top, the top rise up the Forbes good business ladder. It just works that way. The worst thing you can do to people is give them no hope, ladder, or avenue for opportunities.

Like I said, a bad work bulb will attract a bad bug. Again, who knew? Workers have ladders too. I have broken it down into four types. The first to me are the A.D.D. type. They are those who work to win, work to complete, and work too much. They don't know how not to work. My daughter is slightly autistic and trust me it's all or nothing with her. They are the restless out of the box thinkers. We need those types of workers. However, they intimidate lazy workers bigtime.

Secondly, the go-getters are tricky. They use relationships to get past people. A go-getter will use relationships to bolster the company, yet, only to make them look good. In any sense they are always passing on one relationship to the next until they are on top. Usually there is a wreckage of people left behind them. Some go-getters are just that. They are the cream that must rise. Yet, the King turtle did not last long at the top while sitting on others. The ladder you used to gain the top might be your downfall.

Of course, we all have worked with my third type: the bus rider. It the person who is really nice. They show up on time. Give them a task and they will most certainly do it. They love work relationships. It's easy for them to throw parties, go for lunch, and bring in donuts. All they ask is to keep things going like on a bus. It's never too high or low for them. They love a smooth company. Work relationships thrive on bus riders. We love them.

Lastly, there are those people that silently kill a business. They hurt workplace relationships. It's the silent ones that ruin a good work place. Who squealed? Who is the bosses informant?



How did my friend know what I said or did at work? Most of the time we never know. Yet, a silent voice is talking to wanting ears. Half the time these silent people are motivated to get to the top. Get out of my way or die. They will do or say anything to move past you. Much of the time they are lazy and conniving. Remove you and they climb the ladder. Work relationships go dark when a silent one is in your company. People shut off. The smiles fade. It kills business if a boss loves the silent ones.

In a family, we hope there is encouragement. I love the stories of family mentors. It's all about the time spent with encouraging family. We love the words they choose. If we could apply that to work it might be a really good thing. Words like slut, cheater, and relationship killer probably hurt the work environment. Possibly a more positive approach to people is needed. What is the difference between endure and excel? Compromise or confrontation? A good word or a positive instruction makes or breaks a good worker.

Work has one underlying goal: success. How do we all achieve it? Work is the summation of all we have learned in a family setting. How we were treated will reflect on how we treat others. Our way will attract or repel good workers. Hence it will foster or repel good relationships too. So many companies forget that good employee relations foster good customer relations. Yet, a certain bulb will attract certain bugs.

Far too many people count down the time at work. They could be trying to improve the work atmosphere. Instead they treat it as a place of torment. Nothing is free. We all must work at something. Why not make it worth your while at work. Make friends. Offer yourself as a positive person to be near. It brings me back to Yoda from Star Wars again. He looked at a frustrated

Luke. Yoda observes “For so long I watched you looking to the stars not minding where you are and what you were doing.”

There is a step in the training process I left out. It’s school. How often did we sit in school wishing we were not there? We sat there judging those around us. Think about it. Bosses and teachers? Don’t we like some and hate others. Maybe our school experience affected our work experience. We gained freedom from family when we entered school. Yet, it looks like we love the friends but hate the institution. At work we love the job but despised parts of the company.

I wanted to talk about school last because it is even more polarizing than work and family. Our attitude against authority is galvanized at school. Harsh words are used at school. People get lost in the fabric of a school classroom. We take those experiences into the workplace. Most people I know either loved school or down right hated it. Bad upbringing can be overcome by a great school experience. I bet bad school experiences have ruined many good workers too. School is in a way a mini work place. Let’s talk about that.