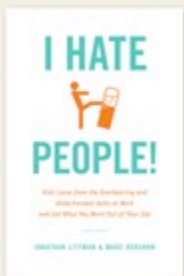


book excerpt

JUJITSU FOR OUTSMARTING THE CORPORATE OAFS



New and
Noteworthy
Books
for
Business
Executives



I Hate People!

Kick Loose From the Overbearing and Underhanded Jerks at Work and Get What You Want Out of Your Job

by Jonathan Littman
and Marc Hershon

Little, Brown and
Company, 2009

By the title, you know this isn't your typical self-help-for-the-office-set kind of handbook. But it's only partly tongue-in-cheek — and a welcome reprieve from the earnest "how to succeed in business" tomes out there. Here's a short excerpt:

People disappoint. Daily. Hourly. Why not wise up and get ready for it? The sooner you learn to stop getting sucker-punched, the sooner you can get back to doing your own thing, your own way. So to help you identify these clowns and clods in the corporate sphere — and get on with your work — we've selected and analyzed the ten most troublesome people you'll encounter in the workplace.

The Ten Least Wanted are not created equal. Some will be more endemic to your business. One thing we can guarantee: Virtually no company will ever be free of some of these people.

Some of these characters, in small doses and correctly aligned with your project goals, can aid instead of hold you back. The same guy who one day may hold up your budget — the Spreadsheet — another day may help you get the funding your project needs. The same loud, abrasive boss who regularly tests your resilience (a Bulldozer, perhaps) may also have the fortitude to keep your company sailing through hard times. And as perfect and smart as we all are, here's another truth we all know, whether we admit it publicly or not: Even on your best week, you may find yourself playing a few of these Least Wanted roles yourself.

Get to know these archetypes. Develop strategies to deflect and deal with them.

The Ten Least Wanted

Stumbling Blocks — Can stop your project cold or send you spinning off on tasks that eat up your time.

1. Stop Sign — Count on them to pour cold water on your every ambition.

2. FilmFam — He's got a lot in common with his criminal cousin, the con man — only his currency is your time and productivity.

3. Bulldozer — What's now considered workplace bullies.

Wrong Turns — Excel at corporate deception, a far more pervasive and troubling problem in many organizations.

4. Smiley Face — Research has shown there are three basic smiles: genuine, false, and disdainful. In today's corporate world, plastic smiles abound.

5. Liar Liar — Artfully crafted fibs, stories, and half-truths make for a wily character.

6. Switchblade — The knife might be slipped in subtly or slammed in abruptly. The only thing you can be sure of is that you'll rarely see it coming.

Time Wasters — At first glance, they don't pose the same threat as Wrong Turns or Stumbling Blocks. They may even believe they have your best interests at heart. But trust us — they're on Satan's road crew, as in "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

7. Minute Man — All they want is a minute of your time. And another minute... And then just one more minute... If you're not careful, you'll end up without a second left to yourself.

8. Know-It-None — What's even worse than a know-it-all is a Know-It-None. Those insufferable boobs are a wealth of facts, figures, and arcane knowledge, most of which is completely wrong.

9. Spreadsheet — Anal-retentive types who corrupt everyone with an overwrought sense of "The Rules," while simultaneously sucking all the fun and energy out of any endeavor.

10. Sheeple — Welcome to the vast majority. Sheeple can be the most maddening, contentious, and difficult to outmaneuver. These are the folks with advanced degrees from the School of Common Thought. They think alike. Move alike. Resist alike.

As a Soloist, you think differently, and what's more, you're often your own leader. ■

Jonathan Littman is a *Playboy* contributing editor and co-author of *The Ten Faces of Innovation* and *The Art of Innovation*. Comedy veteran Marc Hershon is a branding guru who has branded such hit products as BlackBerry and Swiffer.