

This is a scenario that is all too common, but complex, political and nebulous to nail down and combat meaningfully. Anecdotally, it's likely we all know of a workplace or a story of a workplace where this behavior was regularly tolerated if not allowed to perpetuate. Academically, it's difficult to nail down because of how broad, yet nuanced each case can be.

In the Harvard Business Review paper, *Time's Up for Toxic Workplaces*, author Manuela Priesemuth points out that toxicity in the workplace is often more of a ripple effect, out from the organization's core disseminating out from the chain of command (Priesemuth, 2020). This is evident in how Jean mishandled Diane's complaint over Max's attitude and actions toward the team. While management may justify this behavior by making certain allowances for exceptional employees, there is a silver lining. Studies show that toxic workplaces will routinely lead to a decrease in productivity (Adeyeye et al., 2015). Anecdotally, we could make the assumption that such an atmosphere will lead to dissent amongst colleagues causing inter-team tension. By allowing one member to claim the contributions of others will strongly disincentivize innovation amongst the team as a whole and inevitably lead to increased turnover; further reducing productivity and innovation.

It is ultimately shortsighted and costly for an organization to allow this to continue, though perhaps you cannot correct what you don't view as a problem.

References:

Adeyeye, J., Adeniji, A., Osinbanjo, A. and Oludayo, O. (2015). *Effects of Workplace Ethics on Employees and Organisational Productivity in Nigeria*. Available at: <http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/5317/1/Paper%2037.pdf> [Accessed 4 Feb. 2022].

Priesemuth, M. (2020). *Time's Up for Toxic Workplaces*. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2020/06/times-up-for-toxic-workplaces>.