



THE 12 PEOPLE HOLDING YOU BACK

How to spot them and how to drop them

Do you have friends around you who always see the negative in every situation? What about co-workers who drag you down or make you doubt your abilities? Or those calls you send to voicemail rather than answering because you just can't cope with that conversation right now?

If you said yes to any of these, it's time to take control and cut out the people from your network who are holding you back from thriving. Wondering what to look out for? Here are the 12 people you need to cull:

1 The Saboteur sets out to damage your success deliberately and usually for personal gain. Sometimes they may take your idea and run with it. They enjoy asking lots of questions, spending one-on-one time with you so they can pick your brain, and likely use that knowledge for their own end game.

2 The Back-stabber is that someone you usually think of as a friend – until they stab you in the back. It happens; I've witnessed it many times over the past few years. Colleagues and clients have shared their disappointment, hurt and frustration after someone copied their jewellery designs, marketing idea or even blog posts that were sold to a media outlet as their own.

3 The Dream Stealer sucks up all your positivity and self-belief. They are usually spotted hanging out around the water cooler or lurking in the office kitchen. They can be friends, colleagues, even family members, who genuinely seem to want to protect you. You may think they have your best interests at heart, but subtly they'll fill your mind with doubts about your dreams and ambitions.

4 The Traitor says one thing but does something else – usually something that comes at a cost to you because they view the world only as a competition. "This is my dance space – and if you step on my toes, I will step back. Harder." Disloyalty like this undermines your self-esteem and confidence.

5 The Narcissist is interested in one thing only: maintaining their own power. They have an exaggerated sense of self-importance, take more than they give and believe they have the solution to everything. They do not like to be challenged on this. They lack empathy, guilt or remorse. Everything they say or do centres on what they want and need, boosts their own ego and implies others are inferior.

6 The Energy Vampire, aka Negative Neville or Debbie Downer, has nothing positive to say, ever. They constantly blame others and make excuses for their situation instead of taking ownership of their own behaviours and actions. Spending time with this person zaps your purpose and passion, drains you of momentum and leaves you feeling down in the dumps and grey with the world.

7 The Sceptic wants to bring you down (likely with them) before you achieve too much. They believe your ideas have no merit, feed off your inner fears, and wreak havoc on your anxiety and stress levels. They are there on the sidelines watching and waiting, and they love it when they can say I told you so.

8 The Labeller puts you in a box with a neat little name on it and sets your limitations: 'You are too junior.' 'You've never worked in this area before.' 'You're a busy mother – you can't possibly do [XYZ].' And they will only support and appreciate you if you fit into this box or the label they have created for you; anything else and you'll be 'disappointing' them.

“Choose to live the life you want”

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9 The Villain is malicious in intent, motivated by power, greed and jealousy. They appear to set up conflict, obstacles and challenges for you and the people you hang out with. Their toxic personalities and mean-spirited activities can increase your stress, raise your blood pressure and affect your performance. They make it difficult for you to get work done. They can act in a sneaky way, enjoy gossiping and often use their manipulative tactics against you.

10 The Bully fights you from all angles, breaking down your spirit until you feel like you have no hope left. Often they appear in the guise of a friendly competitor, until they start intimidating and even humiliating you. They can make you feel submissive, small and without a voice. They exclude you from conversations, meetings or events. They may even become abusive (verbally or physically).

11 The Liar deliberately holds back important information. Maybe they offer to help with your project, but never deliver. Or suggest an introduction to someone who could help you land a new job, only you're never connected. They may even put you forward for a role or a job, or so you think, but then nothing ever eventuates, no matter how much you follow up.

12 The Critic shuts down your goals, plans, ideas, thoughts and actions before they've even begun. They criticise your plans, fill your head with negative nonsense and opinions that lack evidence or substance. They have strong ideas about what success means, how to live life, do business or build a career, and they're not interested if you don't think or feel the same way. It's either their way or the highway.

Be brave and reassess the negative people in your network. Choose to play your own game in the way you want. Choose to live the life you want. Choose to take control of your own energy, mindset and momentum. Choose to make your network work for you.

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