

DGTMI: Don't Give Too Much Information

In an ideal world, every team member maintains a cool, professional demeanor 100% of the time. In reality, we deal with the moods, quirks, and (*sometimes*) outbursts of our co-workers and supervisors. Sometimes, those outbursts aren't that infrequent, and often that "someone" is a supervisor. Being super passionate about their work, hyper-protective of the reputation of the firm, and super mindful about their workload are qualities that we love, but with too much stress, being overworked and under pressure, some supervisors can seem like supervillains at times. Shouldn't we warn the new hire?

In short, the answer is NO! But that doesn't mean there's nothing to say.

We understand the urge; you're trying to be nice. You want to prepare the new hire to deal with problematic personalities that the existing team have already figured out how to manage. You think that knowing in advance will help the new hire navigate the inevitable outburst. You already know that the benefits of being on this team outweigh the occasional steam-releases that occur in this high-pressure occupation. But the new hire doesn't know.

Put yourself on the receiving end of those warnings for just a moment. You're ready to demonstrate your capabilities and get the lay of the land. Everything is riding on how well you present yourself and perform your duties, especially in the first few weeks. It's a bit stressful, but you're managing just fine. Then a couple of nice co-workers pull you aside, or take you to lunch, or walk with you to the parking lot, and in hushed tones reveal the office tension during Jane's pre-trial meltdowns, or how John gets away with blaming others (loudly) for his mistakes. The nice co-workers walk away feeling good about giving a head's up. Meanwhile, the new hire (already stressed, but managing) reels from the concern that they are committing to a toxic work environment. For some, this concern grows into a fear so large that they decide not to return to work and to seek out a different firm. By trying to save the new hires, the nice co-workers can inadvertently scare them away.

Allison Green from askamanager.com recommends that you don't characterize the problematic person and focus instead on particular actions that the new hire can take to navigate the situation. Say something like, *During pre-trial prep, Jane has a lot on her plate and needs responses to her requests immediately. I've found that it's helpful to set up a special notification for messages from her so that I can prioritize her on those days. Keeping a paper trail of interactions is good practice for any reason, so you can explain that, After any in-person meetings with John, I follow-up with an emailed summary of what we talked about. Sometimes he forgets which tasks were allocated and which he kept for himself, so if we're not on the same page, it's helpful to have a written record of what was decided.* Use a neutral tone, too: no eye-rolls allowed. Green suggests that you "present this the same way that you'd present tips on working with the temperamental copy machine or getting along with a particularly tricky but valued client."

By preparing the new hire to navigate the office environment in this way, you give them practical tools to succeed on the team. Just remember your new motto: DGTMI.



Quarterly Newsletter from NorthStar Legal, Inc.

NorthStar Legal, Inc. is excited to present to you our quarterly newsletter, POLARIS!

Since early times, navigators have used Polaris, also called the North Star, to guide them towards their destinations. At NorthStar Legal, Inc., our goal is to assist you in navigating your hiring process.

A Note From the Editor

NorthStar Legal, Inc. is proud to announce that we have a new member of our team! Our new administrative assistant, **Serenity Williams**, is a pre-law student at The University of Central Florida and has done amazing work for us so far. She is the brains behind our new Paralegal Spotlight! You may find out more about Serenity and her work on our website!
~Jennifer Magnusson

Calendar of events for November/December 2019

November

- 11 Veteran's Day
- 14 World Diabetes Day
- 15 America Recycles Day
- 20 Children's Day
- 28 Thanksgiving Day

December

- 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- 10-17 Human Rights Week
- 22-30 Hanukkah
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26-Jan 1 Kwanzaa



"Why do you say we should go paperless?"

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

~John C. Maxwell

Beware of monotony; it is the mother of all the deadly sins.

~Edith Wharton





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