

Whether you are a young apprentice or an experienced employee, your place of work is an important part of your everyday life. Some kind of conflict at work is not an uncommon event and it can affect people in many different ways. Today we are talking about this with Julian, who started his very first apprenticeship six months ago and Maya who has three years of work experience.

Presenter (P): Let's start with you Julian. How important is it for you to enjoy yourself at work; you know, to get on with everyone and feel all right?

Julian (J): Well, it's very important for me. If I'm in a good mood and feel comfortable and good about myself, then I do a better job. It's as simple as that. I mean, if I don't have any worries, then I can focus on the job at hand and I want to be the kind of person who looks forward to going to work in the morning.

P: Maya, you are still young, but you have a few years of experience as a full-time employee in quite a large company. Is it realistic to hope for a career where one looks forward to every single day of work?

Maya (M): Well, part of me wants to be an optimist and answer yes to that question, but at the same time I know that there will always be ups and downs in every job. I suppose the key is to find out how to deal with problems when they crop up and learn from the situation.

P: Can I ask you to give us an example of a problem that has affected your state of mind at work?

M: Uhm, yes, of course. I found myself in quite a sticky situation earlier this year, when I had to file a complaint about one of my fellow colleagues. The thing was, that she just wasn't doing her job and it started to affect the other members of our team. We had to compensate for her lack of effort in order to get things finished before the deadlines and things just started to pile up.

P: What did you do?

M: Well, first I tried to approach her in a very nice and friendly way and ask if anything was wrong or you know, if she had a lot on her plate at the moment. But she just said 'no, not really' and I just couldn't bring myself to be really direct and tell her that we were overloaded with extra work, because she was basically slacking off.

P: Julian, what would you do in the same situation?

J: Well, that's a tricky one... It's hard to talk to people about things like that without them being offended, but I mean, you can't just ignore it, because it might just get worse. So, I suppose you should probably ask for help from a supervisor or something, but at the same time, nobody wants to be a snitch.

M: Exactly. In the end, I decided that it was best to involve my supervisor and she took over and dealt with the matter. It did create some tension in the days that followed, but at least things didn't get any worse and I could concentrate on my own responsibilities again. It was a relief.

P: This shows why it's so important that companies, big and small, have good routines in place, that the employees are all familiar with, so that when there is such a problem, people know what steps to take in order to resolve the situation.

J: This has really been an eye-opener for me. I mean, I've been so focused on the skills and techniques and stuff that you need to know to do a good job, that I've never really paid much attention to the importance of social skills and being prepared to communicate and cooperate in so many different ways.

M: Oh, I wouldn't worry too much about that, Julian. You can never be 100% prepared, as long as you keep an open mind, you'll learn as you go along. Experience can be the best teacher of new things.

P: And with those words of wisdom, we'll have to wrap up because that was all the time we had for today. Thank you both for your time and all the best luck for the future.