

FILLERS AND SPILLERS

FILLERS – LEADERS WHO SPEAK AND ACT IN A WAY THAT IS A SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO OTHERS

- Build people's confidence by encouraging them to face challenges
- Start with the assumption that workers and colleagues can be successful
- Emphasize the gains that people will make by taking risks and building up their courage
- Optimism about the future leaves people feeling more confident about themselves and more energized to deal with whatever challenges they are facing
- Demonstrate courageous behavior in their own career
- Get deep loyalty from the people they lead

SPILLERS – LEADERS WHO SPEAK AND ACT IN A WAY THAT IS A SOURCE OF DISCOURAGEMENT TO OTHERS

- Undermine people's courage
- Place undo emphasis on all the ways people or the organization will be harmed by courageous behavior
- Drain other people's courage and replace it with fear and anxiety
- Focus on the losses that could be incurred rather than the gains that could be experienced
- Pessimism about the future leaves people feeling discouraged and less confident about themselves and the challenges they are facing
- Demonstrate fear and anxiety in their own career
- Do not get deep loyalty from the people they lead

Warning: Spillers and Fillers isn't an "Us" versus "Them" situation

The truth is, there are times we are Spillers. We often revert to Spiller behavior when we are confronted with a situation that pushes us outside of our comfort zone. What you can do now, is recognize in yourself when you're operating like a Spiller and make a choice to lead more like a Filler.

DEALING WITH A CHRONIC SPILLER

Some people revel in their Spiller status. These are the people who point out the negative, not to be constructive and help people grow but rather to tear people down. Chronic Spillers are draining to deal with on a daily basis, so how do you cope with them?

- **Don't Feed the Negative:** Gossiping about the Chronic Spiller with your colleagues won't help. Instead it creates a more negative environment for everyone. Plus, imagine what would happen if the Spiller found out they were a topic of gossip?
- **Be Clear About Why You Are Going to the Person:** If you need to meet with a Chronic Spiller, prepare in advance. Go to the meeting with specific objectives, know why you need their feedback, and tell them ahead of time. If they try to derail the conversation, use the agenda to bring them back on topic.
- **Find the Best Way to Communicate with Them:** It may be that your Chronic Spiller doesn't spill as much over email or on phone conversations. Identify their most effective communication style and stick to that one as much as possible.
- **Beat the Person to the Punch:** If your Chronic Spiller often interrupts meetings to shoot down new ideas, get ahead of them. Before the next meeting, praise them for their ability to think critically. Set aside time on the agenda, at the end, to spend 15 minutes discussing the issues or challenges of the ideas discussed during the meeting. Let your Chronic Spiller lead this segment. Giving them a focus might turn their discouraging statements into more insightful troubleshooting feedback.