

Stakeholder Types: Thieves

Idea In Short

Whether it's a ballpen or an idea, thieves steal what attracts them and use the stolen goods to further their agenda.

Thieves are a special type of office personalities. They come in two variants, namely those that steal:

1. Material things
2. Intellectual things

Material thief

The first set of thieves resemble the classic thieves, but are largely harmless. They have set upon themselves the task of taking something here and there from the workplace. For example, office stationery, supplies, snacks, promotional items, etc. Valuable items, such as technology, hardware equipment or furniture do not interest them. After all, those are far too conspicuous! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wR2huzk4HQ> Nevertheless, these thieves can be quite annoying in the long run. For example, when their colleagues are constantly looking for a notepad or a pen when the thief is packing up these things in his desk drawer! No matter whether it is annoying or not, colleagues associate those with a pronounced kleptomaniac tendencies with a lack of loyalty to their company. After all, whoever appreciates his / her employer should not desire to do steal items, no matter how precious they are. Furthermore, most colleagues assume that this personality is a dishonest contemporary, unworthy of one's trust.

Intellectual thief

The second category of thieves is quite intricate and sophisticated. They do not focus on material things, but rather on the ideas that originate from their colleagues. Surely, everyone

of us knows this situation:

We have a brilliant idea, which we immediately and euphorically shared with our desk neighbors. This idea immediately arouses the sophisticated thief, who shows extreme interest through his queries. What anyone hardly notices at that moment is that his questions do not serve the purpose of collaborating on the idea. But rather, to solely to gather information and further his interests and standing out in the organization. The thief is already scheming how best to sell the idea to the boss.

At a glance

- Always in search of profitable stolen properties, either objects or ideas
- Only considers his own advantage
- Lack of loyalty to the company and his colleagues
- Pretends to be something that he is not
- Selfish
- Untrustworthy
- Dishonest
- Unpopular with the rest of his colleagues

How to deal with them?

If you notice that one of your colleagues could be a potential thief, it is important to consider what is more important to you - the general climate or loyalty to the employer. You may choose to thwart the thief by notifying his actions to his superior. In the event of disputes, you may have to point out the colleague's misconduct. Sometimes, however, this may bring very little immediate action. Therefore, it is much more effective to talk with other employees and let the thief feel that his / her behavior is wrong. On the other hand, when he / she is stealing on a grand scale, it is indispensable to report theft to the management. Unconditional termination faces the kleptomaniac colleague. If no objects, but ideas are stolen, it is obligatory to address the problem directly, first during 1:1 with your superior. If you observe no tangible improvement, openly escalate this issue to higher management. Always stay objective and avoid a hostile tone when doing so. Eliminate any counter-defenses. Professionalism is important during such a conflict with your thieving colleague. Follow these tactics and you will soon become indispensable resource to other employees

that will benefit from your ideas and leverage their intellectual property.

Summary

As a general rule, think carefully about who you want to openly talk about your lightbulb moments and if you sense a dangerous situation, it is better to keep your mouth shut. This also applies to your notes. Never leave them lying on your desk. You never know who is throwing a thievish look at it.