

Colleagues not doing jobs properly makes staff angriest at work

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Nearly half (49%) of employees said that people that are perceived not to be doing their job properly is the thing that makes them angriest at work, according to a new survey.

The YouGov survey, commissioned by workplace expert Acas, asked employees to consider what would make them the most angry while at work.

Over two-fifths (44%) of respondents said it would be others claiming credit for their work, followed by an over-demanding boss (39%) and rude customers or staff (37%).

Acas Head of Individual Dispute Resolution, Stewart Gee, said:

"It's clear from our poll that there are a range of issues that make people angry at work. Anger over a lack of recognition, rudeness, their boss or a colleague seen as not pulling their weight can impact productivity and escalate to conflict if left unresolved at work.

"Unresolved emotions over things that seem unfair can have a detrimental effect at work and it is important for workplace conflict to be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity.

"An informal resolution through an initial chat or mediation can help organisations prevent the cost and stress of more formal procedures, such as an employment tribunal."

Dealing with conflict positively and quickly can build trust and improve relationships. If employees feel that their frustrations could cause conflict, they should check their workplace policy and find out what support is available.

Employers should typically encourage employees to raise issues informally first, before going through set formal procedures. This will usually help resolve disputes more quickly, which is beneficial for everyone involved.

Stewart added:

"Conflict at work is estimated to cost UK organisations £30 billion each year and Acas is holding a special conference next week that will feature expert mediators, trade unions, academics and employers on how we can prevent, handle and resolve conflict at work.

"Getting the basics right plays a key part in helping to reduce conflict at work. Acas offers employers training in performance management and this can be a key ingredient, alongside an effective conflict management strategy, to help prevent conflict at work."

Acas is hosting a conference around discussing and resolving conflict in the workplace.

Media enquiries

Background notes

1. Acas commissioned YouGov to poll employees in a representative sample of British businesses. The survey was carried out online and the total sample size was 1,023 employees in Great Britain. Fieldwork was undertaken from 27 March to 1 April 2025. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc, have been weighted and are representative of British business size and region.

2. Participants were asked: which 3, if any, of the following would make you most angry at work? (please select up to 3 options)

The results were:

- Having too much work to do – 28%
- A work colleague not competently doing their job – 49%
- An over-demanding boss – 39%
- Feeling excluded by others at work – 26%
- Rude customers or staff – 37%
- Not being given training or an induction – 17%
- Others claiming credit for my work – 44%
- Staff that voice opposite opinions to my own – 3%
- None of these – 4%
- Don't know – 2%

3. Acas is hosting its Annual Conference on 15 May 2025 that will look at conflict, workplace productivity, growth and examine the types of new roles and opportunities artificial intelligence (AI) could create. Speakers will include Business Minister Justin Madders, Acas Chair Clare Chapman and Acas's new CEO Niall MacKenzie as well as a host of business, trade union, academic, mediation and workplace experts. It will be held in Central London.