



## Section 4: Dysfunctional Colleagues

### Opening Discussion:

What comes to mind when you hear the word *dysfunctional*?

What did you think of Dr. White's definition of dysfunctional in the video?

**dys** – challenge, problem, difficult

**functional** – daily activity or task

What do dysfunctional people do to make your life difficult?

### Differences Between Functional and Dysfunctional Colleagues

Here are some of the fundamental differences between Functional and Dysfunctional Colleagues. For every functional behavior, see if you can come up with a corresponding dysfunctional behavior.

There is room at the bottom of the table to add some of your own observations.

Functional	Dysfunctional
Honest, integrity	
Responsibilities lead to privileges	
Accept responsibility for choice	
Able to delay gratification	
Learn from mistakes	

“Q”

“People with dysfunctional patterns have difficulty living with the rules of reality – most notably, with the relationship between choice, responsibility and consequences.”

– Dr. Paul White (*Rising Above a Toxic Workplace* p.139-140)

## How Dysfunctional People Make You Feel Crazy

- They frame the issue as a \_\_\_\_\_ that has to be dealt with \_\_\_\_\_.
- After spending time with them, you feel “\_\_\_\_\_” and question your prior thoughts about the situation. This leaves people confused.
- Dysfunctional people have a talent in helping you think that \_\_\_\_\_ have the problem when it’s actually \_\_\_\_\_ problem.
- You somehow feel responsible to “fix” the situation. If you don’t “help them out,” you are labeled as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- You are concerned if you don’t \_\_\_\_\_ them, the consequences may ruin their life, make you look bad, or hurt the organization.

## Honest Self – Evaluation

Go back to the table on the differences between Functional and Dysfunctional Colleagues, and ask yourself these two questions:

1. Am I a dysfunctional person?
2. In which areas, do I “lean” toward the dysfunctional side?

## **Activity – Your Experience:**

1. How have you tried to work with dysfunctional people?
2. What worked?
3. What didn’t work?