

I hate feeling torpedoed at work!!! Well, it wasn't quite a torpedo hit more like a punch in the gut. Yes, me the Workplace Conflict Queen. I, too, at times am in the line of fire. Amazing. Particularly, since I own the company.

Here is what happened. I regularly instruct a Basic Mediation Course for a local community based mediation center & I LOVE it. Training on the critical life skills of conflict resolution is something that I look forward to every year. Well, this was the week for the training. There was a lot of preparation. The group was resonating with the material. At the close of the day, I congratulated the participants on a job well done, handed out the evaluations, and bid them so long for now.

So here is where the punch in the gut part comes...one of the evaluations said that the person did not like my style of presenting "too physical" and "she flipped her hair". Nothing about the content or the key learning points or the interactive exercises (which others really liked). Just something that was more about them than me.

The comment stung. My first response was "Wow-Ouch." My second response was "Now, **WHAT**
T am I supposed to do with this big poop that has been dropped on my shoe!!!!!"

Now let me say this. I speak and train for a living. I have spoken before hundreds of people. I am confident in my abilities in the content area and in presentation skills. I have never gotten any feedback like that. It felt weird and inappropriate.

So, I needed to practice some of what I preach about how to handle conflict in the workplace. First, I needed to step back and ask if **ANYTHING about the comment was legitimate.**

I decided "**No**". Why "no." Simple. The comment had nothing to do with content or substance AND was off the chart from any of the other feedback. Nothing else said by the other participants was even the same ballpark. The person stated that he or she felt weird with my physical presence. Is that something that I am responsible for? **No.** Am I responsible for making sure that I am dressed professionally and do not purposefully and

inappropriately raise issues that may transgress guidelines for a discrimination/hostile free learning environment? Yes. Absolutely. Did I do anything to cross a line of good taste or decorum?

No.

Yet, the comment still bothered me.

Why, because the message that I took away is that the person did not view me in the same light that I view myself- as a confident and competent professional. Unfortunately, I will bet that many of you can relate to that feeling. It is a bummer. I hate feeling that way at work.

Here is how I got over it...As I mentioned, I took a step back and asked **"Is anything said here legitimate?"**

Second, I

really thought about whether that comment was for my benefit or theirs.

From what I could tell there was nothing in that comment or any others from that person designed to help me or in any way benefit me or the organizers of the program. It, in essence, was all about them.

So I let it alone.

It was all about them. Not me. So I let it go...after venting to a girlfriend and having a glass of wine or two. And my friend, did just want a friend would do. Honestly tell me if there was anything that I should take from it or just move on. So I have moved on...Really...that is why I am blogging on it. **To take this experience and turn it into a lesson and by doing so let it go.**

Now I am sure that I am not the only one out there who has received weird and inappropriate feedback. What have you done with it? Anything? Willing to share? I would love to hear your insights.