

Leading People You Don't Like

A framework for managing fairly and effectively when the chemistry just isn't there

Left unmanaged, personality clashes quietly cost you good people and fair outcomes, the time spent smoothing over avoidable conflict, the cost of losing people who deserved better, and the quality of decisions across your whole team when it looks like favoritism is in play. This framework keeps performance decisions consistent, no matter how a manager personally feels about someone, so people stay because the process is fair, not because you happened to like them.

1 Separate personality from performance

Evaluate work and behavior without letting personal friction cloud judgment.

2 Name the bias, privately

A simple self-check for catching favoritism, and its reverse, before it shows up in your decisions.

3 Set a consistency standard

Apply the same expectations, coaching, and recognition to everyone, regardless of how you feel about them.

4 Manage the friction directly

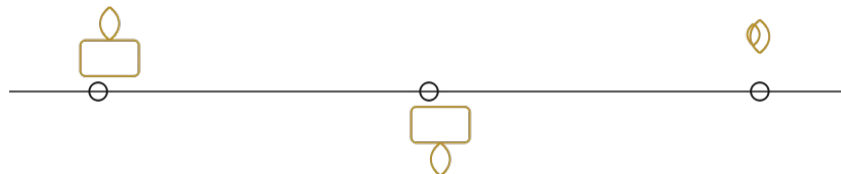
A structured way to address personality clashes without pretending they don't exist.

5 Protect the relationship, not the fondness

You don't have to like someone to build a working relationship that functions well.

6 Know when it's more than dislike

A simple filter for spotting when tension is really a values or conduct issue, not just personality.



How you'd measure it

- Employee survey scores on fairness and consistency of manager treatment
- Turnover among high performers who report friction with their manager
- Number of performance-related grievances or appeals filed

These are our recommended measurements. We'll work with you to align this framework with your existing structure, and with your team to build a measurement strategy so you can see the real impact.

Choose the level of support that fits

Toolkit only	Self-serve framework and templates
Toolkit and training	A live session to put it into practice
Train the trainer	Built for repeatable internal delivery

Works alongside the performance management and feedback tools you already use

Email us to get started

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