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## Roadside Reflection - When the Mood Turns: Understanding Workplace Negativity

### Tips for Navigating Tough Energy at Work

Negativity in the workplace can be contagious—but so can calm, clarity, and kindness. Whether it stems from stress, uncertainty, or burnout, recognizing negativity and responding with intention can help maintain your focus and protect your well-being.

### Recognize the Signs

Understanding where negativity is coming from is the first step to managing it.

- Persistent complaining or cynicism
- Blame without responsibility
- Resistance to change or collaboration
- Passive-aggressive behavior or withdrawal
- Tension during meetings or in emails

Ask yourself: Is this a moment, a pattern, or a symptom of something deeper?

### Strategies for Managing the Mood

#### 1. Don't Take It Personally

Negativity often says more about the person expressing it than about you. Keep emotional boundaries intact.

#### 2. Respond—Don't React

Pause before replying. Consider if the situation calls for empathy, redirection, or silence.

### 3. Use Active Listening

Sometimes people need to be heard. A calm, listening presence can de-escalate tension.

### 4. Protect Your Energy

Limit time spent in negative conversations. Steer dialogue toward solutions or disengage respectfully.

### 5. Model Positivity

Be the example. Express appreciation, highlight progress, and maintain a constructive tone.

### 6. Name the Issue When Needed

If negativity is impacting work, don't be afraid to have a respectful, honest conversation about it.

## **When You're Feeling Negative**

Negativity is human. Here's how to move through it:

- Reflect: What's underneath your frustration—stress, fear, lack of control?
- Reset: Take a walk, breathe deeply, or shift your environment.
- Reframe: Focus on what's in your control and what's going well.
- Reach Out: Talk to a trusted colleague, supervisor, or coach.

## **Keep Perspective**

Workplaces go through seasons—some lighter, some heavier. Your presence, awareness, and ability to choose your response are powerful tools in keeping yourself grounded and your team healthy.