

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT 101 - SAM

You have been with Pepperdine for many years and have worked hard to get to your current position. You are an excellent employee who cares deeply for the University. You are highly respected in the office and take pride in being known for paying attention to detail and never missing a deadline. You have been looking for a way to move up in the University and have had your eye on a more senior position in the department that is going to be opening up soon.

In hopes of proving yourself worthy of this promotion, you jumped at the chance to work on a new project that, if successful, would shed a positive light on your whole department and ultimately provide a great benefit to the entire University. You were assigned to the project and put on a team with Pat, your counterpart in a different work group in the department who is very new to his job.

You tend toward introversion and prefer to work on your own, but you have heard good things about Pat and imagining all the good that could come from the success of this project makes taking on this project a no brainer. Initially, you and Pat got along fine but as the days and weeks wore on things went downhill quickly.

Pat turned out to be simply unbearable and impossible to work with.

The first few times you met about the project, Pat would blab on and on about things completely unrelated to the task at hand. You would meet for hours at a time and nothing would get done. By the second week the project was already behind schedule, tarnishing your reputation for timeliness. The only way you could make progress was if you did it on your own or if you severely limited the time of your meetings so Pat wouldn't have the time to chitchat.

You could never get a word in during project update meetings with your mutual supervisor (the person you need to impress for that promotion) because Pat would immediately take over and not take a breath. Pat has barely been with the University a month – who does he/she think he/she is?

On top of this, the project relies on a computer program that is housed on only one laptop in the office that you have to share. Pat clearly doesn't care about the project because he/she rarely uses the laptop and when she/he does, you often see it sitting unopened on his/her desk as he/she is blabbing away with colleagues.

Pat is completely oblivious to what is at stake if this project fails and only cares about socializing. When you were clearly working on a part of the project that was due the next day, Pat had the audacity to ask if you wanted to go out to Taco Tuesday with him/her and some other colleagues you don't even know!

You really want to be noticed for that promotion, but there is no way you can stay on this project with Pat. You talked to your supervisor about it and she thinks it would be best for you and Pat to see if you can talk it out.