Because crying in the office loo isn't a career strategy

TOXIC WORKPLACE SURVIVAL GUIDE

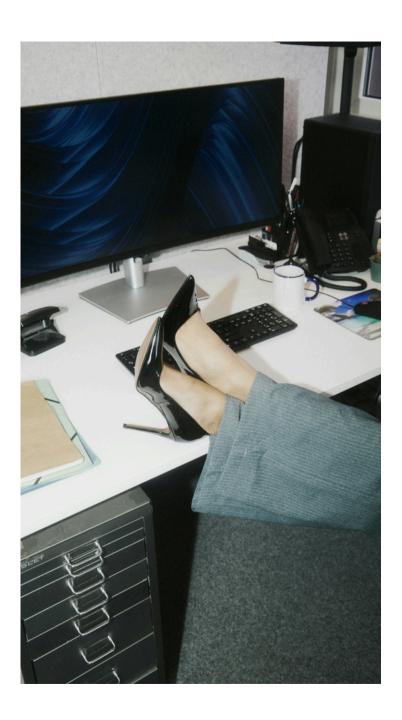


W-COLLECTIVE

Your practical survival guide
to conquering toxic
workplaces, battling imposter
syndrome, and claiming your
worth in a world that still
thinks "girl boss" is a
compliment.

Whether you're dealing with microaggressions that are anything but micro, or a workplace culture that's more toxic than your ex's Instagram feed, we've got your back.

Created by women who've been there, survived that, and built something better - because your career shouldn't come with a side of Sunday night dread.



INTRODUCTION

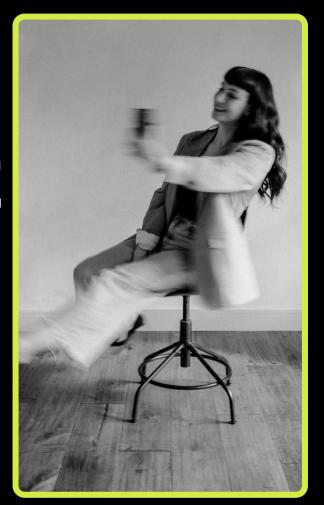
INTRODUCTION

LET'S BE HONEST - IF YOU'RE READING THIS, YOU'RE PROBABLY DEALING WITH A WORKPLACE THAT'S MORE TOXIC THAN THE LAST SEASON OF LOVE ISLAND. YOU'RE NOT ALONE. 77% OF PROFESSIONALS HAVE EXPERIENCED TOXIC WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR, AND 100% OF THEM ARE TIRED OF PRETENDING EVERYTHING'S FINE.

THIS ISN'T JUST ANOTHER FLUFFY "POSITIVE VIBES ONLY" GUIDE. THIS IS YOUR PRACTICAL SURVIVAL KIT FOR NAVIGATING THE CORPORATE JUNGLE WHILE MAINTAINING YOUR SANITY (AND MAYBE EVEN YOUR DIGNITY).

KATIE

Director. Ex Fashion Designer for high steet fashion brands H&M, M&S, ASOS, WGSN, MONSOON, FASION SNOOPS





CLARE

Director. Ex Food buyer & commercial MORRISONS, TESCO, ALDI, SAINSBURYS, ASDA.

WHO ARE WE?

Katie May. Co-Founder

Katie May is a seasoned fashion industry leader with fifteen years of senior design experience at some of Europe's most influential online retailers, including ASOS, H&M, and M&S.

Currently a Director at one of the world's leading fashion forecasting platforms, she brings deep expertise in trend analysis, brand strategy, and market innovation.

A passionate advocate for mentorship, goal setting, and personal and professional growth, Katie is dedicated to empowering individuals and teams to drive meaningful change. She believes that clear direction, strategic ambition, and continuous development are the keys to long-term success.

Clare Mac. Co-Founder

By the time Clare was 30 she was running a £300m turnover business. She has traveled internationally extensively throughout her years in business negotiating multi-million-pound contracts all over Europe, Africa, North, Central and South America for more than 15 years.

Clare has managed large teams for the last 10 years of her career and is particularly passionate about helping women realise their full potential at work and be happy, confident and content outside of work.

Clare knows Buying & Sales having worked with and for some of UK & Eurpoes largest Grocery Retailers including Tesco, Sainsburys, Asda, Morrisons, Aldi, Lidl, Ahold Delhaize, and ICA



WORKPLACE TOXICITY ASSESSMENT

RATE YOUR WORKPLACE (0-5):

- SUNDAY ANXIETY LEVEL
- □ NUMBER OF "URGENT" FRIDAY DEADLINES
- □ TIMES YOU'VE CONSIDERED QUITTING THIS MONTH
- □ FREQUENCY OF "QUICK CHATS"
- AFTER-HOURS EMAIL EXPECTATIONS

SCORE:

0-5: MILD TOXICITY

6-15: MODERATE TOXICITY

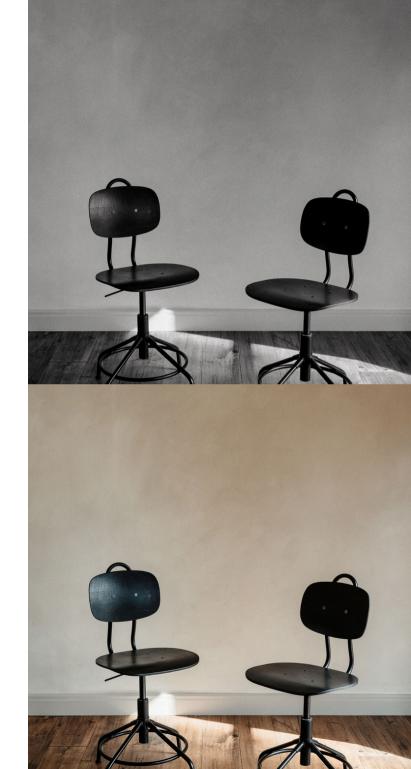
16-25: GET OUT. NOW.

PART 1: THE 'DOCUMENT EVERYTHING' SURVIVAL GUIDE

Now this one is important - when your boss is more toxic than your ex (and that's saying something), you need more than just your word against theirs. Documentation isn't just about covering your back; it's about maintaining your sanity and proving you're not being "too sensitive" (eye roll).

Think of documentation as your workplace equivalent of screenshotting those dodgy texts from your ex - except this time, it's not for your group chat, it's for HR. Because while some managers might be brilliant at making passive-aggressive comments sound like "constructive feedback," they're less brilliant at explaining why they told three different people three different versions of what happened in last week's meeting.

And while your colleagues might be rolling their eyes at your "attention to detail" now, they'll be begging for your meeting notes when things go sideways. Remember: in the corporate jungle, your paper trail is your best friend - second only to your work bestie who witnessed everything and your emergency chocolate stash.





THE ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTATION TEMPLATES

1. THE INCIDENT LOG FOR WHEN "THAT'S JUST HOW THEY ARE" BECOMES "THAT'S ACTUALLY HARASSMENT"

Instructions: • Record incidents as soon as possible after they occur
Be factual and objective in your descriptions • Include all relevant
details, no matter how small they seem • Save copies outside of
work systems • Focus on patterns of behavior

INCIDENT LOG TEMPLATE

Date: [DD/MM/YYYY]

Time: [HH:MM]

Location: [e.g., Meeting Room 1, Teams Call, Office Kitchen]

What Happened: [Describe the incident in detail, using exact

quotes where possible]

Who Was Present: • Direct participants: • Witnesses: • Anyone who walked past/might have overheard:

Follow-up Actions Taken:

Sent follow-up email
 Saved relevant screenshots
 Notified appropriate parties
 Updated personal records

Other: _____

Impact on Work: [Document any impact on your work, deadlines, or wellbeing]

Supporting Evidence: • Emails • Messages • Screenshots • Meeting recordings • Other: _____





2 THE EMAIL TRAIL KEEPER

FORWARD. SAVE. SCREENSHOT. REPEAT.

SAVE EMAILS THAT:
SHOW UNREASONABLE DEMANDS
CONTAIN VEILED THREATS
DEMONSTRATE PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR
SHOW PROMISED VS ACTUAL OUTCOMES

PRO TIP: CREATE A SEPARATE FOLDER CALLED "EVIDENCE" (OR "TEA "" IF YOU NEED TO BE SUBTLE)

3. MEETING DOCUMENTATION TEMPLATE

BECAUSE "I DON'T RECALL SAYING THAT" IS GASLIGHTING'S BEST FRIEND

MEETING DETAILS: WHAT WAS DISCUSSED:

DATE AND TIME: DECISIONS MADE: LOCATION/PLATFORM: TASKS ASSIGNED:

PRESENT: TONE/BEHAVIOR NOTES:

MEETING CALLED BY: WITNESSES:

KEY POINTS: FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

SEND EMAIL SUMMARY

BAVE CHAT LOGS

SCREENSHOT ANY RELEVANT MESSAGES

NOTE ANY WITNESSES

4. YOUR "CYA" (COVER YOUR ASSETS) CHECKLIST

BECAUSE SOMETIMES THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD PAPER TRAIL

DAILY:

- **SAVE IMPORTANT EMAILS**
- LOG ANY CONCERNING INTERACTIONS
- SCREENSHOT MESSAGES/CHATS
- **PERSONAL ACCOUNT**

WEEKLY:

- **UPDATE INCIDENT LOG**
- REVIEW PATTERN TRACKER
- FILE ANY FORMAL FOLLOW-UPS
- BACK UP DOCUMENTATION

5. THE "ACTUALLY, THAT WAS MY **WORK'** CONFRONTATION GUIDE

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Private Conversation Template:

"Hi [name], I noticed during the presentation that you shared the [project/idea] I developed last month. While I'm glad it resonated with the team, I want to ensure there's clarity about where it originated. Could we discuss how to handle project attribution going forward?"

Follow-up Email Template: Subject: Project Attribution Discussion Follow-up

Hi [name],

Following our conversation about [project], I wanted to summarize our discussion:

- Original concept developed by: [your name]
- Implementation date: [date]
- Original presentation: [date]

Going forward, we agreed that project origins will be clearly attributed in presentations.

Please let me know if I've missed anything.

Best regards, [Your name]

WE KNOW THIS SEEMS LONG, BUT TRUST US, IT'S WORTH DOCUMENTING.

REMEMBER:

BE FACTUAL, NOT EMOTIONAL (SAVE THE RAGE FOR YOUR GROUP CHAT)
INCLUDE DATES, TIMES, AND WITNESSES
NOTE THE IMPACT ON YOUR WORK/WELLBEING
KEEP COPIES OUTSIDE WORK SYSTEMS
FOCUS ON PATTERNS, NOT ISOLATED INCIDENTS

PRO TIPS:

USE YOUR WORK EMAIL TO SEND MEETING SUMMARIES: "JUST CONFIRMING OUR DISCUSSION WHERE YOU MENTIONED..."

KEEP LANGUAGE PROFESSIONAL AND OBJECTIVE

SAVE EVERYTHING IN MULTIPLE PLACES

DOCUMENT POSITIVE INTERACTIONS TOO (SHOWS YOU'RE NOT JUST FOCUSING ON NEGATIVES)

BECAUSE WHEN SOMEONE ASKS "WHY DIDN'T YOU DOCUMENT THIS EARLIER?" YOU CAN SMILE SWEETLY AND PULL OUT YOUR COLOR-CODED EVIDENCE FOLDER.



W@

PART 2: CONVERSATION SCRIPTS

BECAUSE "SORRY, COULD YOU NOT?" ISN'T QUITE PROFESSIONAL ENOUGH





Template 1: The Initial Pushback

"I've reviewed the timeline for [project]. To deliver quality work, I'll need [realistic timeframe]. Here's why:

- Current workload: [existing commitments]
- · Required resources: [list]
- Quality assurance time: [estimate]

What would you like me to deprioritise to accommodate this?"

Template 2: The Urgent Request Response

"I understand this is urgent. To deliver by [their deadline], we would need:

- Additional resources: [specify]
- Overtime budget: [amount]
- Scope reduction: [suggestions]

Without these, the realistic delivery date is [your date]."

THE "I'M NOT ACTUALLY HERMIONE GRANGER" DEADLINE PUSHBACK



THE 'MY TIME ISN'T ACTUALLY INFINITE' BOUNDARY SETTING

TEMPLATE 1: EMAIL BOUNDARY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR EMAIL. I'VE RECEIVED THIS OUTSIDE OF WORKING HOURS AND WILL ADDRESS IT DURING MY NEXT WORKING DAY (9AM-5PM). FOR GENUINE EMERGENCIES, PLEASE CALL [EMERGENCY CONTACT].

PS: THIS IS AN AUTOMATED RESPONSE, NOT ME WORKING AT 11PM AGAIN.

TEMPLATE 2: THE MEETING BOUNDARY

"I HAVE A HARD STOP AT [TIME] FOR [VAGUE BUT IMPORTANT-SOUNDING COMMITMENT]. COULD WE ENSURE WE COVER THE KEY POINTS BY THEN, OR SHOULD WE SCHEDULE A FOLLOW-UP?"

THE "I'D LIKE MONEY TO PAY MY **BILLS**" SALARY **DISCUSSION**

Research Prep Template:

- Market rate for role: £[amount]
- Your current salary: £[amount]
- Value added last year: £[amount/percentage]
- New responsibilities: [list]
- Industry standard increase: [percentage]

The Opening Script:

"Thank you for meeting with me. I'd like to discuss my compensation in light of my contributions over the past [timeframe]. I've prepared an overview of my impact:"

The Value Demonstration:

"In the past [timeframe], I've:

- Delivered [project] resulting in [specific outcome]
- Increased [metric] by [percentage]
- Taken on [new responsibilities]
- Developed [new skill/certification]

Based on market research and these contributions, I believe a salary of £ [amount] would be appropriate."

The Pushback Response:

"I understand budget constraints. Could we discuss:

- 1. A phased increase over [timeframe]
- 2. Additional benefits like [suggestions]
- 3.Performance-based bonuses tied to [metrics]"

Remember:

- · Document everything in writing
- Keep emotion out of it (save that for your group chat)
- Stay professional but firm
- Follow up important conversations with email summaries



Blueprint

→ NEED MORE SCRIPTS FOR AWKWARD WORKPLACE CONVERSATIONS?

THE BLUEPRINT GIVES YOU ACCESS TO OUR COMPLETE LIBRARY OF TEMPLATES, PLUS REAL-TIME ADVICE FROM PEOPLE WHO'VE MASTERED THE ART OF PROFESSIONAL PUSHBACK WITHOUT BURNING BRIDGES (UNLESS THE BRIDGE REALLY DESERVED IT).

W-Collective)

WHAT IS Blueprint

IT'S A 52-WEEK, FULLY IMMERSIVE PROGRAMME, AND HONESTLY, WE'VE LOOKED, AND THERE'S JUST NOTHING ELSE OUT THERE LIKE THE BLUEPRINT.

THE COURSE IS STRUCTURED AROUND FIVE POWER-PACKED MODULES, EACH LASER-FOCUSED ON A CRITICAL AREA OF YOUR CAREER AND PERSONAL GROWTH. THESE MODULES ARE DESIGNED TO EQUIP YOU WITH THE TOOLS TO EXCEL IN THE WORKPLACE, GROW YOUR CONFIDENCE, AND CREATE A PLAN THAT WORKS FOR YOU.

WE CREATED WHAT WE WISH WE'D HAD. A PROGRAMME THAT DELIVERS CLARITY, CONFIDENCE, AND ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU TAKE YOUR CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

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THE BLUEPRINT IS CREATED BY PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATED CAREER GROWTH AND UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORKPLACE.

AND THE BEST PART? IT'S PRACTICAL, NO-FLUFF CONTENT DESIGNED TO SEAMLESSLY FIT INTO YOUR BUSY LIFE.



W@

PART 3: EMERGENCY RESPONSE KIT

BECAUSE SUNDAY NIGHT DREAD SHOULDN'T BE YOUR WEEKLY ROUTINE





THE "SUNDAY SCARIES" SURVIVAL GUIDE

IT'S 9PM ON SUNDAY AND YOU'RE SPIRALING ABOUT MONDAY. LET'S FIX THAT.

STEP 1: REALITY CHECK LIST

Core responsibilities (what you're actually paid for):

- · Projects you own
- Regular deliverables
- Team commitments

Not your problem (despite what they think):

- Other people's deadlines
- Department-wide issues
- [That person's] emotional regulation

STEP 2: THE "ACTUALLY, I'M CRUSHING IT" REMINDER

Document your recent wins:

- Problems solved
- Projects delivered
- Positive feedback
- Skills developed
- Times you didn't tell Karen to [redacted]

STEP 3: MONDAY MORNING BATTLE PLAN

- Priority tasks (maximum 3)
- Meetings you actually need to attend
- Prepared responses for likely interruptions
- Scheduled breaks (non-negotiable)
- Exit time (stick to it)

STEP 4: PERSPECTIVE RESET

Remember:

- Your job is what you do, not who you are
- No one died from an unfinished PowerPoint
- Your worth isn't measured in overtime hours
- That promotion won't fix a toxic workplace

RED FLAG RESPONSE SYSTEM 2.0

YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO WORKPLACE SURVIVAL

IMMEDIATE THREATS:

THE LATE-DAY AMBUSH

- SITUATION: "QUICK CHAT" AT 4:55 PM
- RESPONSE: "I HAVE ANOTHER COMMITMENT AT 5. WOULD YOU LIKE TO SCHEDULE PROPER TIME TOMORROW MORNING?"
- FOLLOW-UP: EMAIL SUMMARIZING THE REQUEST AND PROPOSED MEETING TIME
- EMERGENCY EXIT: SET A FAKE CALENDAR ALERT FOR 5PM

THE GUILT TRIP

- SITUATION: "WE'RE ALL STAYING LATE TO FINISH THIS..."
- RESPONSE: "I HAVE COMMITMENTS I NEED TO HONOR. I CAN REPRIORITIZE TOMORROW."
- FOLLOW-UP: DOCUMENT THE PRESSURE TO STAY LATE
- SELF-CARE: REMEMBER THAT POOR PLANNING ON THEIR PART ISN'T AN EMERGENCY ON YOURS

THE FAMILY CARD

- SITUATION: "WE'RE LIKE A FAMILY HERE!"
- RESPONSE: "I PREFER TO MAINTAIN PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK."
- FOLLOW-UP: UPDATE YOUR CV
- REALITY CHECK: YOUR FAMILY DOESN'T MAKE YOU DO UNPAID OVERTIME

YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO WORKPLACE SURVIVAL CONTINUED....

ONGOING SITUATIONS:

- THE CONSTANT CRISIS
- SITUATION: "EVERYTHING IS URGENT!"
- RESPONSE: "LET'S REVIEW OUR PRIORITY MATRIX TO ENSURE WE'RE FOCUSING ON THE MOST CRITICAL TASKS."
- FOLLOW-UP: CREATE PRIORITY DOCUMENTATION
- SANITY CHECK: IF EVERYTHING'S URGENT, NOTHING IS

THE BOUNDARY PUSH

- SITUATION: WEEKEND/EVENING EMAILS MARKED "URGENT"
- RESPONSE: SET UP AUTO-REPLY: "I'LL ADDRESS THIS DURING BUSINESS HOURS"
- FOLLOW-UP: MAINTAIN THE BOUNDARY
- REMEMBER: YOUR PERSONAL TIME ISN'T OPTIONAL



EMERGENCY SELF-CARE PROTOCOL

WHEN IT ALL GETS TOO MUCH:

- 1. TAKE A PROPER LUNCH BREAK (AWAY FROM YOUR DESK)
- 2.GO FOR A "MEETING" (WALK AROUND THE BLOCK)
- **3.USE YOUR SICK DAYS FOR MENTAL HEALTH**
- 4. REMEMBER: "NO" IS A COMPLETE SENTENCE



YOUR MONDAY MOND

"I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR FIXING A BROKEN SYSTEM WHILE WORKING WITHIN IT."

→ TIRED OF NEEDING AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE KIT JUST TO GET THROUGH YOUR WORK WEEK? THE BLUEPRINT GIVES YOU THE STRATEGIES, SUPPORT, AND SKILLS TO BUILD A CAREER YOU DON'T NEED TO RECOVER FROM. BECAUSE SUNDAY NIGHTS SHOULD BE FOR NETFLIX, NOT NERVOUS BREAKDOWNS.

MOVING FORWARD

IF YOU'RE READING THIS AND THINKING "THIS IS DEPRESSINGLY RELEVANT," IT MIGHT BE TIME FOR A CHANGE. NOT THE KIND WHERE YOU JUST SWITCH TOXIC WORKPLACES, BUT THE KIND WHERE YOU ACTUALLY TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CAREER.

→ THE BLUEPRINT ISN'T JUST ANOTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. IT'S YOUR COMPLETE STRATEGY FOR:

- GETTING NOTICED (WITHOUT HAVING TO POST CRINGE LINKEDIN INSPIRATION)
- HANDLING OFFICE POLITICS (LEGALLY)
- BUILDING ACTUAL CONFIDENCE (NO WINE REQUIRED)
- GETTING PAID WHAT YOU'RE WORTH (BECAUSE EXPOSURE DOESN'T PAY RENT)

CREATED BY PEOPLE WHO'VE BEEN THERE, SURVIVED THAT, AND BUILT SOMETHING BETTER.
READY TO STOP JUST SURVIVING AND START THRIVING? JOIN THE BLUEPRINT. BECAUSE ANOTHER YEAR OF DEALING WITH TOXIC WORKPLACE DRAMA MIGHT ACTUALLY SEND YOU OVER THE EDGE.

MORE INFO ON THE NEXT PAGE....





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KEY BENEFITS

121 Mentorship

Kickstart your journey with tailored advice and a personalised game plan that's all about your goals and ambitions.

Online Learning & Challenges

Lessons filled with real-world strategies, paired with action-driven challenges to help you turn knowledge into results from day one

Monthly Group Coaching

Collaborate with like minded peers, tackle challenges together, and gain expert insights to keep your progress on track

Always On Community Support

Stay connected with a supportive network that's there for accountability, advice, and encouragement whenever you need it

SIGN UP AT W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK

LEARNING MODULES

Self-awareness and Personal Growth

Professional Skills and Competency

Networking and Mentorship

Work-Life Balance

Career Strategy and Advancement

SIGN UP AT W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

THESE RESOURCES ARE PRIMARILY UK-BASED. IF YOU'RE REACHING OUT FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY, PLEASE DON'T WORRY - WE'RE HERE TO HELP GUIDE YOU TOWARDS LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN YOUR AREA. JUST DROP US A MESSAGE AT HELLO@W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK, AND WE'LL POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

Mental Health Support Organizations:

- Mind (0300 123 3393)
- Anxiety UK (03444 775 774 or text 07537 416 905)
- Samaritans (116 123 free 24/7 helpline)
- Mental Health UK (workplace mental health specialists)
- Shout (Text 85258 free 24/7 text support)

Employment Law & Workplace Support:

- ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) www.hse.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau Free employment law advice
- LionHeart Workplace mental health support

Workplace Bullying Resources:

- National Bullying Helpline (0845 22 55 787)
- ACAS Bullying and Harassment Guidance
- Able Futures Free mental health support service
- Workplace Mental Health Institute