

No place in business for corporate slobs

SLOTH or laziness is one of the famous Seven Deadly Sins.

Sloth is more a sin of omission than of commission and is a reluctance to work or to exert oneself.

In the context of this article, sloth is an apathy and a laziness in the workplace.

John French, head of corporate intelligence training, is an expert on corporate communication training and strategy. He says: "Employees and their personal communication ability and conduct, embody their company's brand and ethic as much as advertising, logos and multi-million-rand offices do.

"The way you speak, dress, communicate, and the style with which you manage your business relationships all send out very powerful communication messages to your clients which ultimately builds or burns your business.

"Corporate slobs usually have non-committal attitudes, lack passion and refuse to take responsibility for the success of the business and

Snip

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their teams. Everybody else in the office seems to be picking up after them and sorting out what should be their job function and responsibility. The corporate slob is usually cunning in that they know how to avoid work responsibilities, and they are usually adept at manipulating others for their own selfish gain."

French explains: "Slothful people are taking advantage of our new 21st century relaxed style of doing business, and they use it as a vehicle to justify their laziness.

"Corporate dress codes and styles of doing business are relaxing dramatically as we head on into the 21st century. The bottom line is that we are all still in business,

and we need to conduct ourselves professionally. Corporate slobs tend to abuse this new relaxed business style and the results can cause unbelievable corporate reputational damage."

Corporate slobs thrive in corporate and government bureaucratic structures.

French states there are two main types of corporate slob. The silent corporate slob lies dormant, basking in the background, and hopes that they remain unnoticed. Their career objective is to do as little as possible and collect a salary at the end of the month.

Under the mask of introversion, they try to remain anonymous, do little, contribute little, and try to subtly blend in. Silent slobs only get noticed when you have to deal with them directly. And when their lazy sloth delivers nothing but frustration, colleagues usually end up working around them.

The altruistic SA employment legislation usually makes it difficult to get rid of these corporate parasites.

The other type of corporate slob is the loudmouth who makes such an excessive fuss about having their presence known and felt. Behind the noise, hot air and show, nothing actually gets done by them. They boss and bully their colleagues lower down in the corporate hierarchy and delegate all their personal workloads out. They tend to outsource all their responsibilities to sub-contractors and suppliers. Extroverted slobs avoid doing the job themselves at all costs, but gleefully swoop in at the end of projects to collect the kudos and praise if all has gone well. If the project fails, they are the first to blame others.

If you can answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may be a corporate slob:

■ Do you rush into the weekly meetings/projects without being prepared and your colleagues have to cover for you?

■ Are you not disciplined in the way you dress, even if your work environment is casual, and do you not make a conscious effort with your personal grooming?

■ Do your colleagues battle to hear what you are saying and/or do they battle to understand what you are trying to say?

■ Do you tend to leave projects and assignments incomplete, leaving them for other colleagues to finish?

■ In performance appraisals, do you score badly when it comes to being responsible and "taking initiative"?

French concludes: "If a business is to succeed, it is vital for all team players to take ownership of their individual roles and communica-



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tion responsibilities. Team members need to all work responsibly to take the team 'to the next level'. Through customised corporate communication training which instils responsibility, self-empowerment, and self-growth, team members can overcome their limiting behaviours and shine!"