

# Destructive Member Behaviors<sup>1</sup>

1. ***Attacking personality.*** Redirect the member's focus to a performance issue or problem and away from personal attributes.
2. ***Agreeing with everything.*** Ask the member to play devil's advocate and express the opposite point of view.
3. ***Being inconsistent.*** Seek to clarify all apparent inconsistencies by simply stating, "I'm confused."
4. ***Binding others' behavior.*** Remind a member who says, "You're going to love this idea" to speak for himself or herself; consider trying to surface the "bind."
5. ***Changing the subject without explanation.*** Point out the need to return to the agenda; suggest putting new topic on the agenda for a later time.
6. ***Chatting.*** Stop non-contributive talking by team members. Facilitator could ask, "Did you have something you wanted to contribute?"
7. ***Complaining.*** Ask the person to express his or her concerns; say that negativity is hindering whole team and ask, "Do you have an idea?" Give response and support.
8. ***Criticizing.*** Take the criticism to the team meeting, and discuss whether it is warranted. If it is, make changes in the way the job is done. If not, remind the member that criticism hinders team progress.
9. ***Displaying anger.*** Stop the process, acknowledge the anger, and ask its source.
10. ***Displaying superiority / dominating.*** Recognize the value of the member's input, and move process toward involving the rest of the team.
11. ***Engaging in distractions (doodling, writing memos, doing other work, and making other displays of lack of interest).*** Ask team member for input in order to bring him or her back into the process.
12. ***Escaping (taking calls, etc.).*** Ask the member if there is a better time to meet when he or she could give the team full attention.

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<sup>1</sup> Deborah Harrington-Mackin, The Team Building Tool Kit, amacon, 1994, pp 59-61.

13. ***Explaining the speaker's behavior.*** The speaker may state, "I'll explain my own behavior," or another member may remind the team member to speak only to his/her own behavior or opinions.
14. ***Frequent head shaking.*** Anyone can identify the member and ask why he or she is disagreeing.
15. ***Glossing over problems.*** Encourage team to explore difficulties and their causes.
16. ***Goofing off.*** Redirect member's attention back to the process.
17. ***Hairsplitting.*** Acknowledge that a consensus has been reached, and move process forward.
18. ***Interrupting.*** State ground rules, and reinforce members' speaking one at a time.
19. ***Making decisions without the team's knowledge.*** State disapproval of that method; remind member(s) about importance of team involvement in decision-making process.
20. ***Misinterpreting (misstatement of ideas or suggestions by process observers or facilitator).*** Be assertive about own viewpoint.
21. ***Missing many meetings.*** Process observers or facilitator can ask why; see if there is a problem (too busy or loss of interest). Reinforce team concept; point out assets of having the person there; point out some of the positives done for the team.
22. ***Not completing tasks on time.*** Ask if other team members can help; give member a second chance to do the task or allow him or her to back out; talk about accountability.
23. ***Not doing a job in a responsible way.*** Talk to the member and clarify expectations; set quality standards for how the job is to be done by everyone, every time.
24. ***Not participating in team decisions.*** Process observers or facilitator talk to member and ask if there is a problem and seek member's involvement in decision-making process.
25. ***Not taking the process seriously.*** State that each member is expected to value the process enough to spend time discussing the issues.
26. ***Offering putdowns.*** Explore why the person has that point of view; ask the person to contribute information and options, rather than judgment.

27. ***Prejudging.*** Note that conclusion is being reached before data are in; acknowledge feelings; seek person's involvement and input.
28. ***Pretending not to understand in order to avoid being part of the decision.*** Ask member what he or she needs in order to be able to participate in the decision. Do not allow member to abdicate.
29. ***Raising false hopes.*** Set expectations that are realistic.
30. ***Seeking sympathy.*** Surface behavior by asking team member what he or she needs from the team.
31. ***Seeing only one way ahead.*** Ask person to explore other options.
32. ***Solving other's problems.*** Encourage the person to let others suggest their own solutions.
33. ***Speaking in "shoulds."*** Redirect focus to what to do next, given the realities.
34. ***Suggesting a relationship between subjects when none is apparent.*** Ask member to explain how he or she sees the topics relating.
35. ***Talking too much.*** Ask person to state points one at a time.
36. ***Withdrawal.*** Ask to hear from members who haven't shared their ideas yet.