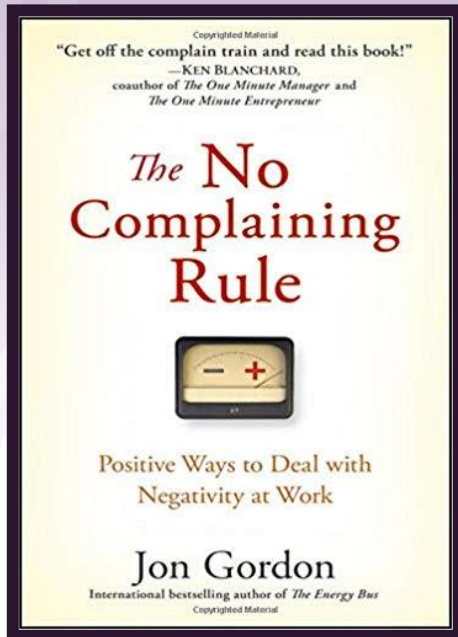


The No Complaining Rule

Positive Ways to Deal with Negativity at Work



Author: Jon Gordon

Inside this Issue

Overview/ Author's Purpose	1
Summary	2
Negative Work Culture	3
Leadership and Direction	4
Work Culture Action Plan	5
Individual Action Plan	6
Positive Work Culture	7
Critique/ Discussion Questions	8
About the Author	9

Overview

In *The No Complaining Rule: Positive Ways to Deal with Negativity at Work*, Jon Gordon shares a fictional story of a single mom, Hope, faced with numerous challenges: personal health, work, and family-life disruptions. Hope's negativity and complaints affect all aspects of her personal, social, and emotional health. However, Hope's negativity is conquered and turned into positive action. Based on the successful principles and action plan of the No Complaining Rule, this book is an ideal read for human resource leaders, teachers, and managers interested in channeling negative energy into positive action. What can result is a positive work culture that contributes to productivity and employee satisfaction.

Author's Goals

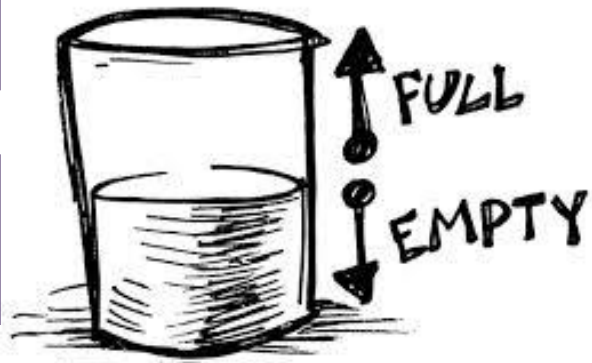
To assist readers in redirecting mindless, chronic complaining

Help readers turn justified complaints into solutions

Recognize every complaint as an opportunity to turn something negative into a positive



Summary of Book



Meet Hope

Hope is a single mother of two teenage children, a son and daughter. Recently, Hope's husband abandoned the marriage and left her devastated. Furthermore, Hope's recent physical exam detected something suspicious and additional tests are needed; cancer does run in Hope's family. Although Hope used to be an eternal optimist, her divorce, health scare, and work-life balance have left her bitter.

Work Life

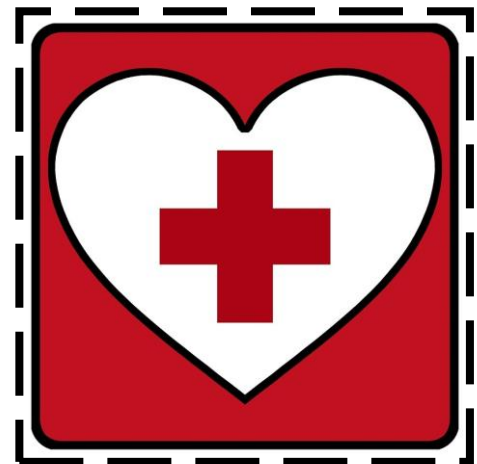
As Vice President of EZ Tech, Hope recognized the morale at work was low. Negativity kept spreading; EZ Tech work culture was deteriorating because business logistics, sales, customer complaints, stock prices, and shareholder meetings took precedence over employees' concerns. To make matters worse, the company was faced with a public relations nightmare: computer batteries were catching on fire. It was the worst day in EZ Tech history!

A Turn-Around Opportunity

The current public relations crisis, defected computer batteries, was a symptom of the negative work culture festering at EZ Tech. To address it immediately, Hope was tasked with creating a 3-point plan that could be presented to the media, board, and employees to address the voids that allowed negativity and morale problems to worsen.

A Chance Encounter

While visiting the hospital to get blood work and an ultrasound, Hope meets Joyce, a no-nonsense nurse. Joyce introduces Hope to the *No Complaining Rule*, a way to empower patients' with a new perspective during an often-difficult time. Joyce encourages Hope to join the energy bus instead of the complain train. Recognizing that she is a chronic complainer, Hope accepts the challenge!



Negative Work Cultures



“... complaining creates a cycle of negativity that feeds itself and grows” (p. 43).

Big Ideas

- 1) People complain for different reasons: fear of the unknown, feelings of helplessness, and habitual.
- 2) Negative emotions are associated with various physical and mental health difficulties.

Negative emotions are often associated with the following:

- ✓ Decreased mental health
- ✓ Increased physical symptoms including energy depletion, headaches/migraines
- ✓ Stress
- ✓ Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness

Negativity is “the biggest problem in business and it not only affects . . . organizations but it affects us individually” (p. 28).



What Do Negative Work Cultures Need?

Leadership: Coaching, modelling, and expectations needed to handle tough situations.

Direction: A workplace vision, set of goals, processes, systems, and habits where negativity cannot cultivate.



Big Ideas

- Consider the actions that are need to rectify difficulties in your life causing negativity and complaints.
- We have the tools to redirect complaints into solutions.
- Complaints can be a gift to improve organizational culture and personal life if used correctly.

Work Culture: Action Plan to Convince Others

Step 1: Explain the Cost of Negativity

Identify the problem and the effect it has on productivity, performance, and morale.

Step 6: Celebrate Success

Continuously highlight employees who turned complaints into solutions. Celebrate the process and people.

Step 2: Share and Explain the No Complaining Rule

Mindless complaining is discouraged. If a complaint is to be made, one or two possible solutions must be shared.

Step 7: Monitor and Enforce the No Complaining Rule

Make positive culture everyone's priority. Weed out negativity and ingrain positive energy into the environment.

Step 3: Differentiate between justified complaining versus Mindless Complaining

Mindless complaining focuses on problems whereas justified complaining focuses on solutions

Step 8: Distribute No Complaining Tools

Distribute cards, posters, emails, and books that highlight the No Complaining Rule.

Step 4: Identify and Share your Complaint/ Solution Process

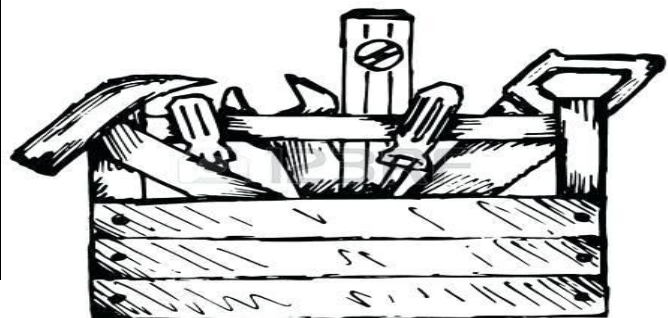
Each person in the organization must understand how the complaint will be considered and addressed.

Step 9: Designate a No Complaining Week

Encourage people to monitor their own thoughts for the week. Use a fun reward as an incentive. Assist with creating personal action plans.

Step 5: Listen, Hear, and Act

Employees need to know their complaints and solutions will be heard and considered.



No Complain Week Personal Action Plan

Day 1: Monitor Your Thoughts and Words

Become conscious of what you think and say

Day 2: Make a Gratitude List

Create a list of what you are thankful for

Day 3: Take a Thank You Walk

Enter a state of gratitude and carry it with you

Day 4: Focus on the Good Stuff

Focus what is on right rather than wrong. Praise more.

Day 5: Start a Success Journal

Write down all the successes you have had

Day 6: Let Go

What do you have the power to change? What can you let go?

Day 7: Breathe

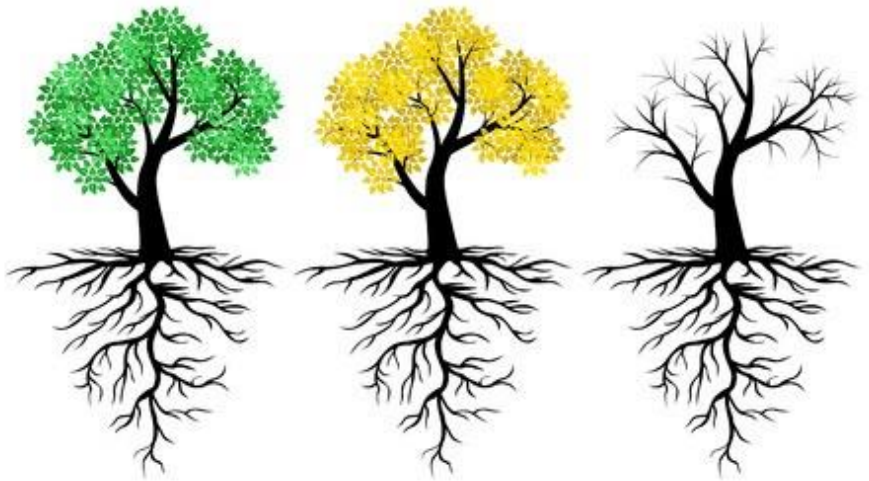
Spend 10 minutes alone in silence. Transform stress into positive energy.



"In life, you have a choice between two roads. The positive road and the negative road . . . you must decide what road you want to be on" (41).

Positive Work Cultures

“It’s like the root and fruit of the tree. Often, we look at the fruit (results, profits, stock, price, etc) at the expense of ignoring the root (people, culture, teamwork, spirit)” (p.55).



Three No Complaining Tools (p. 49)

- **The But:** When you realize you are complaining, add the word but and then add a positive thought or action
- **Get to vs. Have to:** Shift your perspective
- **Complaints into Solutions:** Eliminate mindless complaining

Five Things to Do Instead of Complaining

1. Practice Gratitude: Count your blessings
2. Praise Others: Three times more praise than complaints
3. Focus on Success: What went well?
4. Let Go: Focus on what you have the power to change
5. Recharge yourself: Pray, meditate, exercise, and seek help

Critique of Book

Despite *The No Complaining Rule* being a fictional story from the first-person perspective of Hope, it is filled with relatable situations that human resource leaders and employees may encounter. Jon Gordon, author of *The No Complaining Rule*, provides numerous tools to build positive capacity in personal and professional environments. The strategies presented can be utilized all work environments, including education, business and non-profit sectors.

The No Complaining Rule principles may have direct effect on organizational culture. While no research evidence of the principles' successes are provided, readers may become more positive and solution focused, infusing a positive energy into their organizational culture. This positivity then has the potential to curtail negative energy and complaining. While eliminating all complaining is an unreasonable expectation, negative energy can be redirected into positive change and growth.

Overall, this book was practical and easy read filled with uncomplicated strategies to improve your perspective, and life.

Discussion Questions

- 1) How do you currently lead chronic complainers in the workplace?
- 2) Is it possible to eliminate complaining? Discuss advantages and disadvantages.
- 3) How productive would the No Complaining Action Plan be at your place of employment?
- 4) Think of a time when complaining made a difference in your life. Why was it effective?
- 5) The irony of complaining is that those who share their complaints are admitting their concerns; their openness reveals a level of trust. How can this relationship be honoured while minimizing chronic complaining?

About the Author



Jon Gordon is passionate about developing positive leaders, effective organizations, and efficient teams. As a graduate of Cornell University and holding a Masters degree in Education, Gordon is a best selling author of 18 books. His works have inspired organizations from around the world: Fortune 500 companies, sports teams, school divisions, hospitals, and non-profit organizations.

As a successful author, Gordon's strategies have been featured on numerous media outlets including television, newspaper, and magazine publications.



References

- Author Picture* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <http://jongordon.com>.
- Book Cover* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.ca>.
- Glass* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://rampages.us/socialresearch/>.
- Gordon, J. (2008). *The no complaining rule*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Heart* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://www.redbubble.com>.
- Leadership* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://www.shutterstock.com>.
- Loud Speaker* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://www.wrike.com>.
- Media* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://www.culturelink.ca/>.
- Mental Health* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <http://jwa.org/media/mental-health-in-scrabble-tiles>.
- Thank you* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://idealistcareers.org>.
- Thinking* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://shop.creepyhollows.com>.
- Tool Box* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <http://mibelekacu.top/content/>.
- Trees* (clip art). (no date). Retrieved from <https://www.canstockphoto.com/>