

Chronic Time Abuse

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People who abuse time can be disruptive to a company's morale and operating efficiency. Real time abuse results from psychological conflict. The time abuser typically has a brittle self-esteem and an unconscious fear of being evaluated and found wanting. This article describes four types of time abusers typically encountered in the workplace:

Perfectionists are afraid of receiving negative feedback. Their work has to be "perfect," so they can increase their likelihood of earning a positive evaluation or at least avoid getting a negative one. Preemptives try to be in control by completing work far earlier than they need to, making themselves unpopular and unavailable in the process. People pleasers commit to far too much work because they find it impossible to say no. Procrastinators make constant excuses to cover the fear of being found inadequate in their jobs.

Managing these four types of people can be challenging. Time abusers respond differently from most other employees to criticism and approval. Praising a procrastinator when he is on time, for instance, will only exacerbate the problem, because he will fear that our expectations are even higher than before. In fact, some time abusers, like the perfectionist, may need professional treatment.