

## the ARTICLE (for instructors)

### It Only Takes One Bad Apple

There is an old saying: It only takes one bad apple to spoil the bunch. The idiom can be applied to every day life. A recent research report indicates that "one bad apple" can quickly spoil the atmosphere of the office. An employee with a negative attitude brings conflict and stress to the workplace. A problem employee usually doesn't do an equal amount of work, is always unhappy and complaining, and bullies others.

Negative behavior, the researchers found, is much stronger than positive behavior. As such, several positive employees can't change the mood created by one negative teammate. In fact, it often leads to a downward spiral, with more and more employees becoming unhappier and unhappier as time continues. The news comes out of the University of Washington.

In order to solve the problem, companies need to deal with the negativity immediately. One answer is to have the employee work alone as much as possible. In effect, he should be isolated from other team members work-wise. Better yet, ensure that effective hiring practices prevent the problem from entering the building. Training managers to better determine potential hires helps, as do personality tests. These can identify and remove emotionally unstable or disagreeable people.

Case in point: The wife of the report's lead author noticed that when a problem employee at her office was sick for several days, the atmosphere quickly changed. People began to help one another. They played classical music on their radios. Many went out for drinks after work. However, once the problem returned, the toxic atmosphere returned, too.

**Teacher's Notes:**

\* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

**the ARTICLE (for students)**

saying	isolated	mood	behavior	complaining
effective	attitude	disagreeable	toxic	however
solve	unhappier	employee	spoil	potential

**It Only Takes One Bad Apple**

There is an old (a. \_\_\_\_\_): It only takes one bad apple to spoil the bunch. The idiom can be applied to every day life. A recent research report indicates that "one bad apple" can quickly (b. \_\_\_\_\_) the atmosphere of the office. An employee with a negative (c. \_\_\_\_\_) brings conflict and stress to the workplace. A problem employee usually doesn't do an equal amount of work, is always unhappy and (d. \_\_\_\_\_), and bullies others.

Negative (e. \_\_\_\_\_), the researchers found, is much stronger than positive behavior. As such, several positive employees can't change the (f. \_\_\_\_\_) created by one negative teammate. In fact, it often leads to a downward spiral, with more and more employees becoming (g. \_\_\_\_\_) and unhappier as time continues. The news comes out of the University of Washington.

In order to (h. \_\_\_\_\_) the problem, companies need to deal with the negativity immediately. One answer is to have the employee work alone as much as possible. In effect, he should be (i. \_\_\_\_\_) from other team members work-wise. Better yet, ensure that (j. \_\_\_\_\_) hiring practices prevent the problem from entering the building. Training managers to better determine (k. \_\_\_\_\_) hires helps, as do personality tests. These can identify and remove emotionally unstable or (l. \_\_\_\_\_) people.

Case in point: The wife of the report's lead author noticed that when a problem (m. \_\_\_\_\_) at her office was sick for several days, the atmosphere quickly changed. People began to help one another. They played classical music on their radios. Many went out for drinks after work. (n. \_\_\_\_\_), once the problem returned, the (o. \_\_\_\_\_) atmosphere returned, too.

## STEP ONE

**Title:** Speculate and/or discuss the contents of today's article from its title: "It Only Takes One Bad Apple."

## STEP TWO

**Word Search:** Find the target words (in bold). Time yourself, and see how long it takes you to find all the words.

complaining	toxic	solve	effective	spoil
potential	attitude	disagreeable	mood	isolated
<p align="center">                     F K D J E U V A T V I C M K P                      D O Q F L I A T M I I O N F B                      S P R L B R B I O X O G U C G                      P M O R A I L T O D S Y F N M                      I Y P T E U G T I Q V P I M I                      L Y H K E I E U U Y H N O N Q                      L D E Z R N Z D K P I W S I W                      C E X I G W T E U A L O A J L                      M T N I A F C I L T L S V U M                      J A V D S M J P A A I Z N E D                      G L A Z I Y M K T L L T J B O                      K O I W D O G E N T L I T E K                      Z S N F C E L B I E E G A A O                      E I S O L V E D Z T Z Q X W L                      E S G T P E F F E C T I V E H                 </p>				

## STEP THREE

**Fill in the Blanks:** Fill in the blank with the correct word. Use a dictionary for any words you don't know, but be sure to check your English-English dictionary, too.

	complaining	toxic	solve	effective	spoil
	potential	attitude	disagreeable	mood	isolated
a.	"One bad apple" can quickly ( ) the atmosphere of the office.				
b.	An employee with a negative ( ) brings conflict and stress to the workplace.				
c.	A problem employee is always unhappy and ( ).				
d.	Several positive employees can't change the ( ) created by one negative teammate.				
e.	In order to ( ) the problem, companies need to deal with the negativity immediately.				
f.	He should be ( ) from other team members work-wise.				
g.	Ensure that ( ) hiring practices prevent the problem from entering the building.				
h.	Training managers to better determine ( ) hires helps, as do personality tests.				
i.	These can identify and remove emotionally unstable or ( ) people.				
j.	Once the problem returned, the ( ) atmosphere returned, too.				

## STEP FOUR

The Article: 1) Read the article, but don't worry about the missing words. 2) Fill in the blanks with today's vocabulary, followed by all the other words. 3) Read the article again, and circle any unknown words/phrases. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the words or phrases your circled. 4) Answer the questions to check your comprehension.

a.	What does a negative employee bring to the office?
b.	According to the article, what is a problem employee?
c.	What happens when an office has a negative employee?
d.	What are some possible solutions listed in the article?
e.	What happened in the example when the problem employee was sick for several days?

## STEP FIVE

**Discuss:** Write down five vocabulary words from today's article that you want to use.

a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

Assume you were hiring people for a new position in your company. What three questions would you ask to determine if they were negative or positive people? Next, go around the class and ask your questions. Every time you use a vocabulary word, place a check next to it.

a.	
b.	
c.	

**Score yourself:**

**10 or more times:** Fantastic! Be sure to review the words at home.

**6-9 times:** Pretty good! You're on your way to acquiring today's vocabulary. Try writing your own sentences at home.

**5 or less times:** Try harder next time! To acquire new vocabulary, you need to use the new words as much as possible.