

The Joy of Work: Dilbert's Guide to Finding Happiness at the Expense of Your Co-Workers

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<blockquote>"I cried because I did not have an office with a door, until I met a man who had no cubicle."

-- Dilbert </blockquote>

A message from Scott Adams:

I think the next wave of office design will focus on eliminating the only remaining obstacle to office productivity: your happiness. Happiness isn't a physical thing, like walls and doors. But it's closely related. Managers know that if they can eliminate all traces of happiness, the employees won't be so picky about their physical surroundings. Once you're hopelessly unhappy, you won't bother to complain if your boss rolls you up in a tight ball and crams you into a cardboard box.

As soon as I noticed this disturbing threat to workplace happiness, I did some investigative work and discovered it wasn't confined to the issue of office design. Companies were making a direct frontal assault on employee happiness in every possible way! I knew there was only one thing that could stop the horror.

It was time for another Dilbert book.

It might sound corny, but I felt an obligation to society. People told me it was time for me to "give something back to the community." This scared me, until I realized that no one knows I furnished my house with street signs and park benches. So I interpreted the "give something back to the community" message as a plea for me to write this book and then charge the community to read it.

In the first part of this book I will tell you how to find happiness at the expense of your co-workers, managers, customers, and--best of all--those lazy stockholders. The second part of the book teaches you my top-secret methods for mining humor out of ordinary situations, thus making it easier to mock the people around you. The third part of the book is made entirely of invisible pages. If the book seems heavier than it looks, that's why.

Office Prank #44: Sounds That Drive Co-workers Crazy

You can produce sounds in the office that will drive your co-workers insane. That can be very entertaining. Every co-worker is different, so you might have to experiment to find the sounds that are most annoying to your cubicle neighbor. It's worth the effort.

Scott Adams's latest work is not a collection of Dilbert cartoons (though recycled strips are liberally sprinkled throughout); it's a dialogue between the man and his fans disguised as a tongue-in-cheek guide to surviving the corporate life. There are chapters on "Office Pranks," "Surviving Meetings," and "Managing Your Co-Workers," with enough weird stories and practical jokes to make any middle manager nervous, especially as many of the tricks and tips come from e-mails sent to Adams by his fans (one tip: never let anyone else use your computer). If these messages are any indication, the creative tide has turned, and now the corporate world is following Dilbert's lead. In the office blocks of America, life is

imitating art imitating life, creating a pleasantly postmodern working environment. The final chapter of *The Joy of Work*, "Handling Criticism," includes a response to Norman Solomon's *The Trouble with Dilbert*, which accuses Adams of selling out and supporting the corporate hierarchy that he claims to satirize. Adams's response is thorough and convincing, with just enough nastiness (jokes about Solomon's hair, for example) to demonstrate that although Dilbert may not have a mouth, he certainly has teeth. --Simon Leake
Scott Adams is the creator of Dilbert, the comic strip that now appears in 1,550 newspapers worldwide. His first two hardcover business books, *The Dilbert Principle* and *Dogbert's Top Secret Management Handbook*, have sold more than two million copies and have appeared on the New York Times bestseller list for a combined total of sixty weeks.

Other Books

Sociology in Everyday Life. Over multiple successful editions, this distinctive text puts day-to-day life under the microscope of sociological analysis, providing an engaging treatment of situations and interactions that are resonant with readers' daily experiences. Clearly written and well-researched, it reveals the underlying patterns and order of everyday life, employing both seminal classical works and contemporary analyses that define and embrace the theories and methods of symbolic interactionism. The latest edition provides fresh insights into patterns of behavior across a wide range of settings and circumstances, connecting our individual "selves" to such issues as the effects of power differentials on social situations, changing definitions of intimacy, varied experiences of aging and the life course, and the ongoing search for meaning. Boxed inserts highlight topics of related interest, while thought-provoking discussion questions encourage readers to apply chapter content to their daily experiences.

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