



# Personality Disorders Can Hurt Your Business

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Personality Disorders are psychiatric conditions that usually cause life-long problems in both personal and work relationships for the individual. The reason for this is that the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of the person do not match expectations of society.

There are ten different types of personality disorders and although criteria is complex, following is an extremely brief description of each:

1. Antisocial - These individuals live and behave as though they do not have a conscience.
2. Avoidant - People who do not do things that they need to do even if the task would benefit them, can fall into this category.
3. Borderline - Those who act immature and tend to be in crisis most of the time might be diagnosed as having this personality disorder.
4. Dependent - When people cannot seem to live or make decisions on their own, they could possibly have this disorder.
5. Histrionic - These are the "drama queens" who make everything into a big deal.
6. Narcissistic - The person who is arrogant and totally in love with him-herself might have a Narcissistic personality disorder.
7. Obsessive-compulsive - Those with this disorder tend to have thoughts and feelings that escalate drastically followed by behaviours that are not directly associated with them.
8. Paranoid - This person is afraid that everyone and everything is out to get them.
9. Schizoid - These people usually live in social isolation and are indifferent to other people.
10. Schizotypal - When a person has trouble with relationships, appearance, and disturbing thoughts, they could be schizotypal.

It can be very difficult to diagnose personality disorders. In fact, this is usually done by psychiatrists. Just because someone meets some of the criteria does not mean that they have the diagnosis.

Severity might range from mild to severe and many do not go for help unless they are have difficulties in their lives or another mental illness such as depression or anxiety. Medications and talk therapy may be helpful but Personality Disorders are not cured. They are only managed.

Imagine how difficult it might be to have someone in your business with a full-blown Personality Disorder. You and they would likely face problems on a regular basis unless the person is following a treatment plan and functioning at a high level.

The good news is that if you or someone who is working with you has a personality disorder, there is help available. The first step is to set an appointment with a psychiatrist so that an assessment can be completed.