



**IT'S** quite possible that your colleagues and managers find you intensely bothersome – that you are, in fact, rubbing them up the wrong way

# OFFICE FOIBLES

When 'the foibles' cause 'the fury'

BY KNEEZ BUKHARI

You spend more time at work than you do at home, which means more time spent in close contact with work colleagues than with family, friends or partners. Depending on the size of your organisation, it can even seem as though you live with each other, and sometimes, those little foibles your colleagues have can be downright irritating. So what do you do?

Well, for a start, don't just sign up for the BMW club (bitching, moaning and whining), there's no point huffing if you aren't going to do something about it. In the right way. The fact is that the majority of irritants have no idea that their non-rhythmic toe-tapping, off-key whistling, habit of wailing hysterically down the phone or tendency to floss at their desk is even noteworthy. And if you don't tell them, it's quite possible that they will never know. Leading to the genetic possibility that they will pass on their particular foible to their offspring, who will then toddle

off and propagate a newspecies of uber-irritating human beings who eventually infuriate each other to the point of violence, escalating into world war, leading to the eventual extinction of mankind as we know it. Based on this hypothesis, it's actually your duty to mankind to politely tap your colleague on the shoulder and let them know that they laugh like a hyena on nitrous oxide and smell of gherkins.

This works both ways by the way. It's quite possible that your colleagues and managers find you intensely bothersome — that you are, in fact, rubbing them up the wrong way right now without even knowing it. We all know what we find personally annoying, but one man's irritant is another man's source of intense amusement, so you may not be aware of what other people might categorise as such. Take a look at our Top Five list and see where you rank on a scale of mildly irksome to wearisome pest to 'he who should be publicly flogged until the skin falls in swathes from his body'. ■

## HOW MANY ARE YOU GUILTY OF?

**YOU'RE UNPREPARED:** Always late for meetings? Never have your reports done on time? It's not just bad practice, it loses you the respect of colleagues and makes you look like an idiot.

**YOU LIKE TO SHARE:** Do you never cover your mouth when you cough, sneeze or yawn, and then wonder why everyone in the office is always ill? Make a note — unless it's verbal, it shouldn't be coming out of your mouth!

**YOU'RE A TOUCAN:** Stop whistling, humming, tapping your feet under the desk, giggling at your emails, pretending you can sing, squawking down your mobile to all and sundry and shouting across the office. And don't ever do it again.

**YOU'RE A SELFISH B\*STARD:** When was the last time you offered to get the drinks in? And you still owe me £5 for the lunch I bought you last month. And chip in for the latest birthday present for goodness sake, you cheap to\*\*er. And come to think of it, when was the last time you offered to make the coffee? In fact, did you even know we had a kitchen?

**YOU'RE JUST PLAIN FILTHY:** While you're in there — clean up after yourself you dirty so-and-so, your mummy doesn't work here.