

Business English *with Christina*

Christina (00:00):

Faster Fluency Conversation Club podcast is nice. Workplace culture toxic.

Christina (00:10):

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Christina (00:41):

Now

Christina (00:41):

Let's go.

Christina (00:43):

Hey, Christina here with the Faster Fluency Conversation Club podcast, and today we have a very interesting question to discuss, and that is nice workplace culture, toxic, and to talk about this, I'm here with Sheila and Sheila, how are you doing today?

Sheila (01:02):

Doing pretty good. I'm still feeling the effects of being on fair for 21 hours.

Christina (01:11):

Right. So

Sheila (01:12):

A little shaky, right? So still kind of recovering. I'm doing well.

Christina (01:17):

Okay. Well

Sheila (01:17):

Good kids.

Christina (01:19):

Well, hopefully the effects of the ferry will disappear sooner rather than later, I would say.

Sheila (01:26):

Exactly right. I hope so too. How are you doing today? I didn't even ask.

Christina (01:31):

Yeah, I'm doing very well. It's Monday when we're recording this. So after a nice, refreshing weekend and excited about the week and getting back to work and all of that. And so let's get into the topic today, which is this idea of workplace culture and is a nice workplace culture. Is that actually toxic? And I thought this was an interesting article or an interesting topic because I mean, usually when we think of a nice workplace culture, we think it's something positive and desirable and something that we want, but maybe it can also be a sign of a toxic workplace. So yeah, an interesting topic today maybe to start. Yeah, yeah. No, I think so.

Christina (02:29):

Yeah.

Christina (02:30):

Maybe to start, how would you actually define a toxic workplace? I think

Sheila (02:38):

A toxic workplace to me, as it mentioned in the article a little bit, is a place where people are very critical not getting along. They don't work well together, and it just makes for a very difficult setting to be effective or productive in. But I think the

biggest thing is when you're working with people who are very critical, even if they don't say it, but they show it,

Christina (03:05):

And

Sheila (03:06):

In their actions, that's the same thing showing in their actions. I think that can definitely be difficult to deal with at work. Yeah. What about you? What would you say is,

Christina (03:19):

Yeah, I would say it's all of those things that you just described, and I think there's actually maybe a difference between the toxic workplace where, like you said, people, their actions and their words, they can be maybe passive aggressive or there's a lot of pressure on the employees or a lot of maybe micromanagement and all of these things that we know are, I would say, negative aspects of a workplace. But then there's also, I would say the hidden toxic workplace where maybe on the surface it seems nice and it seems that everything is positive and everybody's happy, et cetera, but I feel like that can actually hide.

(04:14):

I don't know. I want to say it's almost like in a relationship. It's like if everything seems to be positive on the surface, it's not that everything actually is positive because it's normal in the workplace or in relationships to have problems and conflict and difficult moments or whatever. But if you are not addressing those problems and you're just kind of pretending that everything is nice and happy, that is also a form of toxic workplace. Because like we said, maybe your coworkers, they're being passive aggressive. They're saying things that seem to be positive, but that they're kind of meant as a negative thing or a critical thing, or no, everything is like, okay, no, this is great. This is all good. We're doing good, we're doing well, et cetera. And no one is maybe a place where no one feels comfortable expressing a contradictory point of view or bringing up a problem or asking difficult questions, that kind of thing. I feel like that can be a kind of toxic workplace also.

Sheila (05:28):

Yeah, I mean, in the article it mentioned that being kind may be a sort of cop out, so maybe you should tell your coworker or give them some constructive criticism or tell them that they've done something incorrectly, but you kind of cover it over with kindness and you don't tell them directly what they need to improve on.

Christina (05:52):

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, I was going to say, somebody ask you, ask for some feedback or something, you're like, oh, no, no, it was really good. It was all great. No, you did really an awesome job. Exactly. That's nice to hear. But it doesn't help to move the company forward or the team forward if there's something that needs to be improved.

Sheila (06:13):

Exactly. Or the person to grow, either they're not going to know where they need to improve on. So yeah, I think that in that sense, it's not a good way, but to me that describes false kindness because I feel like

Christina (06:27):

Kindness

Sheila (06:28):

Is, it's being considerate, it's being gracious ability to get along with your coworkers, even if you don't see their point of view or don't agree with it,

Christina (06:39):

You

Sheila (06:40):

Still treat them with that same respect, consideration, kindness.

Christina (06:44):

Exactly. Exactly.

Sheila (06:46):

So yeah, I feel like kindness in the workplace, it definitely does have its place, but the false kindness that would be

Christina (06:55):

That contribute to

Sheila (06:58):

Toxic workplace, for sure.

Christina (07:01):

Yeah, and I think that maybe a couple of other just telltale signs of toxic workplace, it's like, yeah, it's feeling like you can't offer constructive criticism or feeling that you have to be positive or that you have to agree with everything, or maybe even if you ask for feedback from your manager or from your colleagues or whatever, and you're only getting positive feedback and

Sheila (07:32):

Praise,

Christina (07:33):

I feel like those,

Sheila (07:34):

That's

Christina (07:35):

A red

Sheila (07:35):

Flag.

Christina (07:35):

Red flags. Exactly. It's like this is, it's

Sheila (07:39):

Like I don't do anything wrong. Everything is

Christina (07:42):

Right. Yes. It's like, oh, I'm perfect.

Sheila (07:44):

My work is so

Christina (07:45):

Good. In that case, that's the moment to go in and ask for a raise like, Hey, everyone says that my work is perfect, so maybe I should be paid more for this.

Sheila (07:53):

Exactly. Yeah. Yeah. I think for sure that it's a problem. I mean, you should be in a safe place where you can accept criticism, you can give it in a constructive way because I think that working in a toxic workplace like that, it will cause people to become discouraged. They may end up leaving their career switch careers go somewhere else. So it is, toxic workplace does have a very negative impact on the

Christina (08:27):

Worker for sure. On the workplace. Yeah, exactly. And I think

Sheila (08:31):

It was something in the news,

Christina (08:34):

I guess this was kind of sort of in that post covid time, they talked about the great resignation and all of these people who were quitting their jobs because they were feeling unhappy in their job or disillusioned or just something. It was lacking depth meaning, and I feel like this is part of it. It's because it's like if you're unable, like you said, to address the issues, to give constructive criticism, to grow, to help other people grow, et cetera, you do feel like you're just kind of going through the motions and not actually really contributing to anything meaningful. And then people are just like, you know what? I'm just going to leave see you. And I think that's, so it can be, yeah, something on the surface that seems nice, but in reality can create a lot of problems for the people in the workplace, but also for creating, I guess, the desire to leave the company as well, which is not good. So

Sheila (09:42):

Yeah, definitely negative for sure. Yeah.

Christina (09:45):

Right. No. Okay. Well thanks a lot, Sheila, and I hope that you get over the fairy waves soon and

Sheila (09:56):

Whatever it is that I have. Yeah, exactly.

Christina (09:57):

Whatever it is. I'm sure there's an official name for that.

Sheila (10:01):

I'm sure there isum,

Christina (10:03):

But I don't know what it is, so we'll just call it fairy waves. Okay. Alright. Well thanks a lot Sheila, and talk to you soon.

Sheila (10:11):

Okay. Have a great day.

Christina (10:13):

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