



## FIVE REASONS WHY COMPANIES ARE DIFFICULT TO DO BUSINESS WITH

An essay on getting in your own way

Jane M. Mason, President & Chief Creative Visionary,  
Watching Paint Dry, LLC.

[watchingpaintdry.com](http://watchingpaintdry.com)

Blog: [artinthecenter.wordpress.com](http://artinthecenter.wordpress.com)

Follow us on Facebook at [watchingpaintdryllc](https://www.facebook.com/watchingpaintdryllc)

We are all familiar with businesses that are difficult to work with. Although sometimes masquerading as rude, I have been around so many of these institutions I have come up with a checklist of five reasons why generally they present themselves as bafflingly obstreperous.

### 1) TANGLED UP IN THEIR OWN BUREAUCRACY:

You cannot cure this. There is no feasible “work around.” Even if you have someone on the inside who is your champion, generally the bureaucracy is too systemic. If you break the code and get your product in place, consider that the underlying bureaucracy will hinder every additional step in building a mutually satisfying relationship.

### 2) AFRAID TO ADMIT THEY DON’T KNOW SOMETHING:

Your presentation or your concept is beyond their current scope of knowledge. Rather than say, “I don’t get it. Walk me through.” They simply make it difficult for you to reach them, to set a meeting, or gauge a fit. This one you can work on if you are patient, and respectfully take it from the beginning. But, weigh the payoff. And, consider that this tendency will continue to form an impediment in the relationship.

### 3) FIXATED ON THEIR OWN IMPORTANCE:

This I don’t need to articulate. And, it’s one you can work around, if you use enough flattery and salespersonship.

Frequently, to grow a business, an unwavering self of confidence has bridged the chasm separating failure and success. You need to understand that this sense of importance probably has served the business well over the years.

A best first step is to spend a significant amount of time having them explain the business to you. Listen. Then assess if you are a good fit to be working with the company. And, if so, how you will effectively communicate with them.

#### 4) TOO HUNG UP IN “THEIR” WAY OF DOING THINGS:

This is infuriating. Although there generally was a basis for why things are done in the “old fashioned way,” and in some cases (perhaps...) they may need to stay that way.

Don’t overthink this one. If it is a frequent expression—almost a motto of the business and a part of their culture—move on to low hanging fruit. This will be a hard sell.

#### 5) TOO BUSY:

Let’s just assume everyone is equally busy. So take that off the table.

This excuse is an example of not lifting one’s head off the table to consider a more productive, more profitable future. If a businessperson can’t take time to even dream about an innovation or consider improvements or upgrades, they will lose relevance. Set appointments far in advance to give plenty of time for the prospect to plan around the appointment. If appointments are missed, cross them off and move on.

But part of this is on you, too. Here are the five points to make sure YOU are not difficult when pitching your idea or establishing new relationships:



- 1) Make an appointment, whether for a phone call or in person.
- 2) Get his or her name correct on all correspondence and in person. It may not seem as if it is a big deal. It is.
- 3) Be respectful: courteous, prompt, and polite.
- 4) Don’t interrupt. Ask meaningful questions. Listen. (Quit reading from a script or asking, “who is the decision maker?”)
- 5) Be prepared. Do your homework. Study the business and its products

Now go forth and conquer: Namaste.

---

*Do you have thoughts or feedback to add to the conversation?  
Email me at [Hello @watchingpaintdry.com](mailto>Hello@watchingpaintdry.com)*

Watching Paint Dry, LLC. Cleveland, OH  
[watchingpaintdry.com](http://watchingpaintdry.com)

© Jane M. Mason, all content copyright. Please contact her for permission to quote from this essay.