

# KA-BOOM: Dealing with bust-ups in the workplace

- by: **Victoria Crow Business Editor**
- From: **news.com.au** (<http://www.news.com.au>)
- June 12, 2013 12:15PM



Prue MacSween  
*Source:* Supplied

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Roxy Jacenko  
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**LAST night's Celebrity Apprentice episode had PR queens Roxy Jacenko and Prue MacSween at each other's throats over a challenge to produce a web campaign for Heinz soup.**

It began innocently enough, with Roxy appointed director of the video, and Prue as writer and producer, although quickly descended into chaos with the PR doyennes sniping at one another and directly to the camera.

"For God's sake Roxy, put a sock in it" Prue fired after the pair clashed on how to come up with an idea for their viral video.

"You're so aggressive" Roxy shot at Prue, continuing that if she "stopped talking and drew breath," she'd be able to come up with another idea.

The clash prompted Dawn Fraser to complain she felt like the mother of two schoolgirls who needed their heads crashed together and later spilt onto Twitter with the pair tweeting jibes at one another.



**Roxy Jacenko**  
@sweatybettypr


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**Prue MacSween**  
@pruemacsween

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While Celebrity Apprentice may be a ramped-up version of reality, Monk and Associates consultant Tina Monk said dealing with conflicting personalities is a major challenge in any workplace.

"Conflict is inevitable in any relationship. Whenever you get two or more people you get the potential for conflict. We all want different things and have different values and motivators," she said.

"It's often because people are feeling they want to get the job done and they absolutely lose sight of other people's feelings. They come across as being somewhat aggressive, insensitive and blunt. That's not their intention. It's not they don't have feelings they're just unaware of it because of the task."

"I've met people like this who are actually pussies inside and would be horrified to think they come across like that, but they've just got no awareness because they've just to get the job done and often (have) a competitive edge to win."

While some industries like finance, law and the resource sector encourage competition among workers, Ms Monk said this can be destructive and leave "wounded soldiers" in the workplace.

"That high competition can lead to burnout and extreme stress, because it is not sustainable long term," she said.

It comes after Peter Everett, who was fired from the show last week, revealed to news.com.au he was suffering shingles, sleeplessness and an ulcerated throat from stress while filming the show.

"I was staying with some friends in Sydney and honestly, I was coming home saying 'please don't make me go back there, please don't make me go back' **he told news.com.au last week**

(<http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/television/peter-everett-stress-of-celebrity-apprentice-gave-me-shingles/story-e6frfmyi-1226657963803#ixzz2Vx9apTtY>).

Ms Monk said if you find yourself in conflict with a colleague, the best thing to do is take a break and walk away.

"We've all said things we regret. But if your boss or someone overhears it, that can really be a career limiting move, you can get yourself a really bad name. Even though you might have been provoked, if you go off, it's not good for you or your reputation."

Managers have a crucial role in reducing conflict among their team members, even though it can feel like parenting a bunch of children at times.

"Your role is monitoring their progress and setting challenges. If they start getting into absolute conflict get them one at a time and have discussions," she said.

It's also important to keep an eye on the fine line between a healthy sense of competition and workplace bullying.

"The guideline is if you the individual find it offensive, then that's considered bullying or discrimination and if another reasonable person would find it so then it's defined as bullying. We might have different lines but I need to speak up in first instance, if not go to HR," Ms Monk said, adding that workers should own up when they've made mistakes.

"If you're wrong admit it and say how to fix it. If you're right be confident. Just know that you can't change them and don't match aggression with more aggression because it will be a bun fight."

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