



## behaving with complacency

*Complacency is an all-too-common occurrence in organizations that have achieved success. Knowing how to identify complacency is half the battle in overcoming it.*

### **Complacency Definition:**

*“A feeling of contentment or self-satisfaction coupled with an unawareness of danger or trouble.”*

Two words are especially important.

**feeling.** Complacency is not only a thought. It’s very much a *feeling*. It is usually less a matter of conscious, rational analysis than unconscious emotion. This point is significant because people treat complacency as a state of mind that can be changed solely with the “cold, hard facts.”

**self.** Complacency is a feeling that a person has about their own behavior, about what they need to do or not do. This is important because it is possible to see problems yet be astonishingly complacent. After all, you do not feel that the issues seen require changes in your actions.

Almost always, complacent people do not view themselves as complacent. They see themselves as behaving quiet rationally. They can be aggravatingly creative in justifying their point of view. These people can be hard to spot because they look rational, thoughtful, and prudent. Worse yet, they can see themselves as rational, thoughtful, and prudent.

Complacency comes **FROM:** Past or perceived success.

How Complacent **THINK:** They never think they’re complacent.

How Complacent **FEEL:** Content with the status quo, often afraid of the personal consequences of change.

How Complacent **BEHAVE:** They are identified by what they do (although words are revealing). They do not alertly look for new opportunities or hazards. They pay attention to what’s happening internally. They move at 30mph when 50mph is clearly needed. Mostly they do what has worked for them in the past.

**WHO can be Complacent:** You, me, our bosses, anybody!