

Preventing and Managing Workplace Bullying and Harassment

for

United Partners for Human Services



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Purpose

The purpose of this session is to provide:

- Resources on the differences between harassment and bullying
- Tools and information to help you understand the motivations behind toxic workplace bullying behavior and effective ways to handle it



6 Kinds of People with Regard to Bullying and Harassing

1. Victims (aka targets)
2. People exhibiting bullying behaviors
3. Bullies and Harassers
4. People who are unaware of such behaviors
5. People who are aware of the behavior and do nothing about it
6. People who are aware of the behavior and speak up for injustice (heroes)

Harassment vs. Bullying

Workplace Harassment	Workplace Bullying
May be physical and usually linked to gender, race, age, or other discrimination	Usually psychological and not usually linked to specific traits
Overt	Covert
Target usually knows immediately that he or she is being harassed.	Target may not realize he or she is being bullied until it is too late.
Initiator often lacks self-discipline.	Initiator is often motivated by envy.
Most people recognize harassment.	Few people recognize bullying.
Usually occurs for domination and superiority	Usually occurs to control the threat-exposure of inadequacy
Illegal	Legal...but this may change soon

Bullying

“Bullying is the sexual harassment of 20 years ago; everybody knows about it, but nobody wants to admit it.”

- Lewis L. Maltby

President, National Workrights Institute

Bullying is Not Yet Illegal

- Workplace bullying is inappropriate and unacceptable behavior, but it is not yet prohibited by federal law (some states have passed laws).
- However, illegal discrimination and harassment may be covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and under state fair employment laws on protected groups such as age, race, gender, ethnic origin, disability, and religion.

Legal Changes

- Healthy Workplace Bill is being pushed nationally
- SB 308 introduced in 2013 by Sen. Oscar Braynon, II (Abusive Workplace Environment Act)
- HB 149 introduced by Rep. Daphne Campbell (Safe Work Environment Act)

The Face of Bullying

- Workplace bullying shows its face through trivial untrue criticisms of underperformance.

How Serious is Bullying?

- Has the same impact on a person as domestic violence
- Can cause many physical and emotional problems
- Kills morale
- Increases turnover
- Causes legal liability for the supervisor if no action is taken

Workplace Bullying Statistics

- 50% of Americans have not experienced or witnessed bullying.
- 35% have been bullied.* (up to 45%)
- 15% have witnessed bullying.
- Bosses comprise 72% of bullies.
- More men (62%) are bullies and women are the most frequent targets of bullies (58%).

Zogby and Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute, 2010

Workplace Bullying Statistics

- Female bullies tend to target other women (80%).
- In total, 44.8% of surveyed perceive employers as doing nothing.
- Bullying targets perceive 81% of employers as doing nothing.
- 45% of bullying targets have stress-related health problems including debilitating anxiety, panic attacks, and clinical depression (39%).

Zogby and Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute, 2010

Bullying Behaviors

- Abuse
- Misuse of power
- Unwarranted criticism
- Needless blame
- Isolation
- Yelling
- Name calling
- Sabotage
- Hostility
- Deceit
- Excessive micromanaging
- Senseless monitoring
- Swearing
- Being treated differently

Why People Bully

- They enjoy feeling powerful.
- They are threatened by others.
- They are perfectionists or nitpickers who think their skills and abilities are superior to others.
- They are stressed and feel pressure to perform.
- They have mental health issues or personality disorders.

Definition of a Bully

- *“A bully is someone who preys on the strong and enlists the weak. Bullies are insecure and target the most competent, confident people because they are threatened. They enlist people who are afraid or easily influenced to help reinforce bullying behaviors and affirm that a target deserves the treatment.”*

- Dr. Gabrielle K. Gabrielli

Dealing with Bullies

- Describe the behavior to the bully.
- Tell the bully how the behavior is affecting your work.
- Tell the bully what behavior you will not tolerate in the future.
- If the bullying behavior continues, confront the bully about the behavior.

Confronting a Bully

- At this point, confrontation is the only way to take power away from a bully.
- Call the bully out when the offending behavior happens.
- Make statements about the conduct to put the bully on notice.
- Control your emotions.

Using “I” Statements

- Take responsibility for your feelings.
- Is a constructive way of confronting.

I feel... (State your emotion) when you....(describe their behavior or under what conditions you feel this way) because... (explain why their behavior or the conditions cause you to feel this way).

Why Use “I” Statements

- Avoids blaming others for your emotions
- Less hostile way to express a feeling or an emotion you have
- Most appropriate way to let someone know that their behavior is causing a problem
- Reduces the other person’s feelings of defensiveness, guilt, and resent

According to WBI, bullying....

- Is driven by perpetrators' need to control the targeted individual(s).
- Is initiated by bullies who choose their targets, timing, location, and methods.
- Requires consequences for the targeted individual.
- Escalates to involve others who side with the bully, either voluntarily or through coercion.
- Undermines legitimate business interests when bullies' personal agendas take precedence over work.
- Is akin to domestic violence at work, where the abuser is on the payroll.

Action Plan for Targets of Bullying

1. Legitimize.
2. Pause.
3. Expose the bully.

Workplace Bullying Institute

Legitimize

- Give what is happening to you a name (bullying, psychological harassment, emotional abuse, etc.) and know that you are not the cause of the bullying.

Pause

- Take time off to heal and launch a counterattack to work on:
 - ✓ Mental health- Seek counseling from a professional.
 - ✓ Physical health
 - ✓ Research on legal options
 - ✓ Research on economic impact the bully has had on the organization
 - ✓ Job opportunities outside of the organization

Expose the Bully

- Make the business case that the bully is too expensive to keep.
- Control your emotions and stick to the facts.
- Give the employer one chance to do something about the bully.
- Should you leave the organization, note the reason (health).

Documenting Behavior

- Documentation is key.
- Keep a log with date, time, and details of each incident as well as if others witnessed the incident.
- If bullying happens in writing including email, keep a folder with the documents in chronological order.

When All Else Fails, Escalate

- If the bully has other victims, ask them to also document the behavior.
- Discuss the issues with a supervisor and show documentation to HR.
- If bullying is in violation of the law, consider action.
- Only 3% of bullied employees sue and 4% complain to state or federal agencies (Zogby-WBTI, 2010).

Hints for Resolution

- Don't escalate emotions.
- Focus on what a person is trying to say.
- Avoid being purposefully hurtful.
- Model behavior you want.
- Focus on solutions.
- Maintain eye contact.

Hints for Resolution

- Be specific about behavior.
- Avoid always and never.
- Avoid name calling.
- Encourage listening.
- Confront in private.
- Praise in public.

Tips on How to Handle Bullies

- Remember that bullies have nothing against you personally (even though it feels personal), and that their insecurities and egos drive their self-serving behaviors.
- *Picture them as a scared little boy or girl.*
- Stand up for yourself with assertive communication.
- Do not engage with them if they do not apologize and want to argue with you.

Tips on How to Handle Bullies

- Buy some time when they are angry, loud, or out of control.
- Call them out for their bad behavior.
- Be concise and clear with your reactions; remain professional.
- Do not react with emotion regardless of how they behave.
- Document details of the bullying behaviors.

Tips on How to Handle Bullies

- Seek inside help from human resources and employee assistance programs.
- Seek outside help including from a coach or mental health professional.
- If you cannot influence their behaviors, then change how you feel.
- Take care of yourself including finding healthy ways to relieve stress.
- When all else fails, do what is best for you including deciding to leave if needed.

4-7-8 Breathing

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a woosh sound
2. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose- count 4
3. Hold your breath- count 7
4. Exhale through your mouth, make a woosh sound- count 8
5. Inhale and repeat for a cycle of 4

Dr. Andrew Weil

Reduce Stress

Remember the positive things in your life.

Exercise, or just take a walk.

Don't sweat the small stuff.

Understand that goals must be reasonable.

Create an atmosphere of joy.

Eradicate the negative and learn to forgive.



Reduce Stress

Smell the roses, and remember to breathe.

Talk through your issues.

Reflect on your emotions and life.

Eat healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Show gratitude.

Save time for YOU and have fun!



Conclusions

Presentation, handout, other resources at
<http://gabrielleconsulting.com/UPHSBully>

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