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BULLYING
PREVENTION
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WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is defined as any unwanted or harmful verbal, physical, psychological act committed by an individual or group that results in any perceived threat or imbalance of power.



Why Workplace Bullying Occurs?

Bullying behavior and a toxic workplace is apparently one of the biggest underlying causes of disagreement in Corporate America and at the university level. It is important for the one who is bullied to realize that they did nothing wrong, and to stop acting like the victim.

In some cases workplace bullying occurs in a corporate environment because:

- The CEO of the company demands rapid decisions and immediate responses from supervisors and managers. This causes undue pressure to respond immediately, and can cause managers and supervisors to be stressed around staff.
- Managers assign heavy workloads to their staff members, causing anxiety, tension and other physical and psychological symptoms for their staff. As a result, due to heavy workloads and rising, demanding and competitive needs, staff don't get enough sleep, as there is too much to do, and too much to think about.
- As a result of the high demanding environment, managers may hyper-focus only on what needs to be done for the organization, and deny any general positive actions from staff, nor notice if all employees on the team are treated properly with their safety in mind.



- Managers can exhibit control and power by exploiting others and encouraging a lack of teamwork between staff. In this way, such managers focus on strengthening their own positions in the corporate environment.

When people work together as a team, the success of the university and corporate setting move forward. Strong leadership, collaboration and communication with one another will encourage people to work together effectively and help show appreciation for one another. Sometimes openness, respect and friendliness break down to form issues affecting civility and workplace bullying. We need to have a process in place at our workplaces where this is monitored, to insure that we work in an environment of collegiality.

Can Workplace Bullying Be Illegal?

Bullying would be illegal if it violated federal and state laws prohibiting harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The discrimination and harassment law protect employees from harassment based on protected rights – such as race, color, gender, disability, sexual orientation, etc. Such behavior is considered offensive and abusive.



For example: Susan’s manager makes fun of her and picks on her continuously calling her names like stupid—and if these remarks are based on the fact that she is a woman- this treatment from Susan’s manager may be construed as harassment which is illegal. There are no such laws regarding workplace bullying.

We need to be in the forefront of discussing and passing the anti-bullying Healthy Workplace Bill. This bill would make abusive conduct, legally actionable. As a result, employees would be liable if they failed to correct or protect anti-bullying incidents in their workplace environments.

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