


A COLLECTIVE RESPONSE TO WORKPLACE BULLYING



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NYSUT Health and Safety Conference
March 1, 2019

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Objectives

- After this workshop you will:
 - Recognize **characteristics** associated with the workplace bully
 - Identify the **health consequences** of being bullied and stressed
 - Discuss **collective strategies** to address workplace bullying





Workplace Bully: What Words or Actions Come to Mind?

What The Bully Does


- Personal insults; teasing
- Verbal abuse – being sworn at
- Work interference – sabotage which you from doing your job
- Unwarranted or invalid criticism
- Exclusion or social isolation
- Being treated differently than the rest of your colleagues
- Being micromanaged or given unrealistic deadlines setting you up for failure


Types of Bullies

Recognize Any of these Characters?

- The Screamer
- The Backstabber
- The Critic
- The Controller



Does a single event constitute workplace bullying?




Workplace Bullying Defined

Repeated and unwanted actions by an individual or group intending to intimidate, harass, degrade or offend

Abuse or misuse of power

Bullying *is* psychological **violence**



"Tough" or "demanding" bosses are not necessarily bullies as long as they are respectful and fair.

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When More Than One Perpetrator



Bullying Often Termed *Mobbing*






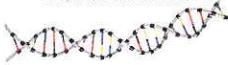


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Difference Between Workplace Bullying and Illegal Discrimination and Harassment

- Workplace bullying is inappropriate and unacceptable behavior, but **it is not prohibited** by any federal law.
- Illegal discrimination and harassment is covered by:
 - Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (EEOC - protected group status)
 - State Fair Employment laws (Fair Employment Practices Agencies - FEPAs)

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Protected Federal Categories

Race 	National Origin 	Color 
Disability 	Religion 	Genetic Information 
	Sex/Gender 	Age +40 

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What the Research Says ...

- A recent National Institutes of Health (NIH) study estimates that **1 in 5** U.S. workers has experienced destructive bullying in the past year.
- According to a study conducted by the Workplace Bullying Institute, bullying is **4 times more prevalent** than illegal sexual or racial harassment.

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Higher Education Bullying Landscape

- Very little research on characteristics in higher education
- Influenced by climate and culture in different departments
 - What's tolerated in one department may not be tolerated in another
- Bullying may take on different characteristics depending on one's position in the college

Faculty Experiences with Bullying in Higher Education: Causes, Consequences, and Management
Loreleigh Keshly - Wayne State University and Joel H. Neuman - State University of New York at New Paltz

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Administrative and Support Staff Bullying



From what you experience or have observed what does administrative and support staff bullying look like in higher education?

College Staff Survey Results

52.9% reported being bullied by a supervisor, administrator or senior faculty member.

Front-line workers more often bullied by single perpetrator.

Faculty Bullying



Who do you think were identified most as perpetrators of bullying on faculty?

Faculty Bullying Survey

Over 62% of faculty who reported being bullied identified the perpetrator to be a colleague.

- Untenured faculty being bullied by tenured faculty.
- Mobbing is reported more frequently – several colleagues “conspiring”, “ganging up” on the target – 2 or more actors.
- Bullying likely to go on for years.

From what you experience or have observed what does faculty bullying look like in higher education?

Faculty Bullying

- Threats to professional status
- Isolation and obstruction
- Access to resources
 - Space
 - Money for research
 - Graduate assistants/students
- Undermining professional standing in academic forums




Think About The Consequences For The Victim: Outside the Job and At Work



Outside of Work	Life at Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queasiness on Sunday night • Frustration with family demands that you stop obsessing about work at home • Trips to the doctor; sky-rocketing blood pressure • Fatigue/ Lifelessness/Diminished family time • Magical belief that you "provoked" the workplace bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have feelings of never being "good enough" • Brace for torment that is arbitrary • Have chronic agitation and anxiety • Experience a sense of doom • Fear bad evaluations if you fight back • Believe everybody agrees that the bully is a jerk "but there is nothing they can do about it"

How Bullying Affects Your Health:



- Victims of bullying experience significant physical and mental health problems:
 - High stress; post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
 - Reduced self-esteem; shame; guilt
 - Musculoskeletal problems
 - Phobias
 - Sleep and digestive disturbances
 - Clinical depression; panic attacks; anxiety
 - Family tension and stress

"Employees who experience bullying—whether first or second-hand—and who work in toxic environments report higher levels of **anxiety and depression** and take more sick leave than workers in healthy work environments (Richardson, 2014)."
Richardson, L. (11 May 2014). Free LanceStar: Bullies can make a workplace toxic. Workplace Bullying Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/2014/05/13/1/>.

According to a 2009 Study

- Targets of bullying react in the following ways:
 - 48% decreased their work effort,
 - 47% decreased their time at work,
 - 38% decreased their work quality,
 - 66% said their performance declined,
 - 80% lost work time worrying about the incident,
 - 63% lost time avoiding the offender
 - 12% left their job because of the uncivil treatment
- Their research also shows that bullying also contributes to turnover among witnesses of bullying, who suffer emotional distress that is almost as great as that experienced by the victims of bullying.

The Cost of Bad Behavior: How Incivility Is Damaging Your Business and What to Do About It, Christine Pearson - UNC-Chapel Hill and Christine Porath - USC's Marshall School of Business, 2009


A Finnish Study on Municipal Workers Found ...

- Not only the targets of bullying, **but also bystanders**, suffer stress and psychological ill-health when someone is bullied in the workplace.
- They concluded that:
 - Bullying must therefore be regarded as a problem for the entire work unit and not merely as a problem of the target.

Workplace Bullying – A Study On The Work Environment, Well-being And Health, Maarit Varti-Väinänen University of Helsinki Department of Psychology, 2003

Does Workplace Bullying Stress You Out?

- Stress response is actually a good thing ... sometimes.
- Physiological reaction that occurs in response to a perceived harmful event, attack, or threat to survival.
- After the threat or demand passes, your body relaxes on its own and returns to its normal self.



It Served our Ancestors Well ... But at a Cost

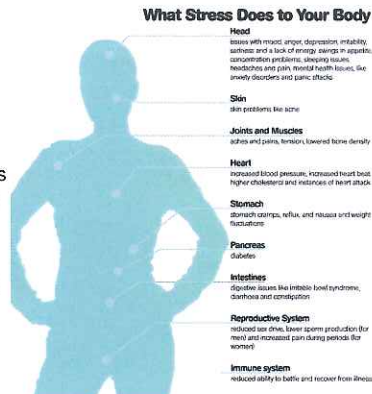
- Staying physiologically on guard against a threat eventually wears down the body's natural defenses.
- Suffering from frequent stress or frequently *interpreting experiences as stressful* can create a serious health risk: an essentially healthy stress response can become **distress**.



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Research Shows ...

An extreme amount of stress can have health consequences and adversely affect the immune, cardiovascular, neuroendocrine and central nervous systems.



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The "Low Road": Individual Strategies

- **Take Care of YOU!**
 - Eat a healthy diet and get regular exercise and plenty of sleep
 - Practice relaxation techniques or learn to meditate
 - Foster healthy friendships
 - Have a sense of humor
 - Seek professional counseling when needed



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If You're Being Bullied, You Can Regain Control By:

- Recognizing that you are being bullied;
- Realizing that you are NOT the source of the problem; and
- Recognizing that bullying is about control, and therefore has nothing to do with your performance.



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If You're Being Bullied, Take Action!

- Take a deep breath and try to stay calm
- Be willing to leave a situation if you're alone with the bully
 - Excuse yourself to use the bathroom
 - Say you are uncomfortable and ask to postpone meeting
 - Ask for a union representative
- Keep a detailed (spiral bound) diary; keep emails and other paper trails
- Report the behavior!

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How Do We Collectively Take On The Bully?



ZERO Tolerance

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Examples of Policies and Laws on Workplace Bullying

• **It can be done!**

- Florida and Kansas Statutes
- Minnesota and Tennessee State Policies
- Workplace Policies and Contract Language



University Policies

**Oregon State University
Civility in the Workplace**

Applicability: Faculty; Classified
 Section: 0100 Employee Engagement in Creating a Nondiscriminatory, Civil and Productive Community
 Policy Number: 104
 Effective: Monday, January 6, 2014
 Human Resources Manual

Respectful Workplace Environment

Respect is a core value and is widely honored by the members of our University community. The University is committed to sustaining a respectful community environment that is, as much as possible, experienced by all as safe, inclusive and welcoming.

Southwestern Oregon Community College

Board Policy: 7180

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND BULLYING

- The Board is committed to maintaining an environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, bullying and other disruptive behavior. Violence or threats of violence will not be tolerated. Prohibited behavior includes oral or written statements, electronic communications, gestures, or other expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical or psychological harm to another. Behavior that communicates intent to cause property damage is also prohibited.
- Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both.

University of Washington Bullying Prevention and Reporting

BUSINESS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL SAFETY AND SECURITY 50.31.1 - 9-15

POLICY

"The University is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from all acts of bullying by or against employees, students, or members of the public. The University is committed to ensuring trust and respect for all persons in an environment that cultivates individual and institutional integrity in all that we do."

Collective Bargaining: Rutgers University

ARTICLE 26 - NON-HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT

The university and the union agree that the working environment shall be characterized by mutual respect for the common dignity to which all individuals are entitled. It is therefore agreed that verbal harassment of an employee or a supervisor is inappropriate and unacceptable.

Policies Must Have In Place At A Minimum?

- Formal complaint process that would also allow for a third party to file a complaint
- No retaliation clauses for complaining
- Impartial investigation process
- Opportunity for the victim to submit documentation
- Real sanctions for bully
- Right to appeal decisions
- Training for faculty and staff

Strategic Planning to Get Action

- Although there are some common denominators, there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution” to collectively taking on bullying in the workplace.

What Are Some Collective and/or Union-Driven Ways You'd Take On The Issue Of Workplace Bullying?

Forming a Health and Safety Committee

- Committees:
 - Determine important issues and problem areas
 - Prioritize problems to solve
 - Identify possible and desired solutions
 - Develop an overall plan for getting the problem solved
 - Carry out specific actions
 - Publicize the progress and successes of the actions



Taking the “Pulse” of the Membership

- Surveying the membership is a good place to start.
 - Can determine priorities
 - Can assess potential remedies
 - Ask for their solutions – many times workers know the best remedies to the problem!



Making Strategic Plans

- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- Who has the power to give you what you want?
- Who are your allies and how will you influence them?
- What or who are potential barriers and how can you overcome them?
- What actions will you take to get what you want?



Are There Any Other Roles For The Union And If So What?

UNION & ACTIONS

What's Your Plan of Action?



Let Us Know How You're Doing!

- If you need help or have victories to share, please contact me!

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