It's About Respect
Building a Culture of Respect in the Workplace

John Short, SHRM-SCP | November 14, 2019

What is the number one cultural issue that you are seeing in your workplace?

#weaccept AirBNB
https://youtu.be/yetFk7QoSck
What is Harassment?

**UNWELCOME CONDUCT**
that is based on a
**LEGALLY PROTECTED STATUS**

Harassment is a form of discrimination.

Today’s Hot Topic

- Resignations and terminations after sexual harassment allegations
- Teachers, CEOs, Celebrities, Priests
- #metoo

Is It Really an Issue?

- 21% of Americans say they have been sexually harassed at work.
- 28% said their boss was the harasser.
- 57% believe the harassment experience hurt their career.
- 52% say they made a job change because of the harassment.
- Only 30% felt they could report the harassment without fear.
- Only 40% believe their employer handled the harassment properly.
- It is estimated that 72% of those who experience harassment do **not** report it.
How Bad is It?

- 94% of HR professionals reported that their organization has a sexual harassment policy while 22% of non-manager employees are not sure if their company has one.
- 57% of HR professionals believe that unreported harassment incidents occur to a small extent in their organization.
- 76% of non-manager employees who experienced sexual harassment within the last year did NOT report it.

Source: SHRM Jan 2018 report

NYT reported that the "one thing that harassers have in common is the belief that they are not the problem; it's the victim's fault."

Where does your organization stand?

1. Over the past 12 months, your employee complaint frequency is…
   a. Decreasing
   b. Staying the same
   c. Increasing

2. Your anti-harassment/bullying policy is…
   a. In place and well known
   b. In the books but few know it
   c. Still just a topic of conversation

3. The #MeToo movement makes you…
   a. Confident that you have the right policies
   b. Re-examine the policies you have
   c. Worry about possible incidents at work
What is a Protected Status?

Protected Statues Under Federal Law

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National Origin
- Sex
- Age (40+)
- Citizenship Status
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Veteran or Military Status
- Genetic Information
- Pregnancy
- including childbirth and related conditions

What is a Protected Status?

Beyond Sexual Harassment...

- Race 34%
- Sex* 30%
- National Origin 10%
- Religion 4%
- Color 4%
- Equal Pay 1%
- GINA 1%
- Retaliation 48%

*Nearly 20% of claims filed by men

EEOC Charge Statistics 2017

Bullying

Workplace bullying is a form of aggressive behavior an employee intentionally and repeatedly inflicts upon another that frightens, humiliates, belittles, degrades, etc.

- Intimidation that undermines performance, working relationships, and perceived value in the workplace; may include veiled or unveiled threats where the bully attempts to exert control over the other person.
- May occur in any form – physical, verbal, nonverbal – and may be blatant or subtle.
- Not necessarily illegal.
Examples of Bullying

Example:
The leader of a meeting approaches a subordinate after the meeting and says “if you disagree with me or say anything negative about my decision I will find out and make you pay.”

Example:
A fellow administrative assistant excludes you from important meetings, leaves you off email threads and screams at you when you claim you didn’t know about something that occurred in the meeting you were excluded from.

Example:
A colleague repeatedly talks about another employee in a negative way loud enough for the employee to overhear and nothing is done to stop the behavior.

The bullied individual typically has trouble defending him or herself and does nothing to “cause” the bullying.

Unconscious Bias

What is it?
Split-second judgements made by our brain as a result of predetermined conclusions or the application of socially accepted norms about people or situations without using reason or proper evaluation.

Why does it matter?
Creates the same concerns and potential liability as conscious bias or discrimination:
• Negative workplace culture.
• Lack of productivity and creativity.
• Poor communication and relationships.
• Discriminatory treatment or practices.

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What is causing this issue to become so rampant now?

Evolving Workplace

The Role of Culture

Harassment
Bullying
Retaliation
Unwelcome Conduct
Discrimination

Over focusing on terms and policy violations ignores all the other conditions that made the conduct possible in the first place.
The Role of Culture

Establish a healthy workplace culture by:
• Taking swift action.
• Demonstrating transparency.
• Being practical about people and their relationships with one another.

Know Your Risk Factors

Common workplace risk factors
• Lack of diversity
• Coarsened social discourse
• Workplaces with high volume of younger employees
• “High value” employees
• Workplaces with significant power disparities
• Monotonous or low-intensity work
• Isolated workspaces
• Tolerance or encouragement of alcohol consumption
• Decentralized workplaces

An Approach to Building a Culture of Respect

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Supporting a Respectful Workplace

- Review practices/policies
- Provide needed training
- Create a reinforcing culture
- Do a compensation review
- Review benefit offerings

Sample Pulse Survey Questions

- I feel like I can be myself at work.
- I feel comfortable in my working relationships with others.
- I feel respected at work.
- I have observed behavior at work that made me feel uncomfortable.
- I have observed behaviors at work that made me uncomfortable.
A day without barriers

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrvaSqN76h4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrvaSqN76h4&feature=youtu.be)

Supporting a Respectful Workplace

Gallagher's holistic approach to help build a workplace culture that values and empowers.

Your Action Plan

1. Critical issues/behaviors observed
2. Identify issues to address
3. Timeline and resources needed to implement
Supporting a Respectful Workplace

“The culture of any organization is shaped by the worst behavior the leader is willing to tolerate.”

Gruenert & Whitaker School Culture Rewired, 2015

Resources

• Harassment Prevention Initiative Checklist
  ➢ https://info.compli.com/harassment/prevention/initiative/checklist

• Gallagher articles
  ➢ “The Cost of Tolerating Bad Leaders” and
  ➢ “How to Reign in Harassment”

• Harassment-Free Workplace Series
  www.shrm.org

Thank you!

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