

# ***Bullying has no place in the workplace***

Bullying in the workplace is recognized as a significant cause of workplace stress. Bullying is far more prevalent than other destructive behaviors that are covered by legislation such as sexual harassment and racial discrimination.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is a form of psychological or physical harassment. Bullying is the repeated malicious mistreatment of a target (victim) by a bully (perpetrator) that is driven by the bully's desire to control others through power and domination. Bullies create a climate of fear, ignorance and disbelief.

Bullying can be so subtle at first that many victims of bullying are not aware of what is going on for some time. Examples of bullying behavior can include:

- Constant unfair surveillance or monitoring
- Encouragement of other staff to harass an individual
- Social isolation of an individual
- Constant innuendo (ridicule, sarcasm, gossip, rumor)
- Verbal abuse (shouting, yelling, screaming)
- Visual abuse (finger pointing, fist shaking, hostile facial expressions, threatening manner)
- Physical Abuse
- Threats of and/or inappropriate performance reviews
- Constant, unjustified, unreasonable criticism of work
- Withholding information and setting up an individual for failure (unreasonable workload and/or deadlines, job change)
- Blocking training and professional development opportunities

## **Profile of a Bully**

Over 80% of bullies are bosses, some are co-workers and a minority bully higher ups. A bully is equally likely to be a man or a woman. Bullies may be narcissistic, attention seeking individuals who seldom accept responsibility for their behavior. Some bullies bully to hid feeling of inadequacy and turn this insecurity outwards by attacking and diminishing the capable people around them.

The most dangerous bully systematically and deliberately attempts to destroy another person. These bullies are authoritarian, fearless and lack remorse.

## **How can Bullying affect you?**

Bullying may make you ill. They physical and psychological effects are the same as other stressors in the workplace and can include headaches, insomnia, irritable bowel syndrome, depression, anxiety, inability to concentrate, irritability, low morale and decreased productivity.

## **How does Bullying affect the workplace?**

Workplace bullies are a tremendous liability for an employer. The human and financial costs include increased sick leave and long term disability claims, staff replacement costs and increased turnover of staff. Patient care is affected by increased risk of incidents, errors and decreased productivity.

## **Preventing Bullying**

Employers should implement strict anti-bullying policies and treat all complaints of bullying seriously. All complaints should be dealt with promptly and confidentially. Employers need to provide training for all employees, managers and supervisors on what is considered bullying and who they can go to for help and have an impartial third party deal with complaints.

## **What can you do?**

Bullies rely on intimidation to silence the victim(s) and their co-workers. Worker power has always come from co-workers bargaining and fighting back collectively. We all need to take a stand against bullying. If you are being bullied or you believe one of your co-workers is a victim of bullying call your UNA local representative for assistance.



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