

How To Combat The Workplace Bullying



Everyone has the right NOT to be bullied or harassed at work.

In today's business landscape, organisations are defined as a collection of people that share common goals and vision. So, what happens when one of your employees is on the receiving end of being bullied?

Example

*I was placed with this woman on the night shift. The next time I saw her, she yelled across the hospital 'howdy, F**KER.' I assume she thought this was amusing because it sounds similar to my last name. It didn't just stop there. For months and months, she only referred to me as f*cker. On one of my shifts, she told me a story about a colleague of mine who she thought was "retarded". She made fun of her large glasses, the clothing that she wore and foreign accent. I left my job shortly after as I felt too uncomfortable and embarrassed to go into work with this woman.*

What is workplace bullying?

Workplace bullying is verbal, physical, social or psychological abuse by your employer (or manager), another person or group of people at work.

Workplace bullying can happen in any type of workplace, from offices to shops, cafes, restaurants, workshops, community groups and government organisations.

Workplace bullying can happen to volunteers, work experience students, interns, apprentices, casual and permanent employees.

What is the potential impact to your business?

The impacts of a person that exhibiting negative workplace issues can be devastating.

Impacts on the business resulting from their bullying behaviour can lead to low business morale; low level of trust; difficult doing business; conflict with colleagues; less confidence at work; physical signs of stress; all the way to the bully committing malicious acts on the organisation if he or she feels aggrieved and unfairly treated. Such as committing business disruptions, leaking sensitive details or posting it online; deletion of high-value data and physical violence.

What can you do about it if you are the manager or executive?

One set of rules! – All employees need to adhere to one set of rules. Otherwise, you are creating a culture of accountability with two sets of rules, which undermines your role as a manager.

One set of values! - While it may be uncomfortable to open a difficult discussion on inappropriate or destructive behaviour with your employee, you must provide clear, constructive behavioural feedback in a timely manner. Anything less will be perceived as implicit approval of these behaviours by all parties.

Don't excuse it! - It's often that we make excuses for "bullies" who have a temperament that negatively impacts those around. Understand what is driving their behaviour, but if it doesn't improve, remove the employee.

Consider the source! - Every human is being driven by two forces. Pain and pleasure. Identify the reason why this person is behaving this way. Is the person seeking attention and importance (pleasure) or is the person hiding a personal problem (pain)? These insights will provide you with an understanding of ways that you can deal with this person. Either way, work out how the behaviour must change, but if it doesn't improve, remove the employee.

Offer support! - Have a performance related conversation. There must be a clear understanding and communication between the problem, behaviour and expectation. It's not enough to tell them to fix the issue. They might need your support or the assistance of an employee program. Let them know that you are behind them.

Document Everything! - If you conclude that you need to fire the person, you must first document their offences and any response you've offered so far. You want to establish a pattern of behaviour, the steps you took to address it, the information, warnings or resources provided to the employee, and the failure of the employee to change. Include any supporting material - formal complaints, relevant information from performance evaluations, such as 360-degree or peer reviews. The idea is to protect yourself and the company and to show your employee exactly why they are being let go.

Separate The Person! - If for some reason, you are unable to get rid of the "bad apple", isolate the person from the rest of the group. Those with toxic behaviours, like to feed on others and their reactions. When such feedback is less coming, their behaviour starts to subside.

How can we help you?

If you fear that you may have such a difficult person to deal with and that you are not sure how to proceed, then let us help you.

At CommsNet Group, we have qualified and certified Neuro-Linguistic Programmers that can directly or indirectly intervene. We can also help you set up an “**employee assistance program**”. And we can certainly provide a customised training program for supervisors and managers, helping them positively handle and manage negative workplaces issues from employees.

You can reach us

- <https://commsnet.com.au/contact-us>
- insider@commsnet.com.au

Contact us

For more information, you can also send them an email at: info@commsnet.com.au Or give us a call at: +61 26282-5554.

Additional resources

- Article – “**Seven Non-Technical Indicators That Might Suggest That You Have An Insider Threat**” - <https://commsnet.com.au/uploads/files/50/file/7-insider-threat-indicators.pdf>