

Bullying! Is it in Your Workplace?

Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Leona Helmsley (The Queen of Mean) have all been accused of taking bullying to the extreme – Harvey and Kevin with accusations of sexual harassment and Leona with cruelty towards her employees.



Bullying can occur anywhere – perhaps even in your own workplace. The Merriam-Webster dictionary states “Bullying is the abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger, more powerful.” With this definition it is easy to see how bullying can easily occur even if the perpetrator is not conscious of a bullying behaviour.

Consider these possible bullying situations:

- ◆ Jokes that are offensive to some listeners or viewers
- ◆ Comments about one’s dress, grooming or behaviour
- ◆ Constant negative comments regarding one’s work
- ◆ Yelling or speaking in a loud tone towards an employee
- ◆ Flinging someone’s work across the desk towards them
- ◆ Throwing something at an individual
- ◆ Leaving an individual out of conversations so they feel ostracized

These are some of those areas where leaders may not see their behaviour

as bullying, merely doing their job of overseeing others. Unfortunately, whenever we frequently make others feel undervalued we are demonstrating bullying.

How can you counteract bullying behaviour? It isn’t easy because we tend to behave in ways which have worked for us before and because these behaviours are part of our “make up” we see them as non-threatening and even acceptable because we may see our co-workers, family and even friends exhibiting these same behaviours.

Take Sam for instance. Sam saw nothing wrong with his behaviour of stomping off to an employee’s desk and showing them in a brusque way with his finger that the policy manual said what was done was inappropriate. Because this intimidated his employee it was deemed bullying.

Actions to deter bullying:

- ◆ Take the offending individual aside and in private physically show him or her what you have witnessed – follow this with a discussion about bullying and its effect on employee morale and performance
- ◆ Provide training sessions on what bullying looks like and how to deal with it, if and when it occurs
- ◆ Post bulletins and send out memos indicating a “bullying free” workplace stating the consequences of such behaviour
- ◆ Follow through on what you have indicated the consequences are – to make a statement and not follow through is a grave miscarriage of your organization’s culture

Become aware, pay attention and observe what is going on around you. Bullying can be very subversive and no one wants it in their workplace. Start today!

Sherry’s Corner



The old year has come and gone and now we are looking at 2018. Perhaps you are a person who makes New Year’s Resolutions. If you do consider some of the things I witnessed in the past year:

- ◆ A stranger helping an elderly gentleman with his jacket when he could not get his arm into the sleeve
- ◆ A young man holding the door open for a woman – no parcels in her hand, no child to contend with, no age challenges
- ◆ A young boy saying “thank you” when a woman stepped aside to allow him and his friend to get on an escalator in front of her
- ◆ Children collecting food for the Food Bank so everyone could enjoy a full tummy at Christmas time

My sole resolution for 2018 is to do one act of kindness every day for 365 days. What’s yours?

Please share your thoughts.

Email: sherry@dimension11.com

QUOTE

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

Aesop

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