RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES
– STRATEGIES FOR A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

A respectful workplace is a prerequisite for building a successful and productive organization. Healthy workplaces foster innovation and contribute to employee well-being. This results in greater job satisfaction, increased employee participation and improved work performance. This workshop explores the components of respect and addresses individual responsibilities within the work environment. In addition, participants will learn how to voice their expectations as well as initiate and respond to difficult conversations about disrespectful behaviour. Participants will return to work with the attitudes and skills necessary to contribute to creating and sustaining a respectful work environment.

Respectful Workplace—Strategies for a Healthy Environment
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Respect or Tolerance

Tolerance
In the workplace, most individuals understand they must learn to tolerate a variety of ideas, peoples and situations. Tolerance involves allowing others to express their preferences without interference or intrusion. Being able to tolerate certain actions and behaviours is important in keeping the workplace healthy and pleasant. We also realize that individuals may be striving to improve and change certain behaviours and that this takes time. Our ability to tolerate some of the growing pains is a way of offering support to co-workers.

- Avoids unneeded contact
- Focuses on individual pursuits
- Keeps silent when annoyed
- Ignores problems in the workplace
- Leaves issues until unmanageable
- Results in minimal personal connection

Respect
The idea of respect is rooted in the belief that human beings are innately valuable. Respect shows consideration of others and esteems differences. When individuals respect each other they safeguard the dignity of their co-workers. Employees in a respectful environment feel safe and valued. Respect includes tolerance, but encompasses more than restraint and putting up with certain individuals or behaviours. Respect entails welcoming differences and understanding that they contribute to a vibrant workplace.

- Welcomes diversity
- Develops and rewards team work
- Openly discusses what is not working
- Focuses on solutions
- Deals with inappropriate behaviour in a timely manner
- Fosters trust and respect
THE COST OF DOING NOTHING

The Link Between Home and Work
There is a strong link between the work environment and the personal life of employees. The dominant viewpoint for many years has been that employees bring their home issues to work. Organizations are quick to acknowledge the reality of emotional issues at home affecting the workplace—depression, drug and alcohol misuse, and family crisis all take their toll on the work place, it is true. Equally as powerful, is the impact of the work environment on the individual and that the employee also brings work issues home. It is clear that a respectful work place generates and supports positive behaviours amongst its employees and this in turn transfers home.

Tangible and Intangible Costs
When considering the cost of disrespect in the workplace both the visible and invisible costs need to be considered. Organizations that are unhealthy may be manifesting the hidden symptoms. Eventually the tangible and intangible symptoms collide and this is often experienced as an immersion in toxicity.

Tangible Costs of Doing Nothing
- Increased rate of absenteeism
- Higher rate of sick and/or stress leave
- Diminished productivity
- Increase in accidents
- Loss of business opportunities
- Staff turn-over—recruitment and retraining costs
- Possible legal costs and litigation

Intangible Costs of Doing Nothing
- Lost creativity
- Strained working relationships
- Decreased workplace morale
- Increased stress levels
- Diminished trust in management
- Poor public relations and tarnished corporate image

Which costs are you seeing in your workplace?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

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Employee Symptoms
The workplace has many pressures and demands with which an individual must learn to cope. However, an unhealthy environment is not one of these necessary pressures to be tolerated. It is inevitable that in an unhealthy environment individuals will manifest the effects. As time progresses and as more and more individuals begin to exhibit the symptoms, the environment reaches collective dysfunction.

Physical • loss of appetite • substance abuse • headaches • binge eating
• severe weight loss/gain • gastrointestinal problems • back pain • high blood pressure • shortness in breath • panic attacks • nightmares • disrupted sleep • sleeping too much

Psychological • diminished self-confidence • anxiety • loss of energy • burnout
• inability to relax • negativity • depression • despair • loss of enjoyment in leisure activities • exhaustion

Social Relationships • strained friendships • marital pressure • compromised parenting • social withdrawal and isolation • thoughts of harming self or others

Financial Hardships • unpaid leave • medical expenses • legal fees • uncertainty of future employment • relocations costs
A LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Universal Declarations of Human Rights
The Universal Declaration of Human rights lays out 30 articles of rights to which every person is entitled. Since it was adopted in 1948, many countries have worked to elaborate and make the articles a reality. The declaration is not prescriptive, rather it provides guiding principles.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
The Canadian constitution reflects the rights and values inherent in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is Canada's means to make the Declaration a reality in Canada. The statute enacted to do so is called the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

- Binding legal document
- Protects all Canadians
- Guarantees fundamental, democratic, mobility, equality, legal and language rights

Canadian Human Rights Commission
The Canadian Human Rights Commission is an independent body established by Canadian Parliament in 1977. It oversees and administers the application of the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Employment Equity Act. Both laws are there to guard equal opportunity and non-discrimination and fall under federal jurisdiction.

Federal jurisdiction oversees the following kinds of organizations:
- Chartered banks
- TV
- Radio stations
- Airlines
- Interprovincial communications and phone companies
- Buses and railways that travel between provinces
- First Nations
- Other federally regulated industries

Example: This would be your venue to file a complaint if your local bank did not have wheelchair access.
Provincial Human Rights Legislation

Each province has its own legislation, as well as commission to investigate complaints and offers legal opportunities for individuals and groups to oversee and administer the enactment of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These commissions investigate complaints about human rights violations as well as educate and promote equality groups who often experience discrimination.

Provincial and territorial jurisdiction oversee the following kinds of organizations:

- Manufacturers
- Stores
- Retail businesses
- Restaurants
- Colleges
- Universities
- Hotels
- Hospitals
- Health care providers

Example: This would be your venue to file a complaint. Sexual harassment, or discrimination would fall under the jurisdiction of your provincial commission.

Criminal Law
Acts such as intimidation, vandalism, hitting, stabbing, shooting, kicking or rape are violations of Canadian criminal law and are under the legal jurisdiction of the federal government.
VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Each province has its own commission to investigate complaints and offers legal channels for individuals and groups to find solutions to their problems. Provinces aim to provide protection to any person or group who is treated differently without reasonable cause, on the basis of age, ancestry or disability. These categories are referred to as "protected categories." In addition, each province may have their own areas of protection.

Harassment is any unwarranted comment or behaviour that is embarrassing, humiliating or demeaning. Harassment can be based on one incident of behaviour. Harassment is behaviour that is objectionable and severe.

Examples: Unwelcomed physical contact, comments on race, marital status or age

Sexual Harassment includes any unwarranted comments or behaviours of a sexual nature. Such comments or behaviours that are known and/or should be known and understood to be offensive.

- Derogatory comments or behaviours based on sexual orientation
- Offensive published materials such as; pictures, cartoons, sketches
- Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- Inappropriate conversations regarding one’s own sexuality
- Unwelcomed invitations to engage in sexual activity

Discrimination is the hurtful conduct of an individual based on a set of characteristics. Each province has a Human Rights Commission that sets out the protected categories.

Examples: Comments or jokes about religion, physical disability, marital status, gender identity or place of origin.
VIOLATION OF WORKPLACE POLICY

Unhealthy workplaces are environments where, at best, tolerance is mixed with avoidance. At worst, unhealthy workplaces are toxic environments that exhibit hostility. It is helpful to define what disrespectful behaviour is and what it is not. Intent is not everything when considering respectful behaviour. An individual may have no intent to be disrespectful, but if they are experienced as disrespectful, then their behaviour is disrespectful.

Disrespect is any behaviour that is unwarranted. Any comment or act that causes offense to another, that is unwelcomed or objectionable, is considered disrespect. Typically people do not see themselves as being disrespectful. It is much easier to identify disrespect in others. In times of stress it is easy for us to discount or be unaware of how our behaviours are affecting others.

- Ignoring
- Discrediting
- Discounting input or ideas
- Verbal incivility
- Putdowns
- Lying
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

The Role of Intent
Our goal is to be aware of our intent and to be aware of our effect. If our intent was not malicious but the effect was negative, we are responsible to acknowledge, apologize and change our behaviour, even when we meant no harm.

What is Not Disrespect?
Conflict is a natural part of working relationships. Conflict is not disrespect, although individuals can behave disrespectfully in conflict. Disrespectful behaviours do not include acts of supervisory responsibilities provided they are performed in a professional and respectful manner.

- Managerial direction
- Performance reviews
- Counseling services
- Differences of opinion
- Personality clashes
GREY AREAS

There are situations and behaviours that seem slightly offensive, but it is unclear whether the behaviour warrants mentioning. We tend to react internally to others who exhibit these behaviours, but are often unsure how to respond. Individuals who display questionable behaviours are usually unaware of the impact on others, or sometimes they simply do not care. Regardless, if we are bothered continuously with certain behaviours we are responsible to give voice to our concerns.

- Having loud telephone conversations
- Having bad body odor
- Not cleaning up after yourself in the staff kitchen
- Showing up late for meetings
- Looking at a co-worker's computer screen over his or her shoulder
- Taking supplies from a co-worker's desk
- Neglecting to say please and thank you
- Wearing too much perfume
- Chewing gum loudly
- Taking the last of something without replacing it
- Asking a subordinate to do something unrelated to work, i.e. run errands
- Telling tasteless jokes
- Complaining about the company, boss, and co-workers
- Your personal pet peeve ________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

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The Reaction Cycle

- Disrespectful behaviours
- Work place stress
- Diminished productivity
- Negative reactions
- Disgruntled employees
IDENTIFYING UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Work environments fall on a continuum from unhealthy to healthy. On the far end are organizations which function well. On the opposite end are toxic environments that are destructive to both employees and leaders. In the middle we have organizations that are getting by. The goal is to be able to identify where our workplace falls on the continuum and then work to move it in a positive direction.

Where do you think your organization falls?

Toxic  Getting By  Healthy

Characteristics of an Unhealthy Workplace

Poor Decision-making
Decision-making is often under pressure and problem-solving methods are haphazard.

High Levels of Dissatisfaction
Dissatisfaction has spread to all areas of work life. Management is frustrated with ground level employees, ground level employees are frustrated with management, and co-workers are frustrated with each other.

Poor Performance
In toxic environments most often the organization cannot meet its goals and professional commitments.

What contributes to a hostile environment?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
**ASSESSING YOUR WORKPLACE**

**Signs Your Workplace May be Unhealthy**
There are additional signs, other than the "big three," that may indicate that your workplace is not as healthy as it could be. These are often not readily noticed, but when identified they seem obvious.

Using the questions below, please rate your workplace: On a scale of 1-10 rate the strength of the indicator. A “0” indicates extremely poor conditions, a “10” indicates excellent conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. <strong>Communication</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When someone has a concern about the way they have been treated by someone they are very likely to talk directly with that person:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. <strong>Regard</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People are treated with positive regard no matter what their position is within the organization:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. <strong>Dissatisfaction and Gossip</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When people are frustrated or dissatisfied with colleagues they may speak about their colleague to other people or they may speak directly to their colleague. In our workplace there is a high level of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. <strong>Management Responses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When management becomes aware of an issue with regard to disrespect or harassment they take it seriously, encourage direct communication where appropriate, and they act:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. <strong>Absenteism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When employees find it difficult to cope with workplace relationships they may seek small pockets of relief for themselves. They may call in sick or use their home situation or other excuses to stay away from work. This happens:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **Appreciation**

In healthy organizations positive contributions are recognized and appreciated. Our positive contributions are acknowledged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. **Relationships**

Some workplaces encourage an “everyone for themselves” mentality. Our workplace is characterized by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combative</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Collaborative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. **Change**

Change, innovation, and new ideas are usually met with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resistance</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Openness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. **Information**

In healthy workplaces individuals share information freely. In our workplace we are usually:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secretive</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. **Anxiety**

When workplaces are unhealthy they often have a heightened state of anxiety. Employees worry that if they make a mistake, they may be punished. I see a high level of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>People at Ease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Add up all of your answers and put your total score here: _________
1. Was there anything that surprised you as you worked through the assessment?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

2. Were there any long-standing issues that you were reminded of?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

3. What is your place of work’s greatest strength?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

4. What is an area of weakness in your workplace?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

5. What is most characteristic of your workplace? Tolerance or respect? Think of specific examples.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

6. How would others characterize your behaviours? Tolerating or respectful? Think of specific examples.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Think About...Talk About

Quietly respond to questions 1, 2 and 3. Take about 5 minutes.

Discuss the following questions as a group. You have about 15 minutes.

1. Describe your workplace in terms of the ideas discussed this morning.

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

2. How do people typically respond to grey areas? What kinds of responses are helpful?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

3. How do you typically respond to grey areas?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

4. If you had offended someone with behaviour they felt was disrespectful, what would you want them to do? What would you not want them to do?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
IDENTIFYING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

A useful definition of workplace health is one that encompasses a broad understanding of organizational culture, climate and practices. While there are many markers of health, several are readily identifiable and are found in every respectful workplace, regardless of the nature of the work. When these indicators are visible, employee morale and job satisfaction are high. Healthy workplaces foster a positive organizational climate and effective work practices.

Markers of a Healthy Work Environment

Support
People are concerned and supportive of each other's needs and respond appropriately. Supportive work environments recognize the interconnection of tasks and roles.

Growth
Individuals are open and receive aide in developing their interpersonal, emotional and job skills. They provide room for others to mature as a contributor to the workforce.

Involvement
Work environments where employees actively participate in their duties. When individuals are involved in their work they tend to do more than simply what is required, they aim to do their best and are willing to go above and beyond expectations.

Three Tiers in Work Environments
Each marker of a healthy work environment has 3 levels in which each component may be present. Ideally each component should be visible in all three levels. Our role is to contribute positively in whichever tier we find ourselves.

1-Employers  2-Employees  3-Individual

The Result of Healthy Work Environments
Ultimately, healthy workplaces are productive workplaces. When an organization demonstrates support, growth and involvement, it also tends to be productive. Given that there are markets for the services and products of a company, it is productivity that will keep an organization viable and ensure work for the staff.

Support + Growth + Involvement = Productivity

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Rationale for Creating Healthy Working Environments

It is the law
Most countries have some legislation regulating the laws of health and safety of its workers.

It is the right thing to do
Every philosophy or religion in the world stresses the importance of defining healthy interactions between individuals.

It is the smart thing to do
The facts verify that healthy workplaces are productive places. When employees are healthy so are the organizations in which they work.

*Take some time and share with the people at your table the strengths of your workplace. How do you see support, growth and involvement?*
Assess the Situation

Before any behaviours can be changed there needs to be a clear evaluation of what is contributing to the issues at play in a workplace.

1. Presenting Problems
The “presenting problems” are the readily identifiable situations that draw attention and cause concern. For instance, high rates of absenteeism, bickering among employees, and harassment complaints. If we choose to respond to this level we will not deal with the real issues and only be offering quick fix solutions.

2. Contributing Factors
These elements exacerbate the situation. For example, deadline pressures, high-stress decision-making, competition to retain market share, and fear of job cuts. This level of problem solving begins to address the factors that motivate behaviour.

3. Root Causes
These are larger issues that operate at a much deeper level. For instance, a workplace culture that reinforces disrespectful behaviour, unreliable supply sources that result in production pressures, or concerns about organizational viability. Problem solving at this level requires regular and systemic review and change.
**Steps To Deal With Disrespect**

Following the steps outlined below is not to negate that there are times when situations necessitate pursuing legal action without going through the progression stages. However, not every issue necessitates a formal complaint. The goal wherever possible is for employees to resolve issues directly. Management is there to facilitate the process when needed and to ensure that there are no further reoccurrences. The steps below provide employees with a framework in addressing issues as they arise.

**Step 1: Set the Stage**

Be proactive. Do what you can to contribute to a healthy workplace. When issues arise, address them quickly and respectfully. Speak to the person who made you feel uncomfortable. Remember that often others are not aware of the impact their behaviour is having. And, if someone speaks with you, remember to listen and work together.

**Step 2: Bring in Support**

If step 1 has not resolved the issue or if you do not feel comfortable approaching on your own, you may need to discuss the problem with someone in a supervisory position. Share your side and discuss possible solutions. At this point it is important to talk about confidentiality and make sure that there is agreement.

**Step 3: Look for Options**

There are times when it is not possible to discuss the problem with your supervisor. If this is the case you will need to seek out other options such as upper level management. It is important to reiterate the need for confidentiality and make sure that there is mutual understanding and agreement. Here you will need to decide if you will proceed to step 4 or if management at this level can address the concerns raised.

![Your Options](image_url)
Level 4: Choose an option and move forward

You will now need to look for additional support. You will need to search out your options. Some workplaces have employee assistance programs, human resource personnel, a labor relations divisions or union representatives to support you through your chosen option.

When to begin an investigation

- When serious behaviours continue
- When allegations are denied
- When discipline is unlikely

What to expect in an investigation

- To be interviewed
- To hear the other side
- To meet with the person with whom you have an issue
- To determine the facts
- To come up with a plan which may include both discipline and a new course of action
- To report to management
- That confidentiality is maintained
YOUR PART IN MAINTAINING RESPECT

Three groups of people are involved when disrespect occurs. Each group has responsibilities that they need to accept.

Initiator
If you are the cause of someone's discomfort, the onus is on you to change your behaviour. If you are unsure if an action was hurtful or offensive, you should ask. If someone mentions that you have offended them, you need to stop, whether you think the behaviour is acceptable or not. If you think your actions are questionable, this is probably a good indication that they are.

Strategy: Own up to your behaviour. Stop. Get help if you need to.

Offended
Address the offensive behaviour as soon as you can. Tell the person you are bothered by the behaviour and ask them to stop. You may need to remove yourself from the situation or take a minute to formulate your response.

Strategy: Acknowledge the impact. Tell the person to stop. Find supports.

Observer
As a witness of offensive behaviour you need to voice your disapproval. Remember, you are not an innocent by-stander. Simply giving voice to your observance and stating what would be appropriate is a first step in addressing the behaviour. If the negative behaviour persists you should report it to a supervisor and follow appropriate protocol in your organization.

Strategy: Recognize your role. Voice your disapproval.

Unhelpful responses:

- Laughing/crying/yelling
- Not saying anything
- Not doing anything
- Getting even
**Domains of Accountability**

**Liability Domain**
The employer is responsible to protect employees from these hazards. This area has the largest financial impact on the employer. The obligation is both moral and legal. In this domain, failing to protect employees may result in legal action and financial repercussions.

*Examples: Bullying, discrimination, harassment*

**Responsibility Domain**
This is the domain that falls between responsibilities for which an employer is legally liable and its discretionary practices.

*Examples: unfair treatment, incivility*

**Discretionary Domain**
This zone is often environmentally specific. Each workplace has varying means to make the work experience more enjoyable. When this domain is considered, workplaces are pleasant and productive.

*Examples: Agreements on type of music, temperatures, break times*
EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A respectful workplace is one that supports the well-being of employees. All employees play a role in creating a healthy environment—no one is exempt. It is the responsibility of every individual to conduct him- or her-self in a respectful manner. When reflecting on your role, consider the two broad areas of capabilities and results.

Capabilities: are the talents, skills and knowledge we leverage to receive results. Capable people have a plan for where they are going. They build on their strengths, compensate for their weaknesses and keep themselves relevant.

Results: are the tangible measurable contributions that an individual delivers and can be measured and evaluated by their colleagues.

Employee Responsibilities

- Check out an organization before you apply or accept a job offer.
- Ask trusted friends to be a sounding board when you notice an emergent pattern that is making you uncomfortable.
- Engage the individual you perceive as being disrespectful in two-way dialogue aimed at improving the working relationship to your mutual benefit.
- Enlist the active support of witnesses.
- Document incidents.
- Ask the advice of legal counsel.
- File a complaint.
- Leave.
EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Carrot and Stick Approach
As an employer you have the responsibility to motivate and encourage people towards good behaviour. As well, you have to set the boundaries of what will be tolerated and what will not. Combining criticism, feedback, guidance, discipline and rewards are all a part of the on-going process in maintaining respectful workplaces. In order to do this there needs to be not only a climate to foster respect but preventative and prescriptive actions.

Preventative Measures
- **Screen new applicants carefully**
  Diligently check references and resumes to ensure that potential hires have a history of conducting themselves in a respectful manner.

- **Have transition plans in place**
  Welcome new employees and ease their transition. Providing orientation, an employee handbook and a mentoring program or buddy system are all possible means to ensure new employees enter with ease.

- **Educate employees**
  Provide training and services. Employees need opportunities for personal and professional growth. Ongoing training is mutually beneficial for both employer and employee.

- **Provide clear and consistent messages**
  Ensure that the messages employees receive from management encourage, acknowledge, measure and reward respectful behaviour.

- **Conduct regular performance evaluations**
  Reiterate expected behaviours and deal with questionable actions. Feedback to your employee is vital. They need to know how their colleagues perceive them.

- **Conduct workplace audits**
  Use outside sources to assess the workplace environment. Ask that they evaluate job satisfaction, workplace stress, and relationships between coworkers and management. They typically will also measure absenteeism, employee turnover and sick leave. However you do it, find a way to hear about the experience of your employees.
Additional Preventative Measures:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Prescriptive Measures

• Provide processes
  Have system in place to deal with lack of respect. Ensure training has been provided in how to document and make use of the procedures.

• Provide support services
  Services for supervisors, managers, initiator, offended and observer need to be in place. It is helpful to have formal and informal support systems. Coaching, counseling, and freedom to converse about issues in an open manner are key.

• Create a respectful workplace policy
  Clearly outline what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. The policy should also delineate the processes that are involved and the resources the organization provides.

Questions for employers to consider:

1. Do our employees have clear job descriptions?
2. Do we practice performance management and give feedback constructively?
3. Do we have a descriptive code of conduct with clear consequences?
4. Do we consistently model the kinds of behaviours we hope to see?
5. Do we acknowledge and reinforce exemplary behaviour?
EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY

Talk Straight
Do not: spin the truth, tell half-truths, double talk, flatter

Create Transparency
Do not: keep secrets, pretense, create illusions, withhold information

Right Wrongs
Do not: cover up mistakes, persist in stubbornness, refuse to apologize

Show Loyalty
Do not: sell out others, bad mouth your organization, take credit for things you did not do

Deliver Results
Do not: fail to deliver, be in the dark about company goals and objectives

Get Better
Do not: force everything in to one solution, refuse to invest in improvement

Confront Reality
Do not: let white elephants remain unnamed, close your eyes to the reality

Clarify Expectations
Do not: ask others to do your work, fill time on unnecessary/unhelpful tasks

Listen
Do not: have a closed mind, interrupt others, roll your eyes

Keep Commitments
Do not: say one thing and do another, have no intention of doing what you say

Practice Accountability
Do not: make excuses, justify when you fall short, guilt others into helping

Extend Trust
Do not: expect the worst in others, expect the bad to go on

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STRATEGY FOR CHANGE: STATE EXPECTATIONS

In order to state expectations you need to keep in mind what is fair and reasonable. At the same time, you need to be comfortable with your own needs and wants and be able to give them expression.

Scripting
This technique involves preparing your response using a four-pronged approach. The script outlines the event, your response to the event, leaves room that the incident was a misunderstanding and delineates the behaviours or actions you would like to see in the future.

Step 1: Name the Event
Be brief and to the point. Leave emotion aside. Give specifics. Be non-judgmental and do not blame the other person.

“Yesterday at the meeting you made an off-hand comment about the living arrangements with my partner.”

Step 2: State the Effect
State the effect the event had on you and ask for their side of the story. Be transparent and honest. Do not over dramatize and make sure to use “I” language.

“I was taken off guard and was a little embarrassed that the whole staff was made aware of a situation that is personal.”

Step 3: Ask for Intent
Allow them the chance to clarify the meaning behind the event from their perspective. This does not negate your experience and at the same time it leaves room for open communication.

“I am not sure what you intended by your comment and would be open to hearing your side.”

Step 4: Make your Request
Tell the person what you need and expect from them in the future. Keep your request as simple as possible.

“I would appreciate if you didn’t make reference to my personal living choices.”
Step 1: Name the Event
Be brief and to the point. Leave emotion aside. Give specifics. Be non-judgmental and do not blame the other person.
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Step 2: State the Effect
State the effect the event had on you and ask for their side of the story. Be transparent and honest. Do not over dramatize and make sure to use “I” language.
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Step 3: Ask for Intent
Allow them the chance to clarify the meaning behind the event from their perspective. This does not negate your experience and at the same time it leaves room for open communication.
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Step 4: Make your Request
Tell the person what you need and expect from them in the future. Keep your request as simple as possible.
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STRATEGY FOR CHANGE: RESPOND TO CONFRONTATION

Sometimes we are the one who is approached about our behaviour. Whether we intended to or not, our actions and words will at times offend others. We should be prepared to respond in a way that hears what the person has to say, offers a dignified response and allows the relationship to move forward in a positive manner.

Responding to Confrontation
Our natural inclination is to either justify our actions or to react in a hostile manner. In creating a respectful workplace, it does not matter whether we intended to offend or not. If someone was offended, then we were offensive. Our goal should be to learn from confrontations and validate the other’s experience and state an intention to be mindful of their concerns in the future.

What is your natural response to being confronted?
- angry
- frustrated
- defensive
- curious
- fearful
- confident
- open
- avoidant
- calm
- frozen
- hurt
- argumentative
- other: ______________________________________________________

Step 1: Name the Event
Be brief and to the point. Leave emotion aside. Give specifics. Be non-judgmental and do not blame the other person.
“Yesterday I made a comment about the living arrangements with your partner.”

Step 2: Acknowledge the Effect
Acknowledge the effect an event had on the other person.
"You were put on the spot and embarrassed."

Step 3: State your Intention: State the intention behind your behaviour. If you were sloppy, thoughtless or careless with your words, state this.
“My words were thoughtless and I did not take time to think of their effect.”

Step 4: Apologize: Tell the person what you are sorry and what they can expect in the future.
"I am sorry about what happened. I will be more careful to not reveal personal information."
STRATEGY FOR CHANGE: HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Just as employees receive training on how to do the technical aspects of their job, they should also be trained on effective communication. It is important to address issues of disrespect as soon as they come up. Most often issues can be resolved early on before they become magnified or individuals have a long history of unresolved conflict.

Directions: Choose an issue from one of the scenarios provided and write a script. Practice the script with a partner. One of you should "state expectations" and the other should "respond to confrontation." Make sure to give each other feedback. Change roles and repeat. Make sure to look directly at the person with whom you are speaking.

Scenario 1

Jim works in the office next to yours. You really like Jim and have a long history of working well together. Last month the company hired a new employee, Marcus, who Jim seems to dislike. Jim has not said anything directly to Marcus, but you hear him making comments about Marcus to other staff members. You are sure Marcus hears it all. His comments revolve around Marcus and his live-in girlfriend whom Jim thinks is cheating on Marcus. You wonder why he persists in mentioning the situation.

Scenario 2

You do not use the work computer for personal emails. In the last several months you have been getting questionable links from a work client attached to work-related emails. You were surprised when you opened them. Your connection via phone and email has continued with the client and to date you have not said anything about the questionable link. Last week you received another link. You are not sure if it is work-related or not.

Scenario 3

Your boss is nearing retirement. You have noticed one staff member has been referring to the boss’ aging in a derogatory manner. She is constantly throwing out jokes on memory loss and inappropriate comments about dentures, hair growth and the need for young blood. Although they are not directed at your boss, you feel very uncomfortable with the comments, and the fact that the comments are happening repeatedly is worrisome.
Scenario 4

Several weeks ago your co-worker commented that you looked really nice. The first time he commented you were fine with the comment and you took no offense. In fact, the comment made you smile and you were appreciative. However, the comments seem to keep coming and you are starting to feel in the spotlight and wonder if there are ulterior motives. Last week your co-worker put their arm on your shoulder when you were both reading a report left on the staff room table. Nothing inappropriate has been said, but you wish the comments and touching would stop.

Scenario 5

You are in charge of managing and overseeing the shipping department of a longstanding business. You are new to the job and after 5 months you are feeling good about the work you've done so far. You only seldom deal with the public, but spend a good deal of time on the phone with customers and giving directions to the ground crew. The other day you overheard two employees discussing whether your accent might be affecting your ability to communicate with customers on the phone and whether the ground crew might be making mistakes because they do not understand instructions.

Scenario 6

Sue is a bubbly co-worker who regularly sends chain e-mails to everyone in the office. She emails jokes and funny pictures. Last week she sent an email with the *Top 10 Reasons Dogs are Better Companions than Men*. You think it is in poor taste and a waste of work time.
Stating Expectations

Step 1: Name the Event
Be brief and to the point. Leave emotion aside. Give specifics. Be non-judgmental and do not blame the other person.

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Step 2: State the Effect
State the effect the event had on you and ask for their side of the story. Be transparent and honest. Do not over dramatize and make sure to use “I” language.

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Step 3: Ask for Intent
Allow them the chance to clarify the meaning behind the event from their perspective. This does not negate your experience and at the same time it leaves room for open communication.

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Step 4: Make your Request
Tell the person what you need and expect from them in the future. Keep your request as simple as possible. *If necessary or if the behaviour persists, include your next course of action. Refer to page 17, Steps in Dealing with Disrespect.

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Talk about: What did I do well? What should I work on?
Responding to Confrontation

Step 1: Name the Event
Be brief and to the point. Leave emotion aside. Give specifics. Be non-judgmental and do not blame the other person.

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Step 2: Acknowledge the Effect
Acknowledge the effect an event had on the other person.

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Step 3: State your Intention:
State the intention behind your behaviour. If you were sloppy, thoughtless or careless with your words, state this.

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Step 4: Apologize:
Tell the person you are sorry and what they can expect in the future.

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Talk about:
What did I do well? What should I work on?

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Strategies for Change—Have a Plan

Act on the Situation
Once the situation has been assessed and root problems are identified, an organization is ready to take action. Taking action requires commitment, time and energy. Change does not come easy and the commitment needs to be reinforced and revisited.

1. Set the Vision
   Define the kind of workplace climate that you want to have (and what you don’t want to have). What do you want your workplace to look like, sound like and feel like? This vision should be tailored to the specific workplace reflecting the environment and language of the particular workplace.

2. Define the Vision
   Many organizations have a vision statement, mission statement, and perhaps a set of values and/or guiding principles. Often these are presented as belief systems.

3. Revisit the Vision
   There needs to be a commitment to regularly revisiting the vision. Honest appraisal of how well the organization is doing needs to occur on an on-going basis. How well are the beliefs translated into daily practice? Does the organization walk its talk? Does it send mixed messages about what it values and what it actually rewards?

Remember: Change is interactive and non-linear and requires much reflection. Most employees understand that disrespectful behaviours are unacceptable, but change even for the better can be a momentous task. Patterns of behaviours need decisive action to be broken.
What is a respectful workplace policy?
A workplace policy should be professional and positive. The goal is to encourage the behaviours that are desired and outline a course of action should the expectations not be met.

A Respectful Workplace Policy
- Outlines workplace behaviour that is respectful
- Commits to building and maintaining a respectful workplace
- Commits to challenging disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour
- Has a framework to report incidents of disrespectful behaviour to a supervisor
- Outlines how to use written records regarding episodes of disrespect which are dealt with directly
- May provide for a volunteer employee who serves as a source of information, support and guidance to employees who believe they are experiencing disrespect in the workplace
- Typically contains provisions for an advisory committee from management in and out of the organization
- Typically contains provisions for a steering committee from inside the organization
**RESOURCES**


**Websites:**

Canadian Human Rights Commission: [www.chrc-ccdp.ca](http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca)
Training
Our training is available in public, on-site and webinar formats. Below is a sample of the workshops we offer.

Leadership Development Workshops
Coaching Strategies for Leaders – Conflict, Performance, Change
Change Management – A Leader’s Guide
Leadership – The Essential Competencies
Leading Meetings – How to Make Meetings Great

Management Development Workshops
Management and Supervision – The Crucial Skills
Performance Reviews – How to Get the Best from People
Mediation – Facilitating Difficult Conversations
Motivating Change – Coaching Through Resistance

Conflict and Communication Workshops
Bullying in the Workplace
Conflict Resolution Skills
Dealing with Difficult People
Assertive Communication
Difficult Conversations

Workplace Culture Workshops
Diversity and Culture – Strategies for Working with Differences
Generations – Working with Differences
Personal Work Styles – Working with Differences
Respectful Workplace – Strategies for a Healthy Environment

Performance Workshops
Change Management – An Employee’s Guide
Emotional Intelligence – Expanding Influence
Mental Health in the Workplace
Stress Management
Team Development – Creating Functional Teams
Time Management

Safety and Violence Prevention Workshops
De-escalating Potentially Violent Situations
Emergency Preparedness Planning
Safety at Work – Mindfulness-Based Strategies
Workplace Violence Prevention

For a complete list of the training we offer, please visit www.achievecentre.com
**Member Plan**
ACHIEVE offers a membership plan that provides the member with unlimited access to our pre-recorded webinars.

**Member Benefits**

- Unlimited access to all pre-recorded webinars whenever and however often you want. New content added throughout the year.
- Ability to download useful PDF handouts and workshops, exclusive to members.
- Notification of special discounts and promotions on products and public workshops only available to members

**Assessment Tools**
ACHIEVE Assessment Tools help leaders and organizations have thoughtful and proactive discussions related to a variety of topics and issues. Each Assessment Tool Package includes one Facilitator’s Guide and 25 copies of the Assessment Tool questionnaire.

- Employee Engagement Assessment Tool
- Organization Health Assessment Tool
- Personality Dimensions at Work Assessment Tool
- Respectful Workplace Assessment Tool
- Strengths and Weaknesses Assessment Tool
- Workplace Violence Assessment Tool

**Consulting Services**
Our consulting services assist organizations and individuals to manage issues related to planning, change, conflict, and stress. To explore how to connect with one of our consultants, please contact us to discuss your needs in more detail.

- Coaching
- Group Facilitation
- Incident Management
- Mediation – Conflict Resolution
- Organizational Assessment – Conflict
- Team Development
- Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

**Lunch & Learn, Keynote Addresses, Mini-Workshops**
Sometimes you don’t have the need for a traditional workshop. The next time you require a shorter presentation, consider using an ACHIEVE Centre speaker. Our speakers provide engaging inspirational and humorous 30-90 minute presentations on topics related to leadership and organizational performance.