UNDERSTANDING WORKPLACE BULLYING

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KNOWLEDGE
Understand:
• What workplace bullying is
• How it impacts members and the workplace climate
• How it differs from sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination

ATTITUDE
• Workplace bullying is inappropriate and unhealthy to bullying targets and bystanders
• Education and training can lessen the impact of workplace bullying

SKILLS
• Strategies that members can employ in workplace bullying situations

As part of this presentation, please understand that this is a very personal, sometimes emotional topic.

We will maintain an environment in the room where people are comfortable talking about their experiences, if they wish to.
Workplace Bullying is ....
Repeated health-endangering mistreatment of one employee (the target) by one or more employees (the bully or bullies). The mistreatment is psychological violence, a mix of verbal and strategic assaults.

Workplace bullying is...

DELIBERATE

DISRESPECTFUL

REPEATED

The Forms it Takes....

Verbal abuse

Offensive conduct/behaviors
(including non-verbal) which are threatening, humiliating or intimidating

Work Interference
sabotage which prevents work from getting done
What percentage of US workers are bullied?

33% of American workers are or have been victims of bullying. An additional 15% have witnessed it.

Source: Workplace Study. Conducted by Ozya International Inc. on 2,500 participants from an online survey and a sample of 5,000 industrial employees. Male targets were 44% and female targets were 41%, while 56% of total were male and 44% female. Workplace bullying is prevalent among all genders, races, and industries. (Ozya International, Inc. 2016)

US Workplace Study
7,740 participants from online survey

Who are the bullies?
73% bosses;
16% are peers/co-workers with same status;
9% are peers/co-workers with lower status

Who supports the bullies?
43% leadership; 35% harasser's peers; 10% target's peers

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Both men and women bully, but the majority of bullying is same-gender. Women do less of the bullying, but when they do, it is almost always against other women.

Female Bullies 36%
Female targets 80%
Male Bullies 62%
Male targets 56%

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BULLIES ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ABUSERS

- 52% Hispanics
- 46% African-Americans
- 34% White
- 31% Asian-Pacific

57% of the targets are in the same group as their bully

Source: The Center for Workforce Diversity, Workforce Diversity Inc.

WHAT'S YOUR EXPERIENCE?

What types of behaviors are warning signals of bullying?

Some Warning Signals of Being Bullied

- Silent treatment
- Continuous criticism and "put downs"
- Publicly undermined and humiliated
- Important information withheld
- Yelling, finger pointing, insults, threats
- Expectations unclear and everything keeps changing so you are constantly off-balance
- Demand that you work extra hours without extra pay (ESP)
Bully Pain Is Not Often Visible

What examples of physical damage caused by bullying have you experienced or observed?

What examples of emotional/psychological damage caused by bullying have you experienced or observed?

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

- Reduced immunity to infections: more colds or flu
- Blood pressure changes
  - Stress headaches
- Fatigue
  - Indigestion
  - Weight changes
- Stomach aches, GI tract issues
  - Sleep disorders
- Itching skin disorders
  - Post traumatic stress disorders

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH ISSUES

- Feelings of worthlessness
- Panic attacks
  - Loss of faith in self-competence
- Depression
  - Lowered self esteem
- Crying: heartfulness
  - Indecisiveness
- Stress - irritability
  - Substance abuse
- Peer pressure
  - Mood swings - anger burst
- Poor concentration - forgetfulness
DAMAGE TO SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Co-worker isolation because of personal fear of being targeted
Co-worker resentment, attempts to silence you
Spouse questions your role in dispute
Strained relationships with children and friends outside work
Abandonment/betrayal by co-workers

SIGNS OF A TOXIC WORKPLACE

www.kicksnbully.com/toxic

Widespread anger and frustration
Workplace bully is admired
Scapegoats are always blamed
Dysfunctional relationships
Dysfunctional meetings
Obvious hypocrisy
Overly restrictive systems
Incompetent or powerless HR manager
High staff turnover; low productivity

What protection does the law provide?

NOT MUCH...

While bullying isn’t illegal, harassment due to race, age, sex, national origin, disability, color, and religion are illegal.

If the bully is targeting certain age, sex, ethnic or other groups, they’ve probably crossed over into illegal harassment.
The Healthy Workplace Bill

"An Act addressing workplace bullying, mobbing, and harassment, without regard to protected class status."

For information on this bill: www.healthyworkplacebill.org

What the Healthy Workplace Bill Does for Workers

- Avenue for legal redress
- The bully can be sued
- Holds the employer accountable
- Restoration of lost wages and benefits
- Compels employers to prevent future instances

Don't get too excited. Utah does not have this law, yet.
### The Law: Where Does Bullying Fit In?

**Bullying**
- Can target anybody
- Intimidates
demoralizes
- Intimidates
demoralizes
- Intimidates
demoralizes

**Sexual Harassment**
- Common behavior
- Demotivates
- Creates hostile environment
- Harms the law
- Harms the law

**Unlawful Discrimination**
- Based on social group
- Frustrates ability
- Harms the law
- Creates hostile
- Creates hostile

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### What Bullying Isn't

General unpleasantness
- Co-workers who don't like one another
- A manager with high expectations
- Someone who is often grumpy
- Single incidents

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Remember: The workplace is not Fantasyland...STUFF HAPPENS!!!
And every grumpy, mean, unpleasant person is not a bully.

Is it bullying, harassment or neither?

Bullying is Different from Managing
www.bullyonline.com

Manager
- Learns from experience and applies knowledge gained from experience to improve communication, language and interpersonal skills
- Consistent
- Respected
- Builds team spirit

Bully
- Has a learning blindness, cannot apply knowledge gained from experience except how to be more annoying, manipulative, and how to better evade accountability
- Inconsistent, random, impulsive
- Loathed
- Divisive and manipulative
So, why don't people deal with bullies?

As an individual, why might I not speak out against bullying behavior?

a. I'm not sure which strategy to use.
b. I don't want to be labeled as too sensitive.
c. If it happens again.
d. I will be blamed.
e. I will be viewed as a whistleblower.
f. I'm afraid nothing will be done.
g. I'm concerned about confidentiality.

h. I don't want to get the offender in trouble.
i. I am afraid of retaliation.

Three Major Reasons to Fight Back

Satisfy your need for fairness and doing the right thing

Be able to move on with your dignity intact

Support others already fighting back; help change the culture
What do I do first?

CONTACT YOUR UNION REP!

Information is POWER.
GET EDUCATED!

How do I regain control?

Risk Assessment + Action = CONTROL
Step 1: Do an Honest Assessment

- What’s going on? Define behavior.
- Is it a manager or a peer?
- Self assessment
- Analyze your support system

Seek professional help when necessary


- Document everything
- Save bullying emails/memos, etc.
- Keep this documentation at home
- Carry a notepad and pen with you
Step 3: Get your ducks in a row

Get support from family and friends
Identify a strong faithful ally
Find out if there is an appropriate channel to address the issue
See Steps 1 and 2

Step 4: Confront the Bully

Depend on your ally for support
Rehearse or practice your presentation
Confront the bully in an appropriate way with a witness
Expect the bully to deny, deceive, manipulate, etc.
Be prepared to file the grievance or complaint if appropriate

Constructive Responses to Bullying Behavior
Once again...

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