

Employees Behaving Badly...Under the Radar

Alongside the extremes of bullying and sexual harassment in the workplace, THE CONSULTING TEAM has witnessed a range of behaviors in the workplace that aren't legally defined as bullying, yet ultimately erode trust, cohesiveness, camaraderie and pleasantness of our interactions with each other, and the general public. Naturally, productivity and workplace satisfaction suffer when civility, friendliness and supportiveness are replaced with rudeness, sarcasm, disrespect and other bad behavior. It's natural to ask, how *can* we all just get along?

A Return to Civility

One easy way to improve our workplace climate is to put the spotlight back on politeness. By treating each other respectfully, as ladies and gentlemen, we create a more harmonious workplace.

Specific ways we can be more polite and respectful:

- Don't interrupt each other
- Don't roll our eyes when we hear something we disagree with
- Remember to say "please," "thank you," "I'm sorry," or "well done" to co-workers
- Give heartfelt praise and sincere compliments
- Admit when we're wrong or have made a mistake
- Learn each other's names and their proper pronunciation, and use them so that people know we see and know, and respect them

Counter-productive Behaviors

Workplaces can be [stressful environments](#). Whether intended or not, some workplace behavior is counter-productive, sowing the seeds of discord.

For example:

- Complaining about one person to another (rather than addressing them directly)
- Using sarcasm, whether in team meetings, water cooler conversations, or elsewhere
- Forming cliques within a department that exclude others
- Voicing consistent skepticism, doubt, and negativity about others' ideas
- Exhibiting passive-aggressive behavior
- Bringing our bad moods to work
- Not tempering our impatience by cutting off others or needing to be right

Our firm is often retained to [coach leaders](#) who have displayed “bullying,” uncivil behaviors. Most of the leaders are unaware of the effect their behaviors have on others and welcome the chance to increase their emotional intelligence. On a recent case, when the executive was asked what was the best thing he learned from our coaching, he said: “I learned that I didn’t have to always be right. I now seek and listen to others’ input and let them know how valued they are.”

Are you unknowingly committing Microaggressions?

Microaggressions refer to the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults —whether intentional or unintentional — which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to certain persons.

Often the transgressor is unaware of their role in slighting or offending the other party. Microaggressions can be experienced by people of color, women, or other groups, classes or subcultures in mainstream environments. The underlying current: a lack of understanding, respect or appreciation by the offender of the recipient of these actions. The net result: recipients of these small indignities feel “less than” and disrespected as they perceived they have been either slighted, overlooked, or disrespected.

Examples of microaggressions include:

- Employees not learning or mispronouncing foreign names of co-workers
- Men who don’t hear women’s voices in meetings or consistently interrupt women (but not men)
- Inappropriate eye contact
- Stereotypical comments meant as compliments
- Insensitive jokes about others’ cultures, rituals or style

When You’re on the Receiving End...Critical Conversations

When you are the recipient of slights, insults rudeness or other intimidating behavior, you needn’t feel victimized. Whether you feel hurt, anxious, disoriented or angry, there are several things you can do about it:

1. Identify how you FEEL as a result of someone else’s behavior
2. Identify what you NEED but are not getting in such situations
3. Now, make your REQUEST on how you’d like to be treated

When your boss repeatedly refers to you as “Honey” instead of with respect, respond like this:

“I *feel* disrespected when you regularly refer to me as “Honey” instead of by my name. I *need* to be seen as an individual, just like the others in our workgroup. In the future, please call me Christina, or Tina for short.”

In a facilitated meeting, you repeatedly are interrupted by others before you could finish expressing your ideas. No other attendees are treated that way. And the facilitator never intervened to cite those others for a breach of their ground rules. Afterwards, that employee spoke privately with the meeting facilitator:

“As an employee here for 15-years, I *feel* disrespected and devalued in staff meetings by repeated interruptions by others when I finally get the opportunity to speak. I *need* to be seen when I raise my hand to speak, and *need* the ability to speak without interruptions before yielding the floor. I *request* in future meetings you review meeting etiquette to remind us all that only one person speaks at the time and interruptions are frowned upon.”

Create a Workplace with a Civil Mindset

A kinder and gentler workplace will not only boost productivity and efficiency, but also stimulate creativity, reduce turnover and sick time and [create a culture of teamwork](#), mutual respect, and caring where everyone feels valued for their expertise and for who they are.

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The Consulting Team offers coaching, assessments and training to help your organization, its departments, leaders and employees address issues that erode civility, cohesiveness and productivity.

1. We can [improve the emotional intelligence of your leaders and employees through coaching and assessments](#) to help them succeed

<http://theconsultingteam.com/emotional-intelligence-executive-coaching-and-assessment/>

2. We can [diffuse bullying behavior of leaders and employees through coaching](#)

3. [Download a PDF file with a service overview](#) of our coaching, consulting, facilitation and training services.

We look forward to partnering with you to foster workplace success.



Contact THE CONSULTING TEAM to learn more about training, coaching, consulting assistance and also one-to-one training for leaders and employees.

Call us at 650-965-3663

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For more information. www.TheConsultingTeam.com

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