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Customizable Soft-Skills Courseware

Civility in the Workplace



Instructor Guide

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Instructional design and learning philosophy

We are committed to providing the best core skills content possible for Instructor-Led Training (ILT). The following principles are applied in the development of programs:

Sound Instructional Design

All course content is developed using a variety of research techniques. These include:

- Brainstorming sessions with target audience
- Library research
- Online research
- Customer research (focus groups, surveys, etc.)
- Subject Matter Experts (SME)
- Interviews with trainers

Expert instructional designers create imaginative and innovative solutions for your training needs through the development of powerful instructional elements. These include:

- Learning objectives — effective tools for managing, monitoring and evaluating training
- Meaningfulness — connects the topic to the students' past, present and future
- Appropriate organization of essential ideas — helps students focus on what they need to know in order to learn
- Modeling techniques — demonstrate to students how to act and solve problems
- Active application — the cornerstone to learning — helps students immediately apply what they have learned to a real-life situation
- Consistency — creates consistent instructions and design to help students learn and retain new information
- Accelerated learning techniques — create interactive, hands-on involvement to accommodate different learning styles

Application of Adult Learning Styles

Adults learn best by incorporating their personal experiences with training and by applying what they learn to real-life situations. Our experienced instructional designers incorporate a variety of accelerated learning techniques, role-plays, simulations, discussions and lectures within each course. This ensures that the learning will appeal to all learning styles and will be retained.

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Course objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your knowledge and ability to:

- ◇ Identify the different types of disruptive workplace behavior types and develop personal strategies for overcoming it
- ◇ Develop effective conflict resolution skills that can help bridge differing points of view
- ◇ Spot and eliminate potential bullying, mobbing, harassing, and violent incidents before they happen
- ◇ Create and implement organizational communication strategies that will help redefine the organizational culture into one of trust and teamwork
- ◇ Assertively handle false accusations of bullying and harassment before they grow out of control
- ◇ Discipline and discharge uncivil offenders with confidence and with the support of the law
- ◇ Check policies and procedures to make certain they clearly define the organization's policy, procedure, and consequential results for uncivil behavior in the workplace

ModuleOne



UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

Deal with difficult personalities


The Bully

Characteristics	How to handle the Bully
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blames others for mistakes • Criticizes ability and accomplishments • Insulting, patronizing and puts others down • Questions and cross-examines unnecessarily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use humorous self-talk • Validate yourself • Ask a close colleague or friend for a second opinion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes unreasonable demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why you cannot meet them and ask for assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withholds information from or shuts others out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule an informal meeting and address the issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes nasty or hostile remarks to Target while being “nice” in front of others • Sabotages work by giving misinformation or direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring up problems immediately • Use a team approach to resolving problems • Ask for clarification of instructions – write it down

Setup: one or more of four basic personality types usually perpetuates workplace abuse.

The Bully

- Usually acts one-on-one.
- Often motivated by personal feelings of inadequacy.
- 92 percent are bosses.
- Is often a politician.



The Bully is by far the most prevalent. The Bully uses his/her power (Bullies are most often bosses) to control the Target.

Review the characteristics and techniques for handling the Bully.

Ask participants to write down the name of someone they think is a Bully (use a code name if that makes you feel more comfortable). **Instruct** participants to think of a situation when that person bullied them. Ask them to write down how it felt at the time and what they could have done differently in that encounter.

Follow this activity with a discussion of how different participants would have changed their actions when dealing with a Bully. Ask for more examples of ways to handle a Bully.

Transition: Workplace bullies use intimidation to control the Target. They are more easy to spot, and then deal with. However, one personality type that is not so easy to spot and deal with is Mobbing, or Group Think.

Case study – the narcissist supervisor

Karan has worked for a graphic design company for seven years. Under her previous boss, Karan flourished, and she won several awards for her graphic designs. However, Mike, Karan's boss, recently resigned and Steve, one of Karan's co-workers, has been hired over Karan to replace Mike and supervise the design team. Steve received the job over Karan because of his production house experience. Steve does not have the design experience Karan has, but he assures her that while his experience made him the "man for the job," her experience makes her a valuable part of the team.

The company has contracted to develop a new marketing piece for a pharmaceutical company. During the course of the project, Steve asks Karan for input and graphic storyboards for the new piece. On several occasions, he challenged her recommendations by saying, "Where did you come up with that idea?" or "That's ridiculous, why would we want to do something like that?" and then proceeded to direct changes with his own suggestions. Further, Steve has neglected to tell Karan of key concept meetings, and others have commented on her absence.

At the client contact meeting, Steve presents the design concept as his own. When the client rejects the piece, Steve states that the team relied heavily on Karan's suggestions and direction.

1. What type of personality is Steve?
2. How should Karan address the situation(s) with Steve?

Group activity: Have participants read through the case study. Then ask them to form small groups and answer the questions.

Give the participants 5-10 minutes to complete the exercise.

Debrief the exercise by bringing participants back together as a large group. Ask for responses to the questions. Point out that each group answered question two slightly differently.

Note that Steve's behavior falls into the "Bully" category (Steve withholds information and resources from Karan).

Karan needs to confront Steve and tell him that she wants to work together as a team, but that means she needs to be more in the information loop and have the resources she needs to get the job done. She also needs to confront him for stealing credit for her work.

Debrief by pointing out that when abusive situations arise in the workplace, it is essential that employees know how to respond to them.

Frequently the problem is not identifying that there is a problem until it's gone on for too long. The key is early recognition and confrontation.

So What: Failure to address abusive or uncivil issues that occur can be worse than actually avoiding them. Unchecked, the abuse will continue and grow – and the employee becomes more of a defined Target for the abuser.

Setup: Once the abuse becomes so prevalent that the Target's work and personal life suffer, the Target needs to take action and control by creating boundaries.

Discuss the points listed on how to overcome the effects of uncivil behavior.

Note that the line in the sand represents an action point for the Target and the need to put it in writing.

Escape plans should be kept up to date, regardless of whether an employee is being abused. Escape plans represent on-going personal development. It is estimated that the average adult will change jobs 10 times in their work career. You want the decision to change to be yours and to be an upward move.

"Take-aways" are behaviors you observed that you would and would not want to emulate. Note that it is just as important to learn from a negative experience as it is from a positive one.

Direct participants to the exercise at the bottom of the page. Ask them to provide two behavior examples they observed that could be used as a take-away.

Debrief by asking participants to share. Provide your own business experiences.

Take action



- Build a portfolio of your work.
- Network.
- Increase your self-value by keeping a list of your accomplishments.
- Don't burn your bridges.

Self-encouragement is an effective tool for overcoming uncivil behavior.

Recover and move forward

Sometimes uncivil behavior is so abusive it leaves the Target emotionally decimated. The Target may feel anger toward the abuser, and at the same time, may have self-defeating feelings of failure or guilt for not being able to handle and defuse the abuse. It is critical that the Target takes control of the future and determines whether to stay or leave the organization.

Overcome the effects of uncivil behavior

- ◇ Determine the "line in the sand." Identify what you can, and cannot, tolerate. Be prepared to take a stand.
- ◇ Develop an escape plan. Create a professional development plan and set goals. The plan will also enable you to make a "business decision" on whether to leave or stay.
- ◇ Identify "take-aways" that you will use in your future career. Turn a negative experience into a positive learning point for you.
- ◇ Build a support team. Recruit family and friends. Develop a circle of people who will provide encouragement and an objective ear.
- ◇ Consult a professional. Meet with a therapist who will give balance and perspective on the situation.
- ◇ Maintain your dignity and self-respect. Don't burn bridges. Act professionally, not emotionally.

Behavior I observed/experienced	Take-away from the experience
My boss did not stand up for me in company meetings	I will find ways to reward or recognize my employees publicly

Lessons learned

Have you been the recipient of uncivil behavior or bullying?

List four adjectives to describe how you felt when you were bullied.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

What can you do to help change how you are perceived and quit being seen as a Target?

Write down a time you may have bullied or emotionally abused someone else. Identify two or three triggering events that may have led to your behavior.

Situation: _____

Triggering events: _____

What could you have done differently? _____

Lessons learned

1. Have you been the recipient of uncivil behavior or bullying?
2. List four adjectives to describe how you felt when you were bullied.
3. What can you do to change how you are perceived?
4. Write down a time you were bullied. Identify two or three triggering events.
5. Identify what you could have done differently.

Individual activity:

Tell participants that they will be asked to spend a few minutes reflecting on what they have just learned. Allow 5-10 minutes of "process time" for this activity. Participants should work independently on this exercise.

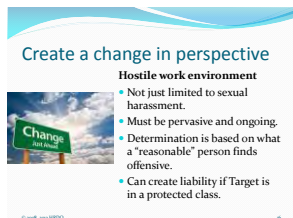
This information will not be shared with other members of the class.

Transition: It takes the buy-in and participation of management to create a change in perspective – to abolish workplace bullying or abuse.

Everyone needs to be aware that there is corporate liability if the behavior extends to create a hostile work environment or harassment in the workplace. This is especially true for protected classes.

In recent years, the U.S. Supreme Court has widened the definition of a hostile work environment to include situations other than sexual harassment. It has been applied to cases pertaining to religion, ethnic background and even for behaviors between same sexes.

Note facts on overhead about the hostile work environment.



Direct participants to the action steps titled "Guidelines for Management."

Point out the importance of immediate action when an incident has been reported. *Failure to act* can be seen as intolerable and can place the company in just as much trouble as if it actively condoned the behavior.

Discuss the how-to options a Target has when management refuses to acknowledge ongoing abuse.

Ask participants for suggestions on what to do if the manager is the bully or abuser (refer back to specific actions provided with the profiles).

Create a change in perspective

Changing how one relates to an abuser is an individual choice; changing the culture of an organization requires the buy-in and commitment of everyone from the top down.

Raise the level of awareness

- ◇ Harassment: Identify what it is, and apply the same definition used for sexual harassment or a hostile work environment.
- ◇ Implement a top-down philosophy and training sessions.
- ◇ Publish and distribute a definition to everyone—including examples of both subtle behaviors and egregious actions that are considered bullying or uncivil.

Guidelines for management

- ◇ Listen! Keep an open mind. Remember that anyone can be a bully or a Target.
- ◇ Investigate immediately when there are signs of abuse.
- ◇ Document accusations and the outcome of the investigation.
- ◇ Use exit interviews. People will talk when they are not under direct threat anymore.
- ◇ If the abuser is another manager, take it to a higher level.

What if management refuses to acknowledge ongoing abuse?

- If the abuse is at an off-site or branch location, contact the corporate headquarters.
- Request that the door be kept open whenever meeting with the abuser.
- Ask that another co-worker be present whenever meeting with the abuser (for a witness).
- Get instructions, designated goals, performance appraisals, etc., in writing.

Group activity:

Have participants read through the role-play. Then ask them to form small groups and role-play the situation. Have one person in the group be the scribe. This person should write down effective responses that redirected the conversation.

Debrief by getting feedback from the various groups. Ask them to share some of the positive statements that were used in the role-play.

Ask participants how it felt and how effective the “I” statement was.

Real-world application

Role-play

Bob and Carol have worked together for nearly four years. They have recently been assigned to work together on the new networking project—it is due in two weeks. Carol has become more and more difficult to work with. Bob is aware that when under stress, the dark side of Carol’s personality comes out. She frequently loses her temper, blame others for mistakes and, on occasion, has thrown pencils or slammed doors. Carol knows from experience that Bob quickly makes his mind up on an issue and rarely changes it—for him it’s a matter of not losing face.

Carol and Bob are at the stage in the project where they must contract with a networking vendor. Their opinions on whom to select differ, and the discussion has gotten out of control.

Carol: “I can’t believe you won’t even consider my vendor!”

Bob: “Why would I? They’re incompetent!”

Carol: “You won’t even listen to why I think we should use them! You are so stubborn!” (She throws down her pen in anger.)

Bob: “You’re so emotional. You choose based on your emotions, not the facts. You’re probably friends with someone in this company.”

Using the “I” statements, balance and reframing communication techniques, role-play with a partner a more effective way for the discussion to be successful.

Successfully handle false alarms

Whether you are a co-worker listening to a complaint of uncivil behavior, or a representative of the company, false accusations or alarms can happen just as easily as a real case of workplace abuse. For the sake of the Target, accusations must be thoroughly investigated. For the sake of the alleged abuser, accusations must be handled with tact and discretion. Both have too much at risk for it to be handled otherwise.

Consider the organizational risk

- ◇ Legal
 - Libel – written defamatory statements
 - Slander – oral defamatory statements
- ◇ Morale and productivity
 - Rumor or gossip spreads false accusations
 - An oppressive environment emerges
- ◇ How a false alarm is handled – ask the following questions:
 - Was the accusation investigated thoroughly?
 - Was there any bias in the investigation?
 - Was confidentiality maintained for both parties?

Recognize the self-inflicted victim

- ◇ Target of multiple people—both at work and at home
- ◇ Constant (and very verbal) criticism of management, co-workers, and others
- ◇ Picks their battles (and picks many of them) instead of the battles choosing them
- ◇ Conflict resolution does not provide relief to the self-inflicted victim
- ◇ Will not compromise and seen as stubborn

Handle complaints from the self-inflicted victim like any other, but when found to be a false accusation, respond to the employee by suggesting an EAP or other forms of remedy. Discipline for multiple false alarms.

Setup: Just as there is instances of workplace abuse that go unnoticed or disciplined, there are also those who accuse falsely in order to meet their own agenda.



False alarms carry with them high risk for the organization. Individuals accused falsely could pursue legal avenues to restore their good name (libel and slander suits). These lawsuits can be filed against the organization if it is found that there was not a thorough investigation and if the punishment for the accused employee is unusually harsh or inconsistent with similar situations.

When an accusation is found to be false, determine the company's level of liability exposure based on the three questions listed. If you answer yes for the first question or no for questions two and three, organizational liability exposure is high. At this point, carefully document every step that was taken, and if there was bias, re-investigate. However, the time to follow the guidelines is before an investigation is initiated.

Note that Targets can seem to be self-inflicted victims. If under fire they can seem to be at the heart of conflict. However the key to determine who is a Target or a self-inflicted victim is found in the items listed on this page.

Setup: When uncivil behavior is egregious enough, disciplinary action must be taken to protect the rights of the Target and indirectly, the liability of the organization, and indirectly, the rights of the bully.

Review the steps progressive discipline steps. Note that with every step documentation should be made to the employee's file, including the first verbal warning – with this you simply make a note documenting when and why the verbal warning occurred.

When disciplining for uncivil behavior, only discipline for those behaviors proven to have occurred and make the discipline fit to the level of the abuse/uncivil behavior.

Note: in most cases company liability is minimal unless the abuse is directed at a member of a protected class.

Currently most cases addressing emotional abuse in the workplace sue for Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress (IIED). However, the courts hold the threshold for holding the employer liable very high. Most frequently, the Target has the burden of proof to demonstrate that he/she made the abuser and the company that the abuse was intolerable.

Review the dangers of not taking action.

The danger of failing to act

- If the Target is in a protected class, possible Civil Rights violation.
- If opposite sex, possible sexual harassment or hostile work environment violation.
- Morale and productivity decrease; employees feel helpless and don't report uncivil behaviors.
- A toxic work environment emerges that impacts the company bottom line.

Discipline and discharge with confidence

When a situation of uncivil behavior takes place, management must take action to discourage the behavior from continuing and to protect the rights of the Target.

Progressive discipline

1. First verbal warning
2. Second verbal and first written warning
3. Suspension/probation
4. Decision-making point
5. Discharge

Consider the organization's liability

- ◇ How egregious is the abuse?
 - In some instances, immediate termination may be the best course of action.
- ◇ Are the facts confusing, making it difficult to make a determination?
 - Recap the facts to both the Target and the accused.
 - If so, it is better to give a verbal warning than to take "official" disciplinary action or discharge.

Setup: There are several legislative acts that provide protection from discrimination and a hostile work environment for protected classes.

Group activity: Ask participants to write down other protected classes that are not listed on the page. Provide three minutes (timed exercise), and bring the groups back together to debrief the exercise. Note that currently, there are not any other protected classes. The question of sexual preference may arise – currently this is not a protected class under U.S. employment law.

Debrief: We often think that more classes are protected than are. It's essential to creating a tolerant and diverse work environment that employees be able to recognize protected classes.

Briefly cover the relevant legislation and the protected classes.

When working with a Target who has filed a complaint and who falls into one of these protected categories, recognize that the organization's risk for liability may be higher. Carefully document each step of the investigative process and the outcomes. Keep the documentation in the employee file.

Review the legalities

Protected classes

- Race, color, national origin
- Religion
- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Veterans

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Stay within the law

There is not currently any law against bullying or uncivil behavior in the workplace. However there are several areas of employment law that have been used to argue the case of, and protect, Targets.

Protections given to prevent uncivil behavior

Civil Rights legislation

Employees that fall into the protected categories identified below may be able to file a claim under Civil Rights protection.

- ◇ Race, color, and national origin – relevant legislation includes the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Opportunity Act and the Immigration Reform and Control Act
- ◇ Religion – Relevant legislation includes the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Employment Act
- ◇ Gender – relevant legislation includes the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act
- ◇ Age – relevant legislation includes the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act
- ◇ Disability – relevant legislation includes the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act
- ◇ Veteran status – relevant legislation includes the Veteran's Employment Opportunities Act of 1998

Course review

1. Uncivil or abusive behavior in the workplace directly impacts which of the following? Circle all that apply.
 - a. Relationships with friends and family
 - b. The organization's bottom line
 - c. The employee's health
 - d. Teamwork
 - e. Customer satisfaction

2. You are working on a special project for the vice president. Your direct supervisor withholds key information you need to complete the project. What type of difficult personality is this?
 - a. Bully
 - b. Predator
 - c. Time Bomb
 - d. Mobbing

3. Uncivil or abusive behavior in the workplace can affect the organization in a number of ways. What specific results can occur within the organization should the behavior go unchecked?

4. What is the CAN DO approach to conflict resolution?
C _____
A _____
N _____

D _____
O _____

5. When confronted by your Bully boss who is yelling about not having the latest budget figures, what response would work best?
 - You cross your arms, sit in silence and wait for him/her to finish
 - You speak in a low tone of voice and calmly answer
 - You count to 10 and then respond with a quick answer
 - You ask the boss to lower his/her voice and continue more calmly
 - None of the above

Answers:

1. a, b, c, d
2. a
3. decreased morale, decreased productivity, increase in attrition, increasing tensions that can lead to violence
4. Communicate your position, Assess the level of conflict, Negotiate differences, Demonstrate trust, Outline a plan to achieve resolution
5. Answer #2 – you speak in a low tone of voice and calmly answer

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