

HOSTILE AND INTIMIDATING BEHAVIOR: WHAT IS BULLYING AND HOW TO PREVENT IT

Content adapted from Hostile and Intimidating Behavior presentation by Michael Bernard-Donals.



Background

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What is Bullying?

Bullying is the repeated use of force or coercion to abuse or aggressively dominate or intimidate; however, bullying is not always physical.

Bullying often involves a power imbalance and develops into a pattern.

Bullying can take form as: abusive behavior, unwanted physical contact or threatening gestures, professional exclusion or isolation, sabotage of another person's work and abuse of power.

What are the consequences of Bullying?

Employees who are bullied are more likely to:

- lose work time worrying about hostile and intimidating behavior,
- show declines in quality of work, and
- decrease their work ethic.

Additionally, up to 12% of employees who are subjected to bullying leave their job.

Porath, C. and Christine Pearson, "The Price of Incivility", Harvard Business Review, 2013, (96). Retrieved from

<https://qualitymanagementinstitute.com/images/hrsolutions/HBR-ThePriceofIncivility.pdf>

How to Prevent Bullying:

Bullying can be prevented by creating a Culture of Civility and engaging in effective Bystander Intervention.

A Culture of Civility can be created when authority figures define a healthy work environment for faculty and staff. Behavior that will not be tolerated must be clearly communicated. When disagreements arise, encourage open communication, mutual respect and active listening (www.siue.edu/ugov/faculty/).

Bystander Intervention is the ability to recognize a potentially harmful situation and choosing to respond in a way that may positively influence the outcome.

The Four D's of Bystander

Intervention: Direct, Distract, Delegate, and Delay. Direct intervention is when a bystander steps in and confronts the behavior. Distract intervention is when a bystander creates a distraction to redirect the person's attention. Delegate intervention is when a bystander asks others to get involved to intervene in the situation. Delayed intervention is when a bystander, after the incident, checks on the person who was harassed.

What to do when Bullying Happens:

If you experience bullying take notes about the incident. Write down what happened, when and where it happened, and who was present. Seek guidance and consultation and utilize campus resources.

If you are a colleague of someone who is experiencing bullying be a resource. Listen and refer colleague to campus resources. Do not take action without expressed permission of colleague.

Authority figures are responsible for the workplace climate in their unit. Reports of bullying must be taken seriously. When a report of bullying is received ask for support from campus resources and supervisors.

Campus Resources:

Campus resources for faculty include: Faculty Ombuds Service, Department Chairs, Deans, Human Resources, Employee Assistance Program, and the Coordinator for Policy in the Provost's Office.

The Human Resources department can serve as an initial contact for faculty members who are experiencing issues at the University. The HR department can offer referrals and outside resources to faculty. To contact HR call (618)650-2190.

Faculty are eligible for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides a valuable resource for support and information during difficult times. The EAP is a free, voluntary and confidential program that provides help with problem identification, counseling, and referral services to assist with a variety of concerns.

More information is available on the EAP website:

www2.illinois.gov/cms/benefits/StateEmployee/Pages/EmployeeAssistanceProgram.aspx

Faculty Ombuds Service offers informal and confidential services to faculty. These services include information resources, neutral listeners, and intermediaries in resolving workplace issues. Ombuds contact information can be found on their website: www.siue.edu/ugov/faculty/ombuds