

Is There a Bully in the Room?

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Bullying—Not Confined to the Schoolyard

This person does not share and wants to control all situations.



Objectives

Identify key characteristics of bullying behavior and specific examples of how this behavior might be displayed.

Apply suggested techniques to address bullying behavior.

Discuss legislative and organizational strategies to prevent bullying in the workplace.

What Is Workplace Bullying?

Defining Characteristics

- Employee is persistently exposed.
- Negative and aggressive behaviors:
 - Psychological in nature—humiliate, intimidate, frighten, or punish target/victim
- Single acts may be seen as uncivil/disrespectful behavior.

What Is Workplace Bullying?

From Department of Labor and Industries (2008):

- Repeated, unreasonable actions
- Actions meant to intimidate
- Risk to the health and safety of the target
- Abuse of power

What Is Workplace Bullying?

Aggression

- Occurs in isolation

Harassment

- As defined by law; person falls under a protected class

Bullying

- Repetition and pattern of abuse

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and which should
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Workplace bullying
mistreatment of an
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Calling a Bully a Bully

Synonyms

- Psychological Violence
- Emotional Abuse at Work
- Psychological Harassment
- Personal Harassment

Euphemisms

- Incivility
- Disrespect
- Difficult People

What is Workplace Bullying?

The Joint Commission requires each hospital to have a code of conduct that defines:

- Acceptable behavior
- Disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate behavior

Distinguish among behaviors is crucial to resolution

- Disruptive
- Impaired
- Incompetent

Why Should We Care?

- According to Russell (2001): “Bullying is as sexual harassment was 20 years ago; everybody knows it exists, but nobody wants to admit it or deal with it.”
- MacDonald (2001) identifies workforce bullying as a cancer that spreads throughout an organization and, when left untreated, may be terminal.

Why Should We Care?

Negative consequences affect individual and organization

- Individual
 - Less organizational citizenship behavior
 - Dissatisfaction with work and life
 - Increasing intention to quit work
- Organization
 - Patient satisfaction
 - Staff performance
 - Quality of care

Statistical Overview

- More than one million persons affected each year.
- 19% of acts committed by individuals well-known to the victim.
- Severe impact on productivity, impaired performance, poor teamwork, and costly absenteeism.

Occurrence Rates

400M

400 million U.S. workers have been directly affected by a bully or have seen one in action.

35%

35% of the U.S. workforce (an estimated 53.5 million Americans) report being bullied at work.

4Xs

Bullying is four times more prevalent than illegal harassment.



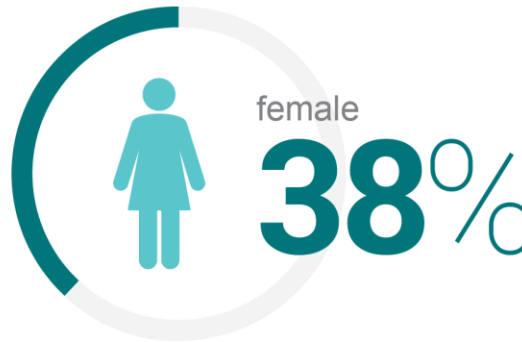
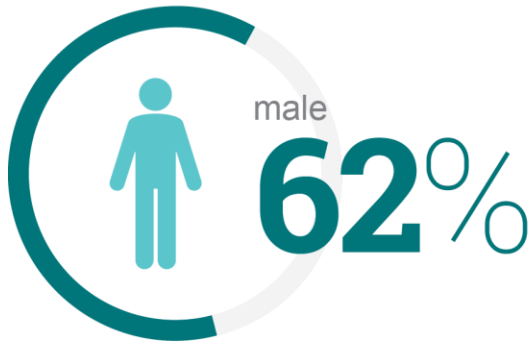
Where Do Bullies Thrive?

Companies with:

- Extreme competition
- Where employees fear for their position
- Authoritarian style of management



Who Are the Bullies?



Behaviors of Bullies

- Controlling others
- Blaming others
- Raising false concerns or criticizing the work of others
- Making unreasonable demands
- Yelling and screaming threats of job loss or insults
- Stealing credit



Who Are the Targets?

Employees most likely to be bullied:

- Pose a threat
- Technically skilled
- Well liked (possess emotional intelligence)
- Empathetic
- Ethical and honest
- Non-confrontational



Coworkers in the Bullying Cycle

- Most coworkers do not help.
 - Five things that discourage coworkers from helping:
 - Abilene paradox
 - Groupthink
 - Co-workers side with the aggressor
 - Winners take all; targets are losers
- Fear suppresses action.

Coworkers in the Bullying Cycle

28%



gave
social
support

16%



did
nothing

15%



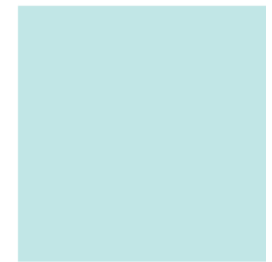
publicly
sided
with the
bully

13%



distanced
themselves

13%



betrayed
the target
to the
bully

Health Outcomes of Bullying

- Debilitating anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Clinical depression
- Other physical manifestations:
 - Migraine headaches
 - Weight loss
 - Hypertension
 - Muscle tension and pain
- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)



Bullying in Healthcare

- Environment:
 - Hierarchical and title driven
 - Nurses have a reputation for “eating its young.”
 - Intense, high stress
 - Economic pressures on industry
 - Team sport
- Patient vulnerability

Examples of HC Bullying

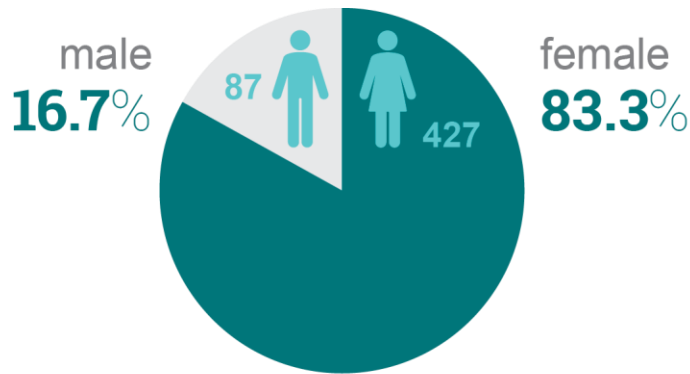
- Tools and other objects being flung across the OR
- Making fun of or mocking co-workers
- Accusations of incompetence or negligence in front of patients and their families
- Personal grudges interfering with patient care

Examples of Bullying in Laboratory

- Throwing specimen racks or slamming down objects
- Refusing to help train or mentor a new hire
- Employee blaming a former coworker via text for his/her termination
- Former managers refusing to assist new managers

Bullies in the Clinical Laboratory

**514 participants,
average age 45.8 years**

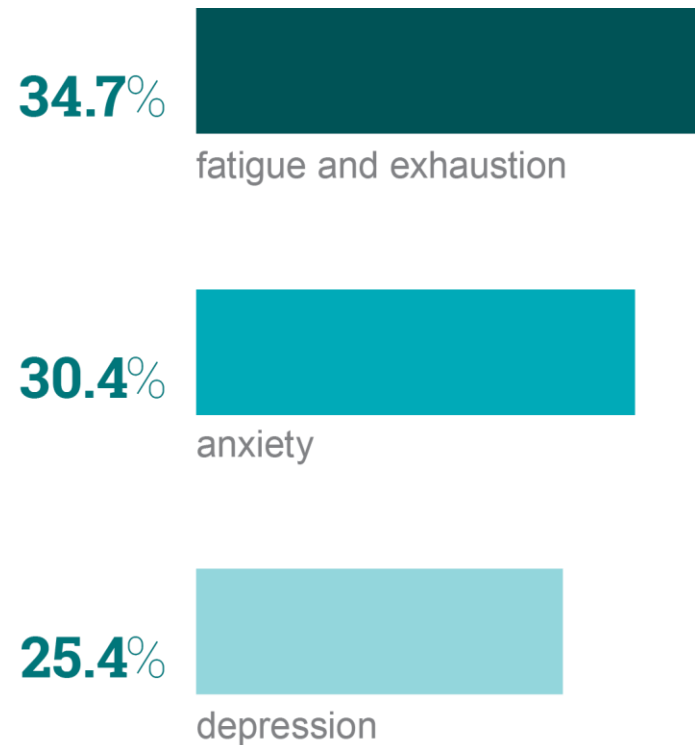


Non-supervisory employees are statistically more likely to be the recipient of bullying.



Women are more likely than men to be the target of bullying

**273 respondents reported
negative health problems**



Health Data 2014

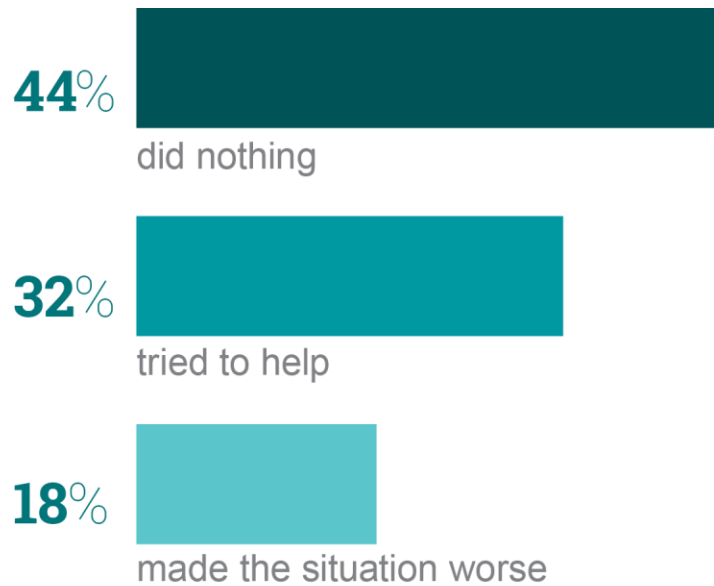
	Frequency	%	Males	Females
Fatigue and exhaustion	181	34.7	26	155
Anxiety	155	30.4	19	136
Depression	133	25.4	19	114
Sleeplessness	120	23.5	20	100
Headaches	10	20.6	7	102
Drinking more alcohol	43	15.7	6	37
Change in weight	68	13.1	7	61
Gastric upset	72	13.3	8	64
Elevated blood pressure	67	12.9	13	54
Panic attacks	33	6.4	6	27
Smoking more cigarettes	16	3.1	5	11
Exacerbation of existing illnesses	27	5.0	2	25
Memory loss	25	5.2	6	19

Suggested Techniques for Targets

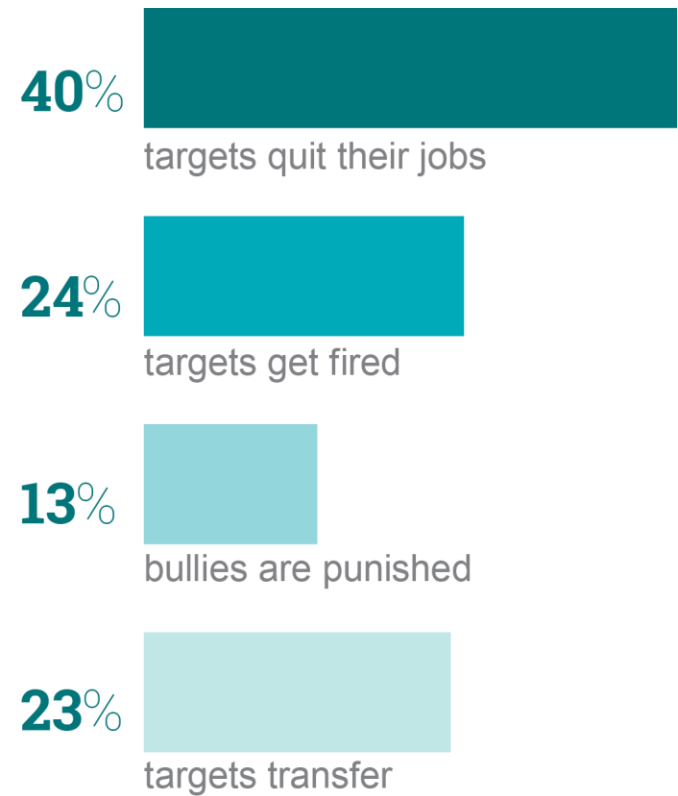
- Do:
 - Verbally ask bully to stop
 - Document events
 - Report the harassment
 - Seek professional counseling
- Do not:
 - Retaliate

Outcomes

Employer reactions



Outcomes of bullying



Overview of Legal Environment and Organizational Strategies



Is Workplace Bullying Illegal?

- There is no federal law.
- Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB) was drafted by David Yamada.
- 30 States and 2 territories have introduced HWB.
- United States is behind other Western democracies:
 - Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are leading the way.



The Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB)

- Authored and introduced by David Yamada
- Effort to amend the labor law to establish a private cause of action for an abusive environment
- What does the bill do?
 - Provides definitions
 - Requires proof of harm (professional)
 - Allows a bully to be individually sued
 - Provides protections for employers

Claims for Legislation

- Requires employer to provide a safe working environment and training for employees.
- Provides the organization with an affirmative defense when:
 - The employer exercised reasonable care to prevent and correct promptly any actionable behavior.
 - The employee unreasonably failed to take advantage of appropriate preventive or corrective opportunities provided by the employer.

Claims Against Legislation

- Frivolous lawsuits
- Increased costs
- Unnecessary
- Current anti-discrimination laws exist
- Damage to economic health of companies
- Biased decisions



Strategies Specific to Hospitals

The Joint Commission for Hospital Accreditation

In order to encourage constructive methods of managing conflict, organizations should incorporate the following goals into their human resources policies, training programs, and educational requirements:

- Continually reinforce the code of conduct.*
- Create educational and counseling programs for offenses that cause disruption and undue conflict.*
- Enforce sanctions in a consistent manner.*

What Can the Organization Do?

- Culture of the organization must have zero tolerance.
 - Policies and procedures of zero tolerance:
 - Enforced consistently
 - No exceptions
- HR department should be strong and impartial.
- Organization should recognize and reward collaborative and respectful behaviors.
- Hiring Process
- Education
- Policies and Code of Conduct

What Can Managers and Supervisors Do?

Management Commitment

- Encourage civility and respect in the department.
- Educate staff.
- Enforce the organizational policies and procedures consistently.
- Encourage CONFIDENTIAL reporting.
- Intervene immediately.
- Treat all complaints seriously.
- Employ third-party assistance.



“ *Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you, you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising which tempt you to believe that your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to the end, requires some of the same courage which a soldier needs.* ”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

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