Bullying in the Workplace

Noel English
Director of MU Equity
Title IX Coordinator
Teaching and Research EEO/AA Officer
Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative Office

Enhances institutional diversity through collaborative partnerships and strategic efforts that promote inclusive excellence and a welcoming campus.

Works to become a more inclusive, creative and innovative research and learning environment that facilitates the competent functioning of students and employees in a diverse and competitive global society.

CDI.missouri.edu
Diversity.missouri.edu
Assists faculty, staff, and students who believe they may have been harassed or treated differently from others in the same situation

- Provides advice and referrals as appropriate
- Informally investigates allegations of discrimination; makes recommendations to decision-makers

Provides campus-wide leadership, coordination and assistance on institutional matters of equity and compliance (faculty recruitment and hiring, faculty exit interviews, etc.)
Bias Incidents

Have you witnessed or experienced a bias incident?
Don’t be silent when you know something is wrong

See-it
Hear-it
Report-it

BiasReport.missouri.edu
When you report it, we respond!

BiasReport.missouri.edu
What is bullying?

Abusive behavior that is:

- Persistent
- Leaves Target feeling belittled, humiliated, devalued
- Intentional? Unintentional?
**Scope of Problem**

- 62% of bullies are men
- The majority (68%) of bullying is same-gendered
- Don’t have data on what percent of workforce are bullies

People who are bullied find that they are:

- constantly criticized and subjected to destructive criticism. Explanations and proof of achievement are ridiculed, overruled, dismissed or ignored.
- forever subject to nit-picking and trivial fault-finding. The triviality is the giveaway.
- undermined, especially in front of others. False concerns are raised, or doubts are expressed over a person's performance or standard of work; however, the doubt's lack substantive and quantifiable evidence for they are only the bully's unrelenting opinion and are not control, net performance enhancement.
- overruled, ignored, sidelined, marginalized or ostracized.
- isolated and excluded from what's happening. This makes people more vulnerable and easier to control and subjugate.
- singled out and treated differently. For example everyone else can have long lunch breaks but if this person is one minute late it's a disciplinary offense.
- belittled, degraded, demeaned, ridiculed, patronized or subject to disparaging remarks.
- regularly the target of offensive language, personal remarks or inappropriate bad language.
- the target of unwanted sexual behavior.

equity.missouri.edu/resource-library/bullying-behaviors.php
Cost of workplace bullying

• Abuse silences/terrifies entire workgroups, destroying cohesion and trust
• Since work is such an important aspect of identity, targets question:
  ▪ Their own value as human beings
  ▪ Work, and the concept of organizational justice
• In a non-responsive environment, stress reactions are common; people feel trapped and hopeless
Cost of workplace bullying

• At the extreme, avoidance is the only option. But when people can’t/won’t quit their job:
  ▪ Illness and absenteeism goes up
  ▪ Engagement and commitment go down
  ▪ Work time is less productive
Cost of workplace bullying

Cost to the institution

- Increased absenteeism and turnover
- Lost productivity
- Lost creativity and innovation
- Dysfunctional work units
- Increased use of EAP
- Increased EEO complaints, worker’s comp, litigation
- Increased management time dealing with problems
Confronting Bias and Bullying

- Why are we afraid to speak up?
- Why do we need to speak up?
- How should we speak up?
Why are we afraid to speak up?

- Concern for Relationships
- Uncertainty about Intention
- Uncertainty about one’s own perception
Why do we need to speak up?

- Intentional or not, words hurt
- Letting things go normalizes and reproduces destructive communication practices
- Rights and responsibilities
How should we speak up?

1) Think strategically about when to speak up
2) Formulate message based on the 3 R’s
   - Relationship
   - Respect
   - Responsibility
3) Be assertive and be prepared for them to be defensive
The Assert-Reflect-Re-Assert Cycle

**Assert**
- Attack the problem, not the person
- Phrase assertion in terms of 3 R’s
- Use an I-message

**Reflect**
- Anticipate defensiveness
- Reflect back to show you that you hear them

**Re-Assert**
- Explain again why you are raising the issue
- Repeat your message
You are NOT alone!

Third Party Assistance
How to address bullying

Bullying: How do you defend against bullying?

Clearly, the first step is to take care of your mental and physical health. But until you escape from the shadow of the bully, it will be very hard to fully recover your health.

When possible, the best suggestion seems to be to stand up for yourself on the spot. That is, politely but firmly tell the bully that s/he cannot talk down to you that way. When the bully starts in with the constant criticism, don’t justify yourself and don’t apologize, but ask for the specific documented evidence on which the criticism is based.

When the bully explodes and starts shouting at you, you don’t have to sit and take it; calmly excuse yourself to go to the bathroom or get a drink. In other words, don’t be insubordinate, but be assertive and don’t let the bully walk all over you.

Never respond emotionally. When you are calm, you can talk to the bully and cite examples of problem behavior. Ask that the offensive behavior stop.

Document the behavior. Even if you don’t plan on pursuing the harassment through official channels, writing down what happened, what was said, and who witnessed it can help you get your thoughts in order.

Create a culture where you support your co-workers and they support you. Stand up for one another. It will help you survive a toxic environment.

[Resource Library]

- Age discrimination
- Athletics and Title IX
- Bullying
- Disability discrimination
- Gender identity and expression
- Genetic information discrimination
- Hate crimes
- Microagression or micro-inequities
- National origin
- Race and color
- Relationships
- Religious discrimination
- Retaliation
- Sex discrimination

[Resource Library URL]
equity.missouri.edu/resource-library/bullying-defense.php
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- Hear-it
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If you think you might have witnessed or experienced a bias incident, you can report it by visiting BiasReport.missouri.edu. The Equity Office encourages all members of the University community to report incidents of bias to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.