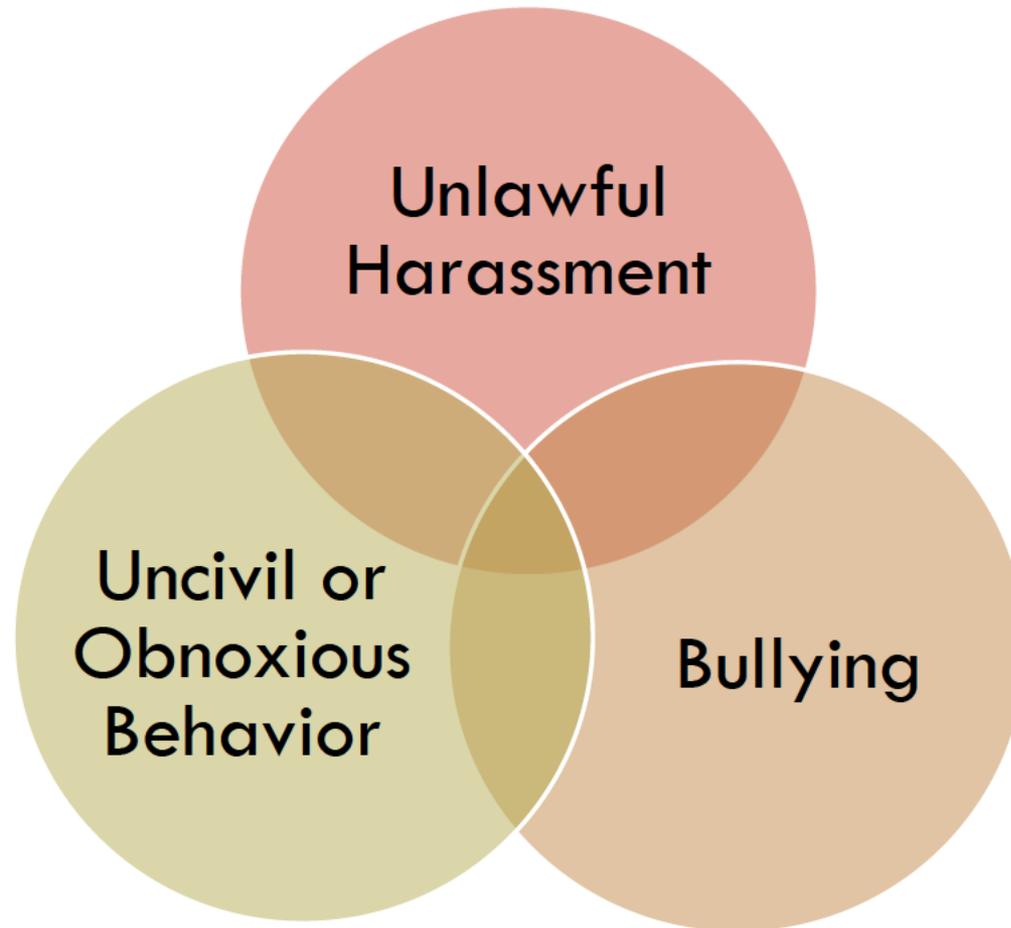


PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE BULLYING

University of Massachusetts Spring 2014

The Workplace Triad



Principles of Employee Conduct

- University employees are expected to be competent and to strive to advance competence both in themselves and in others. **The conduct of University employees is expected to be characterized by integrity and dignity, and they should expect and encourage such conduct by others.**
- University employees are expected to be honest and conduct themselves in ways that **accord respect to themselves and others.**
- University employees are expected to accept full responsibility for their actions and to strive to serve others and **accord fair and just treatment to all.**
- University employees are expected to conduct themselves in ways that foster **forthright expression of opinion and tolerance for the view of others.**

University of Massachusetts Survey

- 2225 Respondents
- 39 % Believed they had been the target of bullying during the past two years
- The majority indicated it had been two or three times, but nearly the same number indicated more than five times.
- Bullying was most often from a coworker, supervisor, someone of higher rank or a faculty member.
- Nearly half did not seek help

SUBJECTIVE PERCEPTION OF WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Positive responses to the question ,“Do you feel valued/respected in your workplace?” Correlate to virtually every positive organizational metric
- Morale
- Retention
- Productivity
- Performance
- Engagement

Most Importantly

- If someone truly believes they are valued and respected, and that their contributions are also respected and valued
- They will know that it is acceptable to raise concerns about things that interfere with their safety, productivity or well-being.
- The work environment becomes inclined to self correct

The transmission of respect or disrespect is both explicit and subtle

- We scan for and perceive intentional and unintentional cues
- We compare the cues we get to the **norms** we observe
- From this we deduce our stature in the eyes of others
- This forms the foundation of our organizational experience



What are the cues that signal
respect?

The Question

Defining Bullying

- **Repeated** mistreatment of one or more persons (targets) by one or more persons (bullies) that involve one or more of the following elements:
 - Verbal abuse
 - physical intimidation
 - infliction of psychological distress, including humiliation
 - Sabotage of work product
- Which **interferes with the target's work product or ability to perform their job**

Bullying Framework: Characteristics

Persistence

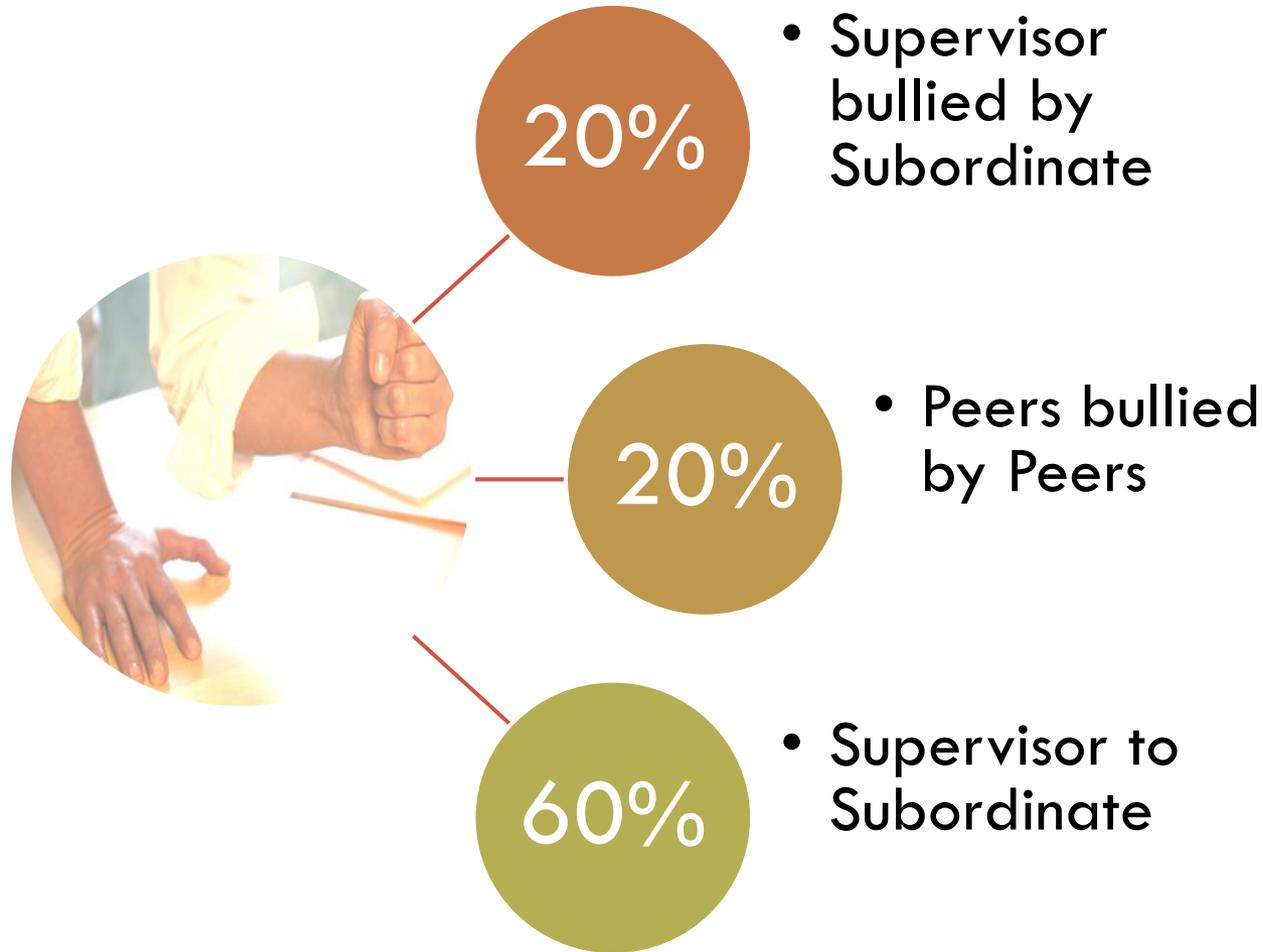


Targeting



Repetition

Bullying Framework: Targets

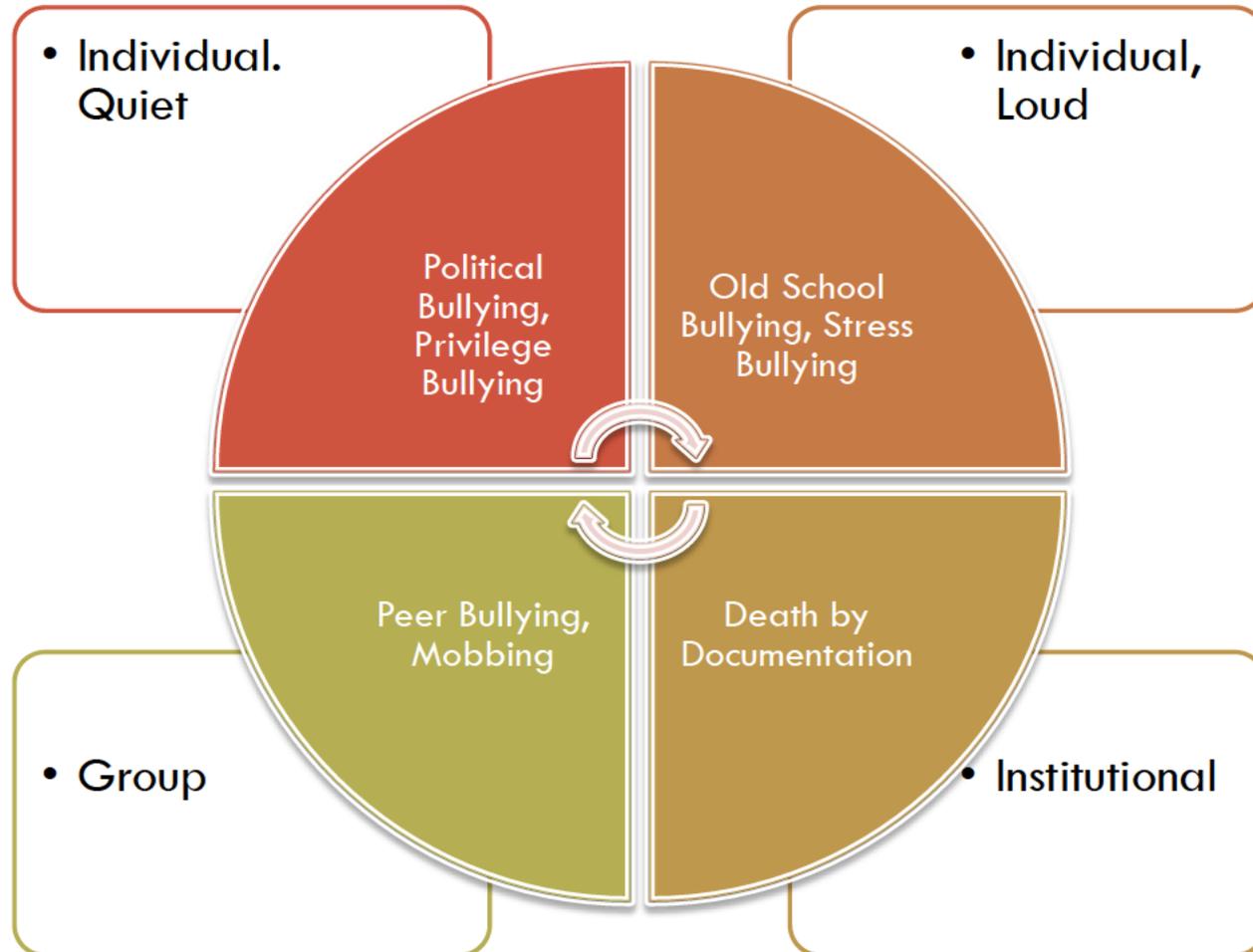


Bullying Framework: Targets

- 
- Bullied by other women in 71% of female directed cases

- 
- Bullied by other males in 54% of male directed cases

Bullying Typology



What Does Bullying Look Like?

□ Quiet

- Spread misinformation
- Share information inappropriately
- Use nonverbal intimidation
- make veiled threats
- Lie about past statements or move the goal line
- Provide too much or not enough work
- Withhold resources
- Faint Praise

□ Loud

- Yell
- Publicly criticize
- Find fault constantly
- Publicly humiliate
- Physically threaten or intimidate
- Over supervise
- Mock and Demean
- Constant attention to shortcomings

The Stress Bully

- ❑ Loses composure during stress
- ❑ Can be verbally abusive
- ❑ Believes it is immediately erased by normative behavior
- ❑ Will deny being a bully but claims s/he is very emotional
- ❑ Seen as a driver who gets results
- ❑ May be more stressful for some than others



The Political Bully

- Uses emotional manipulation and power to compete or to label others
- Socially adept and dishonest
- Extremely likely to take credit for work of others
- Manages up, abuses down
- Team feels a need to be with him/her or against her
- “Crazy making” to target



The “Old School” Bully

- ❑ Bullying is part of the culture
- ❑ Does not have a wide variety of tools available
- ❑ Lacks empathy – believes adversity makes people strong
- ❑ Focuses exclusively on measurable results
- ❑ “They should be happy they have a job.”



The Organizational Bully

- ❑ Prevails in politics, unionized workplaces, sports organizations.
- ❑ Wields substantial clout and influence
- ❑ Can threaten and mobilize group condemnation or ostracism
- ❑ Often makes use of email lists to publicly criticize
- ❑ Speaks for the “good of the group,” but allows no dissent
- ❑ Will openly call people out on disloyalty,



The Privileged Bully

- ❑ Earned or unearned privilege
- ❑ Indispensable to the organization
- ❑ Has unilateral control over the success or failure of others.
- ❑ Generally unapproachable by leaders at any level.
- ❑ Operates with mindset of “high standards.”



The Peer Bully

- ❑ Bigotry not based on protected class
- ❑ Alpha characteristics or status/power/authority difference
- ❑ With them or against them
- ❑ May create alliance against leaders
- ❑ Create “turkeys.”



Mobbing, or Group Bullying

- We are attracted to being a member of an in group
- Affiliation with others is powerful
- Cognitive Dissonance allows justification
- Feelings of power are pleasing when they promote affiliation.



“Death By Documentation”

- Using personnel practices as a tool to intimidate, harass, harangue, shame and motivate employees to quit
- Differs from legitimate documentation in that it is not preceded by attempts to provide tangible targets for performance improvement and assistance in meeting those targets



“They need to get the message...”

- There is **no evidence of any kind** that rudeness, manipulation, humiliation, cruelty, physical intimidation, dismissiveness, condescension or any other form of abusive behavior or language has **ONE SINGLE** positive outcome associated with it
- It is only an indication, when it goes unanswered, that the behavior will continue to reap unconstructive or harmful institutional consequences.

Impact of Workplace Bullying

- Organizational
 - Fear, lack of trust, anxiety
 - High turnover
 - Reputation damage
 - Lack of creativity and risk taking
 - Labor management strife

The death spiral of bullying



The Psychological Impact: Not Just “Feeling Bad”

- Clinical Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- High Rate of Self Harm or Suicide

Bullying?

- ❑ Yelling at someone
- ❑ Refusing to engage someone you don't care for
- ❑ Talking to one employee about another employee's performance
- ❑ Being rude to someone you think isn't doing their job well
- ❑ Throwing things, but not at anyone

Organizational Response to Bullies

- In order to effectively prevent or address bullying, it must be perceived as a “high cost” set of behaviors
 - ▣ Tangible Employment Threats
 - ▣ Direct and Specific Remediation
 - ▣ Measurable Behavior Plans and Accountability

If You Recognize Yourself in the Bullying Types

- ❑ You can change
- ❑ You can acknowledge and own it
- ❑ You can apologize
- ❑ You can ask for help
- ❑ You can ask for feedback
- ❑ You can be a more productive and admired member of the organization
- ❑ Or you can deal with the inevitable consequences

If you Feel Bullied

- ❑ Object early; the effectiveness of objecting diminishes over time
- ❑ Seek support and assistance
- ❑ Get feedback and advice
- ❑ Seek supervisory assistance; climb the organizational ladder
- ❑ Frame your concerns by identifying specific behaviors, language or action AND the effects

Bullying Procedure

- Informal Resolution
- Administrative Review
- Formal Hearing

Administrative Review

- Affirmative Obligation for Supervisors to both respond to complaints and initiate action
 - ▣ This is the most effective level for resolving the situation
 - ▣ It is appealable. If you don't make a good faith effort, there will be a record of this. If you did, the record will reflect it.

Key Aspects of Dealing with a Complaint

- Listen more than talk: hear the story
- Do not debate, express doubt or lay blame
- Affirm feelings
- THEN get salient facts, witnesses and evidence
- Stay neutral, and if you can't, get help
- Use a “reasonable person” standard
- Acknowledge you may have “missed” something in the course of supervision

Bystanders and Allies

- Name or acknowledge unfair or unkind treatment
- Interrupt bullying behavior
- Publicly support those affected
- Privately support those affected
- Privately confront those involved
- Use body language to provide feedback in the moment
- Report to someone who can do something about it.

Bullying is Abuse

- Its consequences are as grave as those of domestic abuse or assault
- If we would not stand and watch these things, we owe it to ourselves to find a way to help or support those experiencing it
- By doing so, we are whistleblowers, protected from reprisal by University policy and State Law.