Bullying & Incivility in the Workplace

How to recognize it and what you can do about it...

Presented by the Ombuds Office in cooperation with Staff Council & EPA
The Ombuds Office

- A confidential place to explore options, resources
- A neutral option for mediating
- An informal avenue to discuss policies, reporting incidents, or gather information
Agenda

- RECOGNIZING BULLYING
  - Defining Incivility and Bullying
  - Impacts of Bullying
  - Bullying in Academia

- Responding to Bullying
  - What Targets Can Do
  - What Administrators Can Do
INCIVILITY...
BULLYING...
VIOLENCE
Defining Bullying

“...repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators that takes one or more of the following forms:

› Verbal abuse
› Offensive conduct/behaviors (including nonverbal) which are threatening, humiliating, or intimidating
› Work interference — sabotage — which prevents work from getting done”

Gary and Ruth Namie of the Workplace Bullying Institute
www.workplacebullying.org
Bullying Behaviors

- **Overt**
  - Screaming/yelling
  - Name calling
  - Belittling, public humiliation
  - Pounding on the table
  - Blocking exit

- **Covert**
  - Withholding information
  - Overwork
  - Controls resources (time, budget, training, support) so as to prevent target’s success
  - Blame target for mistakes of which target had no control
Not Bullying:

- Expression of conflicting opinions
- Direct communication
- Corrective feedback
- People just not getting along
- High performance standards
- One-time verbally aggressive outburst
INCIVILITY...BULLYING...VIOLENCE

- Norms for the organization erode
- Spiraling and Cascading

“Incivility goes unchecked and can escalate leading to a chain of more aggressive, coercive behaviors possibly leading to violence.”

Pearson, Andersson, and Porath, 2000
IMPACT OF BULLYING
IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE INDIVIDUAL

- 45% of targets had stress-related health problems
  (Workplace Bullying Institute-Zogby US Workplace Bullying Survey – 7740 survey respondents, 2007)

- Anxiety, disrupted sleep, loss of concentration, obsession over bullying, depression, increased use of substances to cope.

- One in seven adult suicides are as a result of workplace bullying  
  (Leymann, 1992.)
IMPACT ON THE ORGANIZATION

- Loss of productivity
- Increase in use of vacation and sick leave
- Turnover
- Increase in workers compensation or disability claims
- Increasing chance of retaliation or sabotage
- Increasing chance of violence
Unique Characteristics of Academia... Bullying
Characteristics of Academia...

- Tenure
- Department Chair (Head) Role
- Academic Freedom
- De-Centralization
- Culture of Critique
RESPONDING TO BULLYING
What you do depends upon...

- How you categorize the offender?
  - Behave badly but not clueless/open to feedback
  - Behave badly in response to stress
  - Bully in reciprocal fashion
  - Workplace Psychopath (Giles St. John Burch, University of Auckland 2010)

• Barbara McCulloch
What you do depends upon...

- What you have tried before and how successful it was in getting the unwanted behaviors to stop?

- How much risk are you willing to take to get the behavior to stop?
What Can Be Done?

- As an individual...
  - Do nothing directly/do not engage
  - Keep a journal with details of specific dates, places, witnesses, and behaviors
  - Hold onto copies of documents that contradict the bully’s accusations against you (e.g., time sheets, audit reports, etc.)
  - Third-party assistance (mediation, coaching, or shuttle diplomacy)
What Can Be Done? (continued)

- As an Individual....
  - Complain to the alleged bully’s supervisor
  - Report to EthicsPoint
  - File a grievance (individual or group)
  - Report to HR – Anti-violence Policy
  - Formally complain to Administrative Agencies (e.g., EEOC / Courts)
What Can Be Done?

- As a supervisor...
  - Hold individuals responsible for uncivil/bullying behavior
    - Cite the “Anti-Violence” policy
  - Establish norms and codes of conduct for your unit that speak to civil, respectful, and professional behavior
  - Consider using a tool, such as a climate survey, to assess your unit’s “health”
  - Ask colleagues to speak up if they observe alleged bully engage in bullying behaviors
What can organizations do?

Create Expectations for Respect

- Leadership Statements and Policies

  - STATEMENT ON CIVILITY - Claremont McKenna College
    - [http://www.cmc.edu/president/docs/civility.php](http://www.cmc.edu/president/docs/civility.php)

  - STATEMENT ON CIVILITY - Indiana University
    - [http://www.ipfw.edu/about/civility.shtml](http://www.ipfw.edu/about/civility.shtml)

  - RESPECT AND CIVILITY IN THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY - UC, Berkeley
    - [http://students.berkeley.edu/uga/respect.stm](http://students.berkeley.edu/uga/respect.stm)
What can organizations do?

Training

- Awareness – seminars, workshops
  Include “bullying” in training at all levels ...
  for supervisors, faculty, staff

Bystander Training
What can organizations do?

Collect Data

- Exit interviews and 360 Degree Evaluations
- Climate Surveys
- HR Monitoring of Employee Leave
We Are Here to Help!

- Have us help...
  - Explore options and ideas for addressing issues
  - Confidentially inquire about possible policy violations
  - Facilitate conversations with groups to explore norms, standards of conduct
  - Provide Training

- Downtown: 303.556.4493
- AMC: 303.724.2950