



Bully Free At Work: Surprising Facts You Need To Know About Workplace Bullying

Many people ask “*How is Workplace Bullying different from working with difficult people and what exactly is workplace bullying anyway?*”

Workplace bullying is repeated, deliberate, disrespectful behavior by one or more people toward another for their own gratification, which in turn harms the target.

Bullying is **deliberate**, not accidental.

Bullying is always **disrespectful** with intent.

Bullying results in **gratification for the bully**, where the target feels severely **disrespected**.

Difficult people are not necessarily out to harm another; they are out to protect their own needs. Therefore, if you can reason with a difficult person in order to show good will for their needs, they may change. A bully will not change.

Workplace bullying occurs in every country of the world, and one out of six people will report having being bullied in their lifetime. Statistics would be even higher if employees were more aware of what workplace bullying actually is.

Stress is the result of unmanaged exposure to workplace bullying. The fear, uncertainty, doubt and emotional devastation that result from being bullied plays out frequently in a target's emotional, mental and physical abilities.

According to the Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute, the top health consequences are:

1. Severe anxiety (94%)
2. Sleep disruption (84%)
3. Loss of concentration ((82%)

As a result, the top consequences for an organization are:

1. Good morale (a positive culture) is traded for a fearful culture where people become hesitant, less free and less open.
2. Teamwork will deteriorate into group-work or individual efforts.
3. The agreeable, cooperative and supportive environment becomes hostile, secretive and dead.

So, how can workplace bullying be stopped and prevented?

1. **The first step is an educated workforce.** What workplace bullying is, how it occurs, who are likely to be targets and bullies. In addition, systems and accountabilities need to be put in place to protect and create the kind of workplace culture that is respectful.
2. **The second step is to empower employees** to create and enforce workplace-bullying policies that protect a respectful workplace, and hold a bullying culture accountable to becoming a respectful culture.

We know that people want to be treated with respect. Workplace bullying demeans the individual and destroys the trust needed to do high quality work.

Workplace bullying can be stopped, but it must not rest only on the target's shoulders to stop this behavior. Stopping workplace bullying is everyone's responsibility. Upper management must use their authority to ensure that a respectful workplace exists.

We want to help you eliminate bullying from your workplace.

Together we can make the workplace a welcoming environment for you and your co-workers alike.

Valerie Cade is a world-wide authority and speaker on Workplace Bullying and author of *Bully Free at Work*™ and she can be reached at val@bullyfreeatwork.com

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