

Bullying in the Workplace

Workplace bullying, though difficult to define, is typically an ongoing pattern of intimidating or demeaning behavior that can affect an employee's health. Recent findings by the research firm Zobgy International for the Workplace Bullying Institute (2010) indicated that:

- 35% of workers have experienced bullying firsthand (37% in 2007)
- 62% of bullies are men; 58% of targets are women
- Women bullies target women in 80% of cases
- Bullying is 4 times more prevalent than illegal harassment (2007)
- The majority (68%) of bullying is same-gender harassment

Workplace bullying can take many forms. Often it involves a boss targeting his or her employees, but can also include workers picking on their peers or even their supervisors. Managers, supervisors, and employees who bully may not realize how their behavior affects their coworkers' well-being or impacts workplace efficiency.

Bullied employees may take more sick days, longer breaks, or use their work hours to look for other jobs. They may also be more isolated and less likely to participate fully in their work or offer help to their coworkers. The targeted employee will often keep quiet about the bullying because they are embarrassed or in fear of retribution. Witnesses may also be scared to come forward because they are reluctant to attract negative attention and run the risk of being targeted themselves. In addition, disciplinary measures and legal recourse available to the bullied employee may be limited. Policies and procedures often focus on harassment or discrimination, but do not address bullying specifically.

Is a demanding boss being a bully or are they just a perfectionist? When your coworker says something inappropriate is it malicious or just tactless? EASE encourages you to reach out if you are feeling targeted in the workplace. Talk with friends and family, or contact EASE at 1-800-882-1341.



“Strength is the courage...to reach out!”