

Harassment & Bullying Tips

Prevention

1. Set a good example: the behaviour you demonstrate is as important as the policy and can enable you to minimise the chances of harassment or bullying.
2. Early intervention: where you identify concerns regarding behaviour or signs of conflict, tackle them at an early stage to prevent habits being formed and also to ensure you are not demonstrating tacit approval to such behaviour.
3. Tackle any concerns you have even if no complaint has been made. If you perceive behaviour as inappropriate and do nothing then it can be perceived as condoning harassment or bullying.

Informal Approach

4. Deal with issues promptly: ignoring problems allows them to escalate, which could result in formal complaints or the disciplinary process. Dealing with matters swiftly helps to prevent or limit future occurrences.
5. Take issues seriously: this does not necessarily mean moving into formal procedures as informal methods are extremely effective and are encouraged. Taking complaints seriously demonstrates that our intention of providing working environment free from such behaviour.
6. Think whether mediation may be appropriate but you should try to resolve any issue yourself first - try to act as a mediator if necessary.

Gathering Information

7. Be objective: it is important not to take sides. You will need to gather objective evidence by talking to both parties and any witnesses to understand individual perceptions of events.
8. Be sensitive: raising harassment or bullying issues can be uncomfortable for all parties and whether you decide to take further action or not, the ongoing situation will need to be carefully managed.
9. Be consistent: ensure you deal with your team fairly and with the same importance, failure to do so can itself be a cause of conflict.

Formal Approach

10. If you feel the issue is serious enough to warrant separating the two parties, always seek advice from the Advice & Support Team.
11. Distinguish between matters of fact and matters of opinion. Challenge either party if necessary if you need to clarify anything.

12. Consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion. The perception of what constitutes harassment or bullying can be different for each individual.
13. If you conclude that harassment or bullying has occurred, you must proceed to the disciplinary procedure.

Other Issues

14. Follow up on issues after resolution: whether conflict is resolved informally or formally, don't assume that the problem has gone away for good. Use informal one to ones to discuss the ongoing situation to check for renewed tensions or that the situation is really resolved.
15. Always keep a record of your investigations and meetings including names, dates, nature of the complaint, actions taken, follow up and monitoring.
16. Ensure everything to do with the complaint is kept confidential and ensure that all those involved are aware of the importance of confidentiality.