SAFE AND RESPECTFUL:
THE CIVIL WORKPLACE

Do your employees feel safe and respected at work? You may be surprised to learn that some research estimates that the prevalence of workplace incivility may be between 75% and 100%, indicating that most employees have experienced or observed some level of disrespect at work. The numbers may be hard to believe – especially if you answered yes to the question above – but this is likely because the behaviors attributed to incivility tend to be less overt than outright harassment and are therefore often underreported. As a manager, you have a responsibility to foster a safe and respectful environment for your employees. So, let's explore the topic further and look into some examples of how you can recognize incivility and ways to create and maintain a respectful workplace.

Examples of workplace incivility

Incivility is often described as low-intensity behavior with vague intent to mistreat others in violation of social norms. Simply put, the behavior is rude, impolite, discourteous, or is generally lacking in respect for others. Here are some examples of what that might look like in the office:

- Condescending or insulting comments, put-downs, and sarcasm
- Showing up late to, disrupting, or multitasking during meetings
- Not responding when someone says, "Good morning" or holds the door open for you
- Leaving a mess in the breakroom
- Stalling response or not communicating at all to time-sensitive matters
- Rolling eyes, negative eye contact or facial expressions
- Demanding that projects be completed by unreasonable deadlines
- Undermining credibility or not giving due credit
- Initiating or engaging in gossip

Creating a Respectful Workplace

Here are some ideas of how you can instill civility in your team culture.

- Hire employees from a diverse range of backgrounds to foster tolerance and inclusivity

- Allow flexibility, if possible, with work location and schedules

- Practice active listening to show employees that you appreciate, care, and respect them as individuals

- Acknowledge and reward employees for a job well done

- Take notice of conflict and intervene quickly

- Be accountable; establish a zero-tolerance policy for incivility and make the reporting and investigation processes clear to everyone

- Greet all employees by name and take an interest in their personal lives

- Model positive behavior by showing up to meetings on time, being prepared, and contributing thoughtfully to discussions

- Regularly check in with staff, have an open-door policy, and provide opportunities for them to give anonymous feedback

- Combat rudeness by managing your own stress and modeling good work/life balance

Incivility affects motivation, and of those who were subjected to it at work:

- 66% cut back their work efforts

- 80% lost work time

- 12% left their jobs

Christine Porath, Author of
*Mastering Civility:
A Manifesto for the Workplace*

For more on how you can create a safe and civil work environment for your employees, contact the EAP to speak with a licensed counselor and to schedule your free, personalized management consultation.

24 HOURS A DAY

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