How to Manage Bullying in the Workplace
Objectives

1. Define workplace bullying.
2. Define overt versus covert bullying.
3. Understand the personality traits of bullies and targets.
4. Understand the social relationship between bullies, their targets and other observers.
5. Name ways to manage bullying behavior both for the bully and for the target.
Question:

How many of you have either felt bullied by someone or have witnessed bullying in the workplace environment?
**Bullying Definition**

**What Bullying is:**

*Conduct that cannot be objectively justified by a reasonable code of conduct, and whose likely or actual cumulative effect is to threaten, undermine, constrain, humiliate or harm another person or their property, reputation, self-esteem, self-confidence or ability to perform.*

**What is not bullying:** acceptable office banter, a tough or demanding boss, expressing differences of opinion, a manager who shouts at or criticizes all of his/her employees, a critical co-worker.

Negative comments or actions that are based on a person's:
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Legally protected status.

This is considered harassment.

BullyingOnline.Org
What bullying may look like in the workplace

**Women versus Men**

- Sixty-nine percent of bullies were men
- Sixty percent of targets were women
- Women bullies target women 68% of the time

**Overt versus Covert**

- Overt: yelling, humiliating, aggressive, sexual
- Covert: relational aggression, online, manipulative

The Sociopath Next Door by Martha Stout; WorkplaceBullying.Org
Overt/Covert Bullying Examples

**Language:** cursing, yelling, threatening, rumors or gossip, belittling, criticizing

**Attitude:** finger pointing, slamming things, throwing things, posturing body language, intimidation, excluding/isolating, glaring looks, pestering, spying, stalking

**Behavior:** withholding information/resources, constantly changing work, guidelines, establishing impossible deadlines, undermining work, assigning unreasonable duties/workload, unwarranted punishment, work equipment tampering
The Why

1. Bully/ies threatened by target’s technical skills
2. Bully/ies abusive-toxic personality/ies
3. Target is not a political game player
4. Bully/ies threatened by target’s popularity with others
5. Target perceived as weak
6. Single instigator convinced group to mob target
7. Bully/ies are noticed by higher ups; promotions depend on willingness to aggress
8. Bullying is rewarded at the workplace; experimentation encouraged
9. Group did the bullying & became out of control
10. Target deliberately provoked attacks upon self
Target personality characteristics

- Independent
- More technically skilled than their bullies
- Better liked, have more social skills, and may have greater emotional intelligence
- Are ethical and honest
- Are non-confrontational
Bully Personality Traits

The Screaming Mimi
The Two-Headed Snake
The Constant Critic
The Gatekeeper
The Attention Seeker
The Wannabe
The Guru
The Sociopath

Anton Hout, founder of [OvercomeBullying.org](https://OvercomeBullying.org), identifies these eight bully types.
The Social Relationship

Polsky’s Diamond

Leader

Lieutenant

Members

Status Seekers

Scapegoats

‘Cottage Six: The Social System of Delinquent Boys in Residential Treatment’ by Howard W Polsky
What can you do if...

You are being targeted or see it happening to someone.
You recognize yourself as a bully.

You manage others,
You work in HR

WorkplaceBullying.Org
Your Employee Assistance Program

Call toll-free or visit us on the web
24 hours a day/7 days a week
Thank you!

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