



Advice - Dealing with Bullying and Harassment

1. Recognise that bullying does go on and that its effects can be profoundly damaging and very costly both to those individuals concerned, as well as to your organisation.
2. Do not assume that 'no complaints' means there are no problems.
3. The ultimate responsibility for engineering change in the workplace lies with each employer to ensure that effective measures are in place to deal with this unacceptable behaviour in order to facilitate the creation of a healthy culture in which the bully will not thrive.
4. Look at contributory aspects to workplace bullying, i.e. organisational culture, styles of management, consultation process, job design and workflows, performance expectations, composition of workforce, inadequate staffing levels, large workloads and increased work pressures, workplace layout, behaviour of clients, levels of communication, level and nature of training, performance management, lack of mutual respect.
5. Introduce stress audits and communicate to staff a genuine wish for dignity at work. Seek their views and provide a listening atmosphere.
6. Formulate and establish a separate policy and procedure for dealing specifically with workplace bullying that makes it known to all staff that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated - eliminate fear and uncertainty by offering alternative, simplified, confidential channels for complaints through the introduction of specialist trained Harassment Advisers.
7. Ensure that grievance procedures are effective and that there is a consistent application of all organisational policies/procedures. Regularly monitor, review and amend these policies in order to keep pace with change.
8. Recognise that whatever the facts of the case, the target of a bully believes that they have a problem that needs addressing and provide practical help and support for them whilst inquiries are underway.
9. Whatever the circumstances, the support of the following is essential: senior managers, line managers, personnel managers and officers, occupational health officers, union representatives, employee counsellors, contact officers or harassment advisers.
10. Provide specialist training for these key staff members and awareness raising seminars for all staff.