

Incivility, harassment and violence at work

Violence is never part of the job

Troy Winters
Canadian Union of Public Employees


1

Overview

Module 1
Misunderstandings, incivility, and conflict

Module 2
Block 2: Bullying and harassment


Module 3
Block 3: Sexual harassment, domestic violence, & workplace violence



2

Module 1

Misunderstandings, incivility, and conflict




3


What is a respectful workplace?

A workplace in which all stakeholders combine organizational regulation and self-regulation regarding interpersonal conduct to maximize respect and civility experiences and to both minimize and constructively address incivility, harassment, and violence.

This operates on a continuum of a 10-factor escalation model:



Misunderstanding | Incivility | Conflict | Covert psychological bullying | Overt psychological bullying | Physical bullying | Discrimination based on protected grounds | Psychological sexual harassment | Physical sexual harassment | Physical violence



4

Misunderstanding

10-factor respectful workplace continuum

What is it?

- Miscommunication between two employees that results in one feeling wronged

Examples

- An employee interprets a statement from another employee as something that is offensive

5

What are misunderstandings?

One of the biggest challenges with misunderstandings is that only one party (the perceiver) is aware there is a concern.

6

It seems so simple but...

When left unchecked, a misunderstanding can fester and turn into something that can result in acts of incivility, like rudeness.

7

Be aware of misunderstandings

Be curious: Do you have the facts and understand the intentions?

Give the benefit of the doubt: Could you have misheard?

Check in on your feelings: Are you feeling hurt or defensive? Are you tired or stressed about other things going on in your life?

8

Take accountability for misunderstandings

A

Awareness

A

Accountability

A

Action

Don't jump to conclusions: There could be a rational explanation or other perspective that deserves investigating.

Take responsibility for your interpretation: What is it about what you heard that is bothering you.

Accept what you can control: Your behaviour.

Do not avoid the conflict: Create the opportunity where both parties could be aware there is an issue to resolve a potential conflict.



9

9

Take action on misunderstandings

A

Awareness

A

Accountability

A

Action

Keep an open mind: It is a possibility that you may have misheard

Act quickly: Address the concern as soon as possible with the other party in private

Seek to understand: What you heard may be easily explained by seeking clarification

Communicate: Use effective communication skills, remain calm, and avoid accusations that cause defensiveness



10

10

Before addressing a misunderstanding

STOP

Take a pause



Wait for the right time and place



Have an open mindset



11

Incivility (AKA Disrepect)

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- Act of rudeness to a peer
- rude or unsociable speech or behaviours considered to be inconsiderable, impolite or offensive

Examples

- Being short with another employee
- Checking emails and sending texts during meetings
- Ignoring co-workers
- Demonstrating frustration with co-workers

Incivility is defined by a person's frame of reference



12

12

Self tips for preventing incivility at work

Be polite and respectful.

Be self-aware. Your conduct and comments may be hurting someone else.

Don't let your stress translate into aggression

STAND UP against rudeness, incivility, harassment and bullying.

REPORT harassment and violence to your manager



13

Rudeness in the workplace

How do you know when a person in your workplace has been rude to you?

Rude • ness

Can be defined as **low-intensity, deviant behaviour** that can negatively affect others.

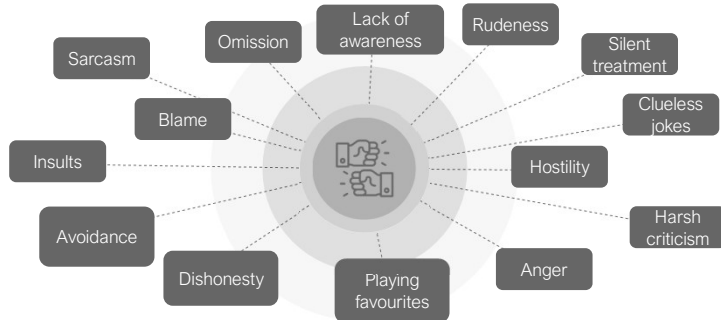
- It can range in level of severity.
- Most of us don't consciously determine when someone has been rude.
- Our unconscious brain is a filter.
- We know if we feel a flash of emotional pain.



Rudeness and incivility and disrespect at work can result in a low moral standard of conduct that, in turn, makes harassment and bullying more likely.

14

What does incivility look like?



15

15

Incivility leading to harassment and violence

Shooting rampage had deadly echo

ERIN ANDERSEN >
OTTAWA
PUBLISHED JANUARY 11, 2000
UPDATED MARCH 23, 2018

[In April 1999, OC Transpo worker Pierre Lebrun arrived at his workplace with a gun and killed 4 co-workers.]

"...Mr. Lebrun had complained repeatedly about his co-workers teasing him over his speech impediment, and that he had once slapped a man in the face for mimicking his stutter on the job...."



16

Cost of incivility

Harvard business review did a poll of 800 managers and employees in 17 industries and found that...

- Performance ↓**
- Creativity ↓**
- Customers ↓**

- 78% reported declined commitment to the organization
- 48% intentionally decreased their work effort
- 80% lost work time worrying about the incident
- 63% missed work to avoid the offender
- 25% admitted to taking their frustration out on customers
- 12% said that they left their job

! Before they ever officially make it to the HR department, these behaviors have already distracted workers, sapped morale, and potentially boosted the turnover rate

17

Micro-skills for eliminating rudeness

- Acknowledge**
rudeness is NEVER Okay
- Confront**
Rudeness with Kindness
- Engage**
Someone you Trust to Help

18

Be aware of Incivility

A Awareness **A** Accountability **A** Action

Take inventory of your communication style: Do you tend to be aggressive, assertive, or avoidant or passive aggressive?

Be honest with yourself: Are your words, actions, and intentions aligned?

Put yourself in their shoes: How do you think your words and actions perceived by others? Incivility is ultimately defined by the receiver, not the sender

19

Take accountability for Incivility

A Awareness **A** Accountability **A** Action

Be proactive: Acknowledge that responsible, proactive leadership is essential for preventing the spiral of workplace incivility

Do not tolerate incivility: If you find yourself starting to make an excuse for why someone was disrespectful to you, ask yourself why.

Do the work: Develop the skills necessary to confront rudeness when it happens to us or others.

20

Take action on Incivility



Awareness

Accountability

Action

Set clear expectations: Define the kinds of behaviours you find disrespectful with the people you interact with.

Walk the talk: If there are behaviours you find rude, then don't engage in such behaviours yourself.

Ask for feedback: If our behaviour is perceived by another as being rude, stop it, acknowledge it, and correct it.

Confront incivility: When it happens, as quickly as you can, away from others. Do not ignore it.

21



21

Set the expectation for a kind culture

“ A seemingly small act of kindness or rudeness ripples across communities, affecting people in our network with whom we may or may not interact with directly. ”

Porath, Christine. Mastering Civility. Grand Central Publishing, 2016



22

Conflict

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- Verbal or email altercation or disagreement between two employees

Examples

- Argument between two employees

23



23

How do you know if conflict is unresolved?

Conflict can become a slippery slope if not resolved...

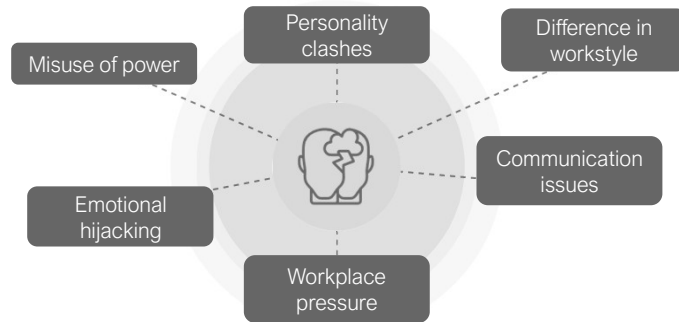
- It is often easier to ignore something or 'let it slide' in the hope that it will go away
- When conflict is discussed in teams, it is often addressed but not resolved
- It may be months or years later when the same issues resurface



24

24

Common causes of unresolved conflict



25

Why are conflicts not resolved?

Relief that conflict is being addressed leading to a dismissal of what needs to be done to prevent from resurfacing

Fear of what might happen when initiative is taken to resolve conflict

Uncertainty of how a discussion about conflict will be received

For conflict to be resolved it requires attitude and behaviour changes from those involved in the resolution conversations



26

Costs of unresolved conflict

- 7 **Absenteeism** – to avoid the conflict
- 6 **Presenteeism**– indifference on the job
- 5 **Turnover** – I quit
- 4 **Lost productivity** – wasted time
- 3 **Theft and sabotage** – getting even
- 2 **Opportunity cost** – lost potential
- 1 **Health and safety** – chronic stress

Unresolved conflict will deteriorate union solidarity, the worker experience and ultimately hurt those involved and the organization's culture if left unattended.



27

Calculating the cost of unresolved conflict

Unmanaged or **unresolved conflict** contributes to employee absenteeism that cost the Canadian economy an estimated **\$16.1 billion** in 2012, according to the Conference Board of Canada.



Unresolved conflict quick survey
<https://www.howatthronline.com/conflict/conflict.a5w>



28

Be aware of conflict

A

Awareness

A

Accountability

A

Action

Accept the facts: Conflict and contrast will always exist. The only thing that can change is how you feel about and deal with it.

Take responsibility: When it comes to conflict, everyone plays a role. Take responsibility for your part and own it.

Maintain a positive mindset: Conflict can create an opportunity; resolving it is good for business.



29

29

Take accountability for conflict

A

Awareness

A

Accountability

A

Action

Be curious: Ask questions and invite feedback on others' perceptions of the situation. Create an environment that allows for continuous open and honest communication.

Do root cause analysis: What is the real reason the conflict lingers and is not going away?

Make time for conflict: Leaders spend an average 30% of their time dealing with conflict, though often not resolving it.



30

30

Take action on conflict

A

Awareness

A

Accountability

A

Action

Engage your conflict management strategies: Take the course if you're unsure what these are.

Create a contract: Have all parties commit and sign off on an action plan.

Be vigilant: It can take constant vigilance to effectively resolve recurring patterns or concerns and to ensure people don't revert to old habits.

Follow-up: Check in on progress, adjust as needed, and address new conflicts quickly and effectively.



31

31

Micro-skills for resolving interpersonal conflict



Develop key basic conflict resolution skills



Accept that sometimes you might be wrong



Create an environment that deals with differences quickly




Fight fairly



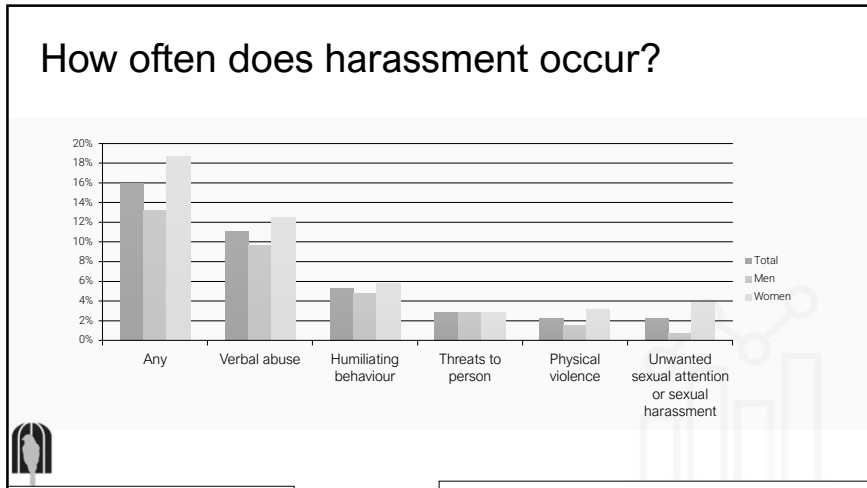
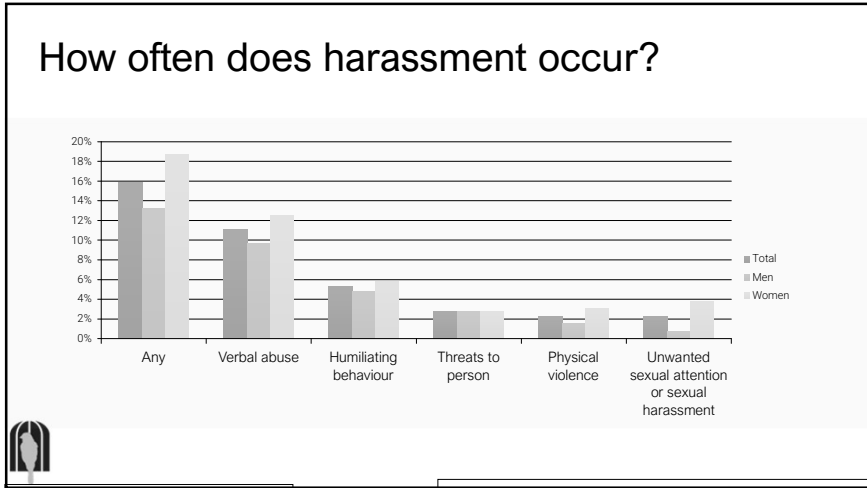
32

Module 2



Block 2: Bullying and harassment

33



Harassment means (SEA, 2021)

(i) any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person towards a worker:

(A) that either:

- (I) is based on any prohibited ground as defined in *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018** or on physical size or weight; or
- (II) subject to subsections (4) and (5), adversely affects the worker’s psychological or physical well-being and that the person knows or ought reasonably to know would cause the worker to be humiliated or intimidated; and

(B) that constitutes a threat to the health or safety of the worker; or

**religion, creed, marital status, family status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, colour, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, race or perceived race, receipt of public assistance, gender identity*

36

Harassment means (SEA, 2021)

(ii) any conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person towards a worker that:

- (A) is of a sexual nature; and
- (B) the person knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome;



37

37

Harassment

(4) To constitute harassment for the purposes of paragraph (1)(l)(i) (A) (II), either of the following must be established:

- (a) repeated conduct, comments, displays, actions or gestures;
- (b) a single, serious occurrence of conduct, or a single, serious comment, display, action or gesture, that has a lasting, harmful effect on the worker.

(5) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(l)(i)(B), harassment does not include any reasonable action that is taken by an employer, or a manager or supervisor employed or engaged by an employer, relating to the management and direction of the employer's workers or the place of employment.



38

38

In the regulations...

39

39

Harassment

3-25(1) An employer, in consultation with the committee, shall develop a policy in writing to prevent harassment that includes:

- (a) a definition of harassment that includes the definition in the Act;
- (b) a statement that every worker is entitled to employment free of harassment;
- (c) a commitment that the employer will make every reasonably practicable effort to ensure that no worker is subjected to harassment;



40

40

Harassment

36(1) An employer, in consultation with the committee, shall develop a policy in writing to prevent harassment that includes:

- (d) a commitment that the employer will take corrective action respecting any person under the employer's direction who subjects any worker to harassment;
- (e) an explanation of how complaints of harassment may be brought to the attention of the employer;



41

41

Harassment

36(1) An employer, in consultation with the committee, shall develop a policy in writing to prevent harassment that includes:

- (f) a statement that the employer will not disclose the name of a complainant or an alleged harasser or the circumstances related to the complaint to any person except where disclosure is:
 - (i) necessary for the purposes of investigating the complaint or taking corrective action with respect to the complaint; or
 - (ii) required by law;



42

42

Harassment

36(1) An employer, in consultation with the committee, shall develop a policy in writing to prevent harassment that includes:

- (g) a reference to the provisions of the Act respecting harassment and the worker's right to request the assistance of an occupational health officer to resolve a complaint of harassment;
- (h) a reference to the provisions of The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code respecting discriminatory practices and the worker's right to file a complaint with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission;



43

43

Harassment

36(1) An employer, in consultation with the committee, shall develop a policy in writing to prevent harassment that includes:

- (i) a description of the procedure that the employer will follow to inform the complainant and the alleged harasser of the results of the investigation; and
 - (j) a statement that the employer's harassment policy is not intended to discourage or prevent the complainant from exercising any other legal rights pursuant to any other law
- (2) An employer shall:
- (a) implement the policy developed pursuant to subsection (1); and
 - (b) post a copy of the policy in a conspicuous place that is readily available for reference by workers.



44

44

Covert psychological bullying

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



Misunderstanding Incivility Conflict Covert psychological bullying Overt psychological bullying Physical bullying Discrimination based on protected grounds Psychological sexual harassment Physical sexual harassment Physical violence

What is it?

- Omission of a peer from activities

Examples

- Scheduling a team meeting or event but not inviting one of the team members

45

45

Overt psychological bullying

10-factor respectful workplace continuum


Misunderstanding Incivility Conflict Covert psychological bullying Overt psychological bullying Physical bullying Discrimination based on protected grounds Psychological sexual harassment Physical sexual harassment Physical violence

What is it?

- Name-calling in person or online, known as cyber bullying

Examples

- Spreading rumours about another employee
- Teasing another employee



46

46

Physical bullying

10-factor respectful workplace continuum


Misunderstanding Incivility Conflict Covert psychological bullying Overt psychological bullying Physical bullying Discrimination based on protected grounds Psychological sexual harassment Physical sexual harassment Physical violence

What is it?

- When one's physical body or physical acts create a feeling of overpowering for another person

Examples


- Preventing a person from leaving a room by standing in the doorway
- Standing over an employee who is sitting




47


47

Who are the harassers and bullies at work?


 A variety of factors cause some employees to harass and bully others, including:




Organizational status



Psychological composition



Previous victimization



48

48

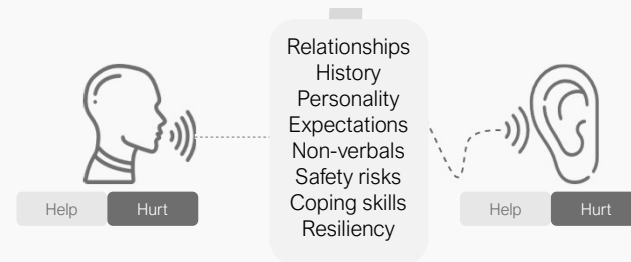
Some employers facilitate these behaviours

- 1 Deficiencies in workplace design.
- 2 Deficiencies in leadership behaviours.
- 3 Socially exposed position of the victim.
- 4 Low moral standard in the organization.



49

Interpersonal behavioural impact



50

What is not workplace harassment

Remember: (5) For the purposes of [this act] harassment does not include any reasonable action that is taken by an employer, or a manager or supervisor employed or engaged by an employer, relating to the management and direction of the employer's workers or the place of employment.

The normal and reasonable exercise of supervisory and management rights and responsibilities.

Differences of opinion.

Minor disagreements between an employee and another person.

Isolated incidents of rudeness.



51

Tips for preventing harassment and bullying

- Align respectful workplace programs with mental health strategy.
- Put respectful workplace reporting into the OHS management program.
- Use an evidence-based methodology to design a respectful workplace strategy.
- Measure respectful workplace programs' impact and results.
- Provide training for leaders on mental injuries and how to detect, intervene, and investigate respectful workplace events.
- Make respectful workplace policy and procedures easy to read and understand.
- Leverage online training to train all employees in respectful workplace policies, procedures, and self-advocating skills annually.
- Have senior leadership set cultural expectations around values and civility.



52

Suggestion for stopping bullying/harassment

Victims of bullying need to have the knowledge and skills to cope with bullying and to advocate for themselves in order to prevail.

Employee coaching for increasing self-advocacy:

Learn the different types of bullying and harassment, to prevent rationalizing inappropriate behaviour as being okay.

Being prepared and having a support system ready in case you observe or are a victim of bullying or harassment can give you confidence to go through the process required to confront an offender.



53

Stand up for the targets of harassment

Bystander Effect was identified in the 1960s when Catherine Genovese, a New York City woman, was repeatedly attacked and eventually murdered

When several people observe a need for help, their perceived personal responsibility is reduced.

Each one of us needs to become an UPSTANDER by speaking out against the misconduct immediately.



54

Discrimination based on protected grounds

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- Poor treatment such as the use of racial pejorative terms to describe a peer

Examples

- Calling another employee by their racial background or slang phrase
- Prejudicing another employee based on race



55

55

Human rights and prohibited discrimination

Human rights laws aim to protect historically disadvantaged groups from discrimination based on their personal characteristics.

Adopted into health and safety
(remedies are different)

*religion, creed, marital status, family status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, colour, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, race or perceived race, receipt of public assistance, gender identity



56

Tips for creating a respectful workplace

Evaluate the impact of respectful workplace training on employees' ability to self-advocate. Don't assume that having a policy is enough.

Provide all leaders with the training they need to confront bullies and harassers who are on the fringe of or are actively bullying or harassing an employee.

The end goal is to ensure that every leader has the knowledge, skills, and a plan to confront at-risk behaviours.



57

Micro-skills for preventing harassment and violence

MICRO-SKILLS FOR PREVENTING HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE



Approach with a fair mind



Address problem behaviour



Agree on go-forward strategy



STAND UP for targets



Don't be a BYSTANDER

The company policy (and the law) requires you to report incidents of workplace harassment and violence to company management.



58

58

Employees and leaders

Most provinces under OHS put an obligation on employees and leaders.

- 1 Read, understand and enforce your company policy.
- 2 Watch for and report incidents of harassment and violence.
- 3 Protect your co-workers and yourself from harassment and violence.
- 4 Strongly encourage and model polite, civil behaviour.



59

Module 3

Sexual harassment, physical & domestic violence



60

60

What is workplace violence?

“violence” means the attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury. –
Sask Employment Act



Over 20% of Canadian workers have reported being victims of violence at work.

61

Psychological sexual harassment

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- Making sexually inappropriate or demeaning comments to a co-worker
- Unwanted sexual attention

Example

- Asking an employee for sexual favours in exchange for work preference



62

62

Physical sexual harassment

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- Touching a co-worker who is not a consenting partner in a sexual manner

Examples

- Unwanted touching of another employee
- Prolonged hugging



63

63

Workplace sexual harassment

Vexatious comments and conduct that is based on gender, gender identity or sexual orientation; and unwanted sexual advances.



64

Sexual harassment and PTSD

The consequences of sexual harassment can include decreased productivity, loss of job, decreased income, and impaired psychological and physical well-being.

Evidence from empirical studies shows that victims often exhibit post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms



65

Coaching tips for victims of sexual harassment

It is important to provide this coaching to the victims, do not assume that they know or they may feel safe to ever report it.

- ① **Document it**
- ② **Make it clear it there is zero tolerance**
- ③ **Talk to HR**
- ④ **Make a change**



66

Physical violence

10-factor respectful workplace continuum



What is it?

- The intentional use of physical force or power against another employee

Examples

- Throwing an object at another person with the intention to hurt



67

67

Factors that increase the risk of violence

- **Patient, client and student characteristics**
- **Environment**
- **Staff(ing)**
- **Organizational policy and education**



68

Patient, client and student characteristics

- History of violence or aggression;
- Clinical conditions such as substance abuse and emotional disorders;
- Head injuries;
- Deinstitutionalization of people who need support and care.



69

Environment

- Inflexible rules and management policies and attitudes towards staff;
- Overcrowding;
- High noise levels;
- Patient or client area.



70

Staff

- Understaffing;
- Working alone;
- Staff relationships and presence of conflict;
- Attitudes towards violence or aggression;
- Behaviour of staff including body language and tone.
- Staff Relationships



71

Organizational Policy and Education

- Lack of preventive policies or lack of enforcement of policies;
- Failure to enact emergency procedures;
- Lack of education aimed at reduction of workplace violence;
- No control measures;
- Lack of employer/supervisor support.



72

Legislation: SEA section 8

3-8 Every employer shall:

(d.1) ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that the employer's workers are not exposed to violence with respect to any matter or circumstance arising out of the workers' employment;

3-9 Every supervisor shall:

(c.1) ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that all workers under the supervisor's direct supervision and direction are not exposed to violence at the place of employment;



73

Legislative Duty re policy statement on violence

3-21(1) An employer operating at a prescribed place of employment where violent situations have occurred or may reasonably be expected to occur shall develop and implement a written policy statement and prevention plan to deal with potentially violent situations after consultation with:

- (a) the occupational health committee;
- (b) the occupational health and safety representative; or
- (c) the workers, if there is no occupational health committee and no occupational health and safety representative.

(2) A policy statement and prevention plan required pursuant to subsection (1) must include any prescribed provisions.



74

Updates

- Changes to The Saskatchewan Employment Act (Act) will require that all workplaces in Saskatchewan implement a policy statement and prevention plan (PSPP) to eliminate workplace violence by May 17, 2024.
- This applies whether an employer or a workplace is in a high-risk industry or not.



75

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

1. Raise the profile of the issue

Post CUPE's "It's not part of the job" poster on union notice boards. We also have stickers and buttons you can order.

2. Empower your members

Make sure they know their rights and understand the importance of reporting incidents – no matter how small. Remind them their union will be there for them.



76

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

3. Put it on the agenda

The employer has a responsibility to ensure a workplace free of violence. It's our job to make sure they fulfill that obligation. Put the issue as a standing item on the agenda of health and safety committee meetings. If you don't have a committee, establish one. If that isn't enough, put it on the agenda for labour-management meetings, too.

4. Empower your health and safety committee

CUPE representatives on your joint health & safety committees have a big role to play in identifying workplace hazards that increase the risk of violence. Make sure they have the tools they need.



77

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

5. Provide training to your activists

Your health and safety committee can't tackle this on their own. Make sure your local executive, stewards and other activists have the skills they need to help address concerns in the workplace.

6. Survey your members

The worst incidents of workplace violence are easy to spot, but your members can also be subject to incidents of smaller aggressions, harassment and violence that can go unreported. CUPE has tools to help you find out where and how your members are experiencing violence at work.



78

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

7. Conduct a workplace inspection

Noticed a spike of violent incidents? Your committee should conduct an inspection. We have a tool for that.

8. Review the employer's policies

Employers develop policies to address a lot of workplace matters. If yours has a policy on violence prevention, make sure it works for your members. CUPE has a guide that will help.



79

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

9. Put it on the bargaining table

Review your collective agreement and make sure you have the best possible language to address workplace harassment, violence and related issues like staffing levels and working alone.

10. Partner with your employer

Once your employer understands the seriousness of the issue, you might be able to work together. Consider partnering on training, communications to employees, and communications to the public (for example, using prominent signage) that lets people know that aggressive and violent behaviour will not be tolerated.



80

12 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIGHT VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

11. Lead by example

Conduct union business, including meetings, with respect and solidarity. CUPE's Equality Statement and Code of Conduct can help.

12. Campaign with community allies

Pressure governments to increase funding and restore public services. Staff shortages increase the risk of workplace violence.



81

Considerations for workplace risk assessments

- Training in the recognition and reporting of risks and violence incidents or threats.
- Provisions for accessing security and policing assistance.
- Workplace movement patterns.
- Procedures concerning elevated violence risks such as money handling, working alone and travel.
- Facility design, including access points, lighting, locks, exits, washroom safety and communication systems.
- Signage.
- Protocols for field workers.



82

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is as any form of physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, including financial control, stalking and harassment. It occurs between opposite- or same-sex intimate partners, who may or may not be married, common law, or living together. It can also continue to happen after a relationship has ended.



83

Prevalence of Domestic Violence

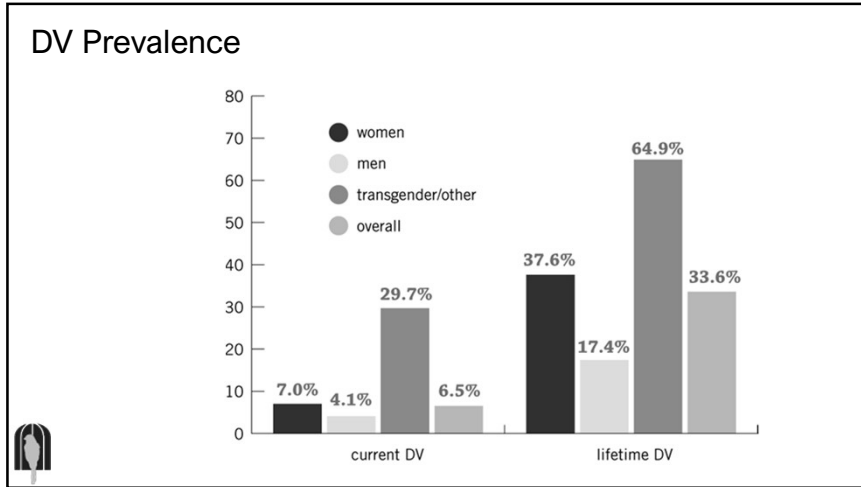
- One third of all respondents (33.6%) had experienced DV in their lifetime
- **37,6% of women have experienced DV once in their lifetime**
- Female, transgender, and Aboriginal respondents, those with disabilities, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual had higher rates
- Rates consistent with other large Canadian surveys



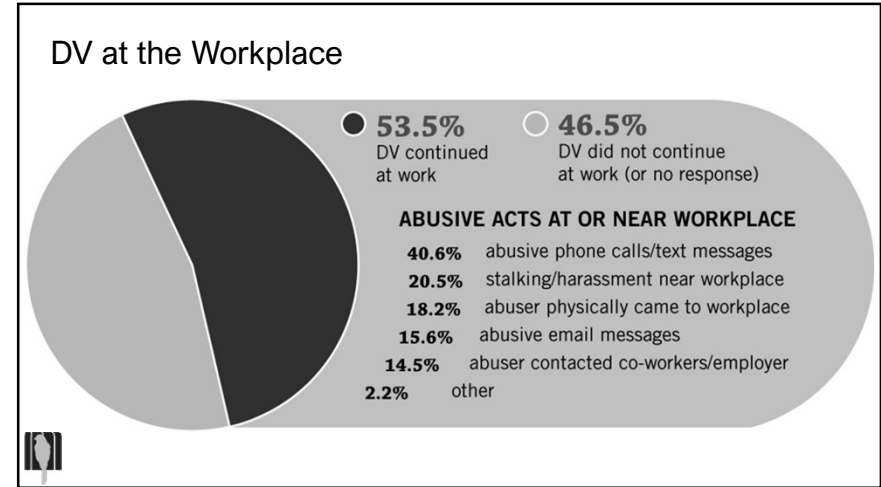
84

CAN WORK BE SAFE WHEN HOME ISN'T?

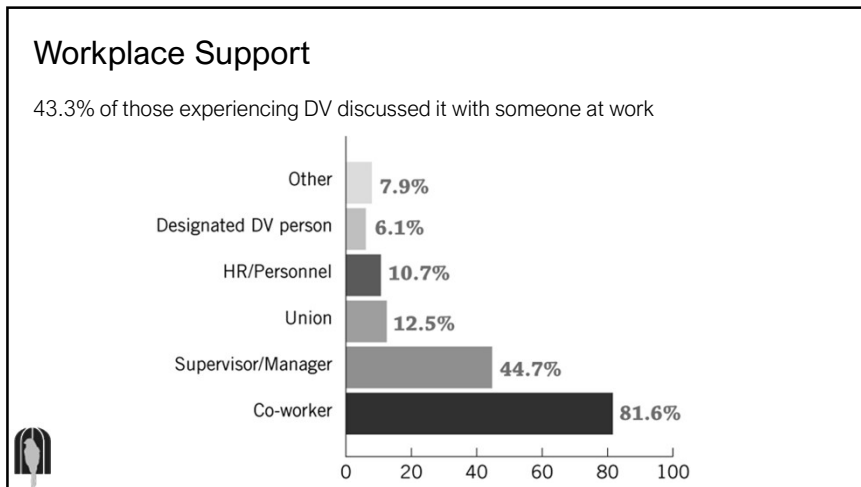
Canada's First National Survey on the Impact of Domestic Violence in the Workplace



85



86



87

- ### Signs of domestic violence
- Physical injuries
 - Using drugs and/or alcohol to cope
 - Uncharacteristically late or absent from work
 - Disruptive visits in the workplace
 - Change in job performance
 - Sensitivity if people ask about home life
 - Sudden signs of anxiety, fear, social isolation and/or emotional distress
 - Excessive phone calls, reluctance to respond to phone messages
 - Sudden appearance of gifts

88

What to do about domestic violence

Report – any sign of domestic violence to your manager or supervisor and follow up in writing.

Engage – with your co-worker: “I am concerned about you. Are you ok? Is someone hurting you? Can I help?”

Focus on safety – Be supportive but refer your co-worker to a manager or supervisor immediately so that a safety plan can be prepared, and professional supports can be obtained.

Support programs in place – be aware of local community resources.



89

Coaching tips for support

These tips are for leaders while they are supporting an employee who has experienced sexual abuse in the workplace.

Do not judge

Encourage to stay connected

Respect boundaries

Help them reach out to supports

Do not question their feelings or experience



90

Domestic Violence Leave

From Sask Government:

- Interpersonal violence leave is a job-protected leave of up to 10 days in a period of 52 weeks for survivors of interpersonal or sexual violence to access supports or relocate to a new home.
- The 10 day leave can be taken as five employer paid days and five unpaid days. The leave can be broken down into days or hours as required. Only time spent away from work would be considered leave time.



91

Domestic Violence Leave

- Eligibility applies to an employee who is a victim of interpersonal or sexual violence or an employee who is a parent of a child who is a victim or an employee who is a caregiver of a victim of interpersonal or sexual violence and the employee requires time off work to:
 - seek medical attention for a victim with respect to a physical or psychological injury or disability caused by interpersonal or sexual violence;
 - obtain services from a victim services organization;
 - obtain psychological or other professional counselling;
 - relocate temporarily or permanently; or
 - seek legal or law enforcement assistance, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from the interpersonal or sexual violence.



92

Leveraging tools

These resources can be used to help plan and design measures to help support victims of domestic violence in the workplace.



This handbook aims to raise awareness about the prevalence and effects of domestic violence in the workplace.

