

BULLYING

And—you thought this was just a behavior of childhood!? Surprise! As a leader, begin to recognize bullying in individuals and groups. Learn successful methods to contain it quickly! To understand, appreciate, and perform positive leadership, it is important to know the difference between good vs. bad/positive vs. negative leadership behaviors.

Bullying in the workplace is common. Bullying is a misuse of power in human relationships that are aggressive intentional behaviors that hurt, injure, threaten, frighten, intimidate, embarrass, or cause discomfort and verbally demean others. The person receiving the bullying behavior usually has done nothing to cause the bullying response. The bullying efforts of others are often in response to another person's positive behavior or actions that are not seen by the group/others as very exciting, interesting, or currently known acceptable behavior(s). Yet, individuals who seek to inform, help, or positively change a less-than-desirable situation are outwardly demeaned/bullied by others who cannot seem to hear ideas different than those in place.

Therefore, bullying is usually physical, verbal, emotional, harmful, and unfair. The expressions we hear too often from a bully are: "Big Deal"!, "Damn X!#*", "I Could Care Less!," "Whatever!" "Bully for her/him!", "Bullshit!" and "Who does she/he think she/he is? (Shall I go on?)

Open positive sharing in any situation that is not a current practice sometimes brings overt and covert derogatory behaviors and physical abuse to the person who shares. Comments and writings related to defamation and threats of physical abuse are not uncommon. As a leader, it is critical to recognize the positive and negative behaviors of others. It is important to recognize and immediately stop bullying behaviors exhibited by any person(s) due to the possibility of causing another person to experience social and community ostracism.

Leaders who use bullying tactics think they represent themselves as a "strong leader" by showing punishing prowess toward another person who shares new or different ideas. The truth is, the only thing accomplished is a confirmation of inappropriate leadership behaviors. Know this--Acceptable leaders support positive growth and possible change in a situation in which they are the supposed leader.

Most Common Detrimental Bullying Tactics:

Narcissistic Bullying---Self-Centered, decreased empathy, superiority complex, a narcissism that encourages putting others down, regardless of the other person's intended contributions or positive efforts toward success.

Verbal & Written Bullying---Name-calling, verbal rumors, and conversation meant to demean a person—especially when the person is absent. Relentless hidden insults are intended to belittle, mock, ridicule, demean, and hurt a person. Defamation of character (written or stated) appear from specific and anonymous authors. The statements and threats target how a person looks, behaves, or attempts to be informed and helpful.

Emotional Bullying---Ostracizing by spreading rumors and lies. Secrets or unnecessary aspects of a person's life are exposed and involve attempts at manipulating the thoughts and impressions of others.

Physical Bullying---A physical domination. It includes theft, physical behaviors of pushing, shoving, kicking, punching, fist fighting, poking, tripping, stealing, biting, property damage, etc.

Cyberbullying---A verbal threatening or harassing behavior through technology—cell phones, email, etc.

PREVENTION & CONTROL: A leader's strong understanding of bullying behaviors and commitment to not allowing or participating in bullying is the most effective prevention. Written non-bullying protocols are important. Prevention, recognition, firm curtailment through a written policy against bullsh behaviors, and disciplinary action for bullsh behaviors are necessary.

Anti-Bully Protocols enforced by an effective leader encourage all persons to be:

1. Supported and safe in the sharing of their ideas.
2. Respected by all others through listening and clarifying information.
3. Sustained as a contributor of information by refraining from personal defamation.

Carolyn Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.