

THE ELEPHANT IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE: *ADULT-ADULT BULLYING*

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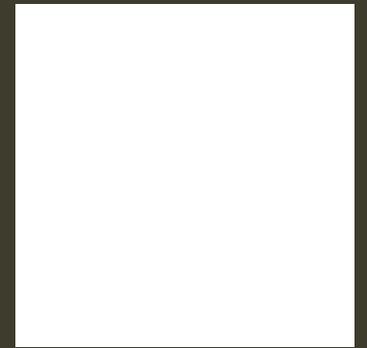
NORMS FOR OUR WORK TODAY

- **Actively listen and fully participate**
- **Seek application**
- **Be willing to hear this message**
- **Respond to signal for attention**
- **Render cell phones, texting and email useless for 75 minutes**

ANSWERS FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

- 1. What is adult-adult bullying?**
- 2. Who are the bullies in the schoolhouse?**
- 3. When bullies are women – what is relational aggression?**
- 4. What can leaders do about adult bullying?**
- 5. What can the organization/district do about adult bullying?**
- 6. What strategies can we use to intervene when bullying occurs?**

WHO IS IN THE ROOM?



HISTORY OF BULLYING AS AN ISSUE IN THE WORKPLACE

Study in 2010

- 9% of workers currently experiencing bullying
- 26% have been bullied in the past but not now
- 15% witnessed other workers being bullied
- 50% have had no experience with bullying

MY JOURNEY

- 1949-1967... Farmers' Values in the 1950s & 60s
- 1967-1976... Domestic Violence Ages 17-25
- 1976..... Donahue Show on Battered Women
- 1973-1977... Miss Murray at Boardman School
- 1986-1999... Workplace Bullying – Boss as Bully – GM as Target
- 1993-1995... Dissertation on Women School Leaders and Their Lives

MY JOURNEY (CON'T)

- 2000-2008... Teachers as Bullies in Elementary School Settings
- 2008.....First MEMSPA Conference Session
- 2008-2010... Client as Bully
- 2011.....Theory of the Impact of Visible Book Covers
- 2012-2017... Workplace Bullying – Boss as Bully
Teacher Bullying of Beginning Principals...Sometimes Secretaries

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Workplace bullying is the repeated, heart-hammering mistreatment of an employee by one or more employees through acts of commission or omission manifested as: verbal abuse; behaviors – physical or nonverbal – that are threatening, intimidating, or humiliating; work sabotage; interference with production; exploitation of a vulnerability - physical, social or psychological; or some combination of one or more categories. This bullying behavior results in a toxic work culture.

Source: The Workplace Bullying Institute

WHY DOES BULLYING HAPPEN IN THE WORKPLACE?

- Isolation
- Scarce resources
- People mix
- Historical response of the employer when reported
 - Bullying is often rewarded
 - Reports of bullying are treated with indifference

BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE WILL CONTINUE UNLESS...

- **There is a change in the environment**

or

- **There is a change in the organization's response**

THE 21ST CENTURY VERSION OF HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

As psychological abuse, bullying causes:

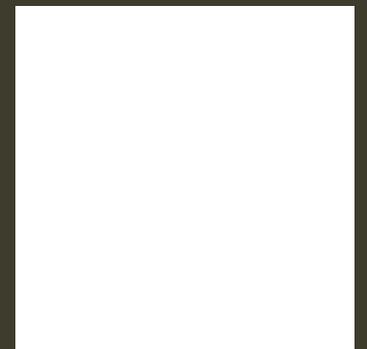
- Prolonged stress which causes health-related issues
- Loss of social support and increased isolation
- Fear
- Disengaged workers
- Economic harm

All bullying is about control

- 1/2 happens out in the open
- 1/2 happens behind closed doors

Bullies never apologize for their behavior

**TARGETS ARE NOT
VICTIMS**



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What are examples of bullying in YOUR schoolhouse or school district?
- How does this information ring true for you?

PROFILES OF BULLIES

- **The Screaming Mimi**
- **The Constant Critic**
- **The Two-headed Snake**
- **The Gatekeeper**

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIORS

- Over-controlling and autocratic
- Sarcastic, cutting and demeaning
- Silent treatment, cold shouldering and excluding
- Gossip, rumors and misinformation
- Sabotage and undermine
- Intimidating and threatening
- Sometimes physical behaviors

PROFILES OF TARGETS

The person who is...

- independent and refuses to be subservient
- more competent
- well liked by others
- ethical and honest, who believes in the good of others
- not political

WOMAN-WOMAN BULLYING IS RELATIONAL AGGRESSION

The Queen Bee

- The bully who buzzes from place to place undermining and manipulating others.

The Middle Bee

- The go-between who spreads gossip or stands by as others do so.

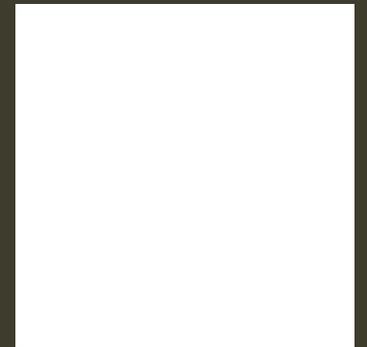
The Afraid-to-Bee

- The woman who retreats into passivity and is a target for aggression.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN BULLYING

- **62% of bullies are men**
- **38% of bullies are women**
- **Women bullies choose women to target 82% of the time**

**SIMILARITIES OF
BULLYING TO
SEXUAL HARASSMENT
& DISCRIMINATION**



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- **What examples of relational aggression do you see with women in your school or district organization?**
- **What steps have you taken to address this form of bullying?**

IMPACT OF BULLYING IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE

- Leads to toxic culture for both adults and children
- Unaddressed bullying exposes the school to risk of violence

WHAT LEADERS CAN DO

- Look within ourselves
- Respond to a request...do not be indifferent to requests for help
- Separate the bully and the target
- Document and escalate based on facts about behavior
- Do not respond with “Go and work it out yourselves”
- Never make the target solve the problem s/he didn't cause

WHAT THE EMPLOYER CAN DO

- We understand what bullying is
- We know it exists here
- We want to address it
- We want to create board policies and enforcement procedures which apply to everyone (only 3% of U.S. organizations have such policies and procedures)
- This bullying behavior is declared unacceptable

USING SKILLS WE ALREADY HAVE

- Be observant and listen
- Do not be indifferent to a target's request for help
- Establish a set of agreed-upon norms or collective commitments up front
- Provide feedback using SBI template from the Center for Creative Leadership
 - S – Situation
 - B – Behavior (focus on behavior, not personality)
 - I – Impact of the behavior on...
- Reassert the needs of the school **OVER** the bully's needs

USING SKILLS WE ALREADY HAVE (CON'T)

- A Bug & a Wish
- Hard conversation with the Bully using POP for planning
 - P – Purpose – WHY
 - O – Outcomes – WHAT
 - P – Procedures – HOW
- Describe observed (or heard about) behaviors
- Focus on content, pattern and relationship
- Provide written follow-up to Bully after the conversation

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What are your next steps based on today's learning?
- What can you do between now and the end of the semester? Next semester?

SUMMARY

- Attached bibliography
- Vital Smarts
 - www.vitalSMARTS.com
- The Work Doctor
 - Workplace Bullying in Schools Project
 - Workplace Blueprint Tailored for School Systems
 - www.workplacebullyinginschools.com
 - 360.656.6630

WHY HAVE WE IGNORED THIS ISSUE FOR SO LONG?

- Remember: Bullying in the schoolhouse is domestic violence when the abuser is on the payroll!
- Consider supporting the Healthy Workplace Bill in which it will become unlawful to subject an employee to an abusive work environment.
 - 28 legislatures have introduced this bill
 - Michigan IS NOT one of the 28 states

PLEASE...

- Join me in creating and sustaining civil and caring cultures in our schools in which our students can learn, teachers can teach, and staff can work!
- Remember...silence is permission! Ignoring bullying means it is condoned.
- Adult-to-adult bullying in the schoolhouse requires our courage, integrity and intentionality and, in Jill Jackson's words, BACKBONE!

THANK YOU!

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