

Top Ten Things a Firm Should Do to Create a Civil Workplace:

(From *The Cost of Bad Behavior**)

WHAT'S A LEADER TO DO?

- 1. Set Zero-tolerance Expectations**
- 2. Look in the Mirror**
- 3. Weed Out Trouble Before It Enters Your Organization**
 - a. Thorough reference checks; don't leave it to recruiters.
 - b. See how candidates act with wait staff if they are taken to lunch.
 - c. Tell candidates how important civility is in the organization, and provide examples of some of the consequences that have occurred to those who were uncivil. (Hopefully some people will weed themselves out.)
 - d. Use the team interview approach, in case some people pick up a "vibe."
 - e. In keeping with a behavioral interview approach, ask candidates to provide examples of some of their civil behaviors.
 - f. Approach all candidates with measured cynicism in this area.
- 4. Teach Civility**
- 5. Take Complaints Seriously**
 - a. It takes a lot of courage for an employee to report a complaint
- 6. Don't Make Excuses for Powerful Instigators** (List of common excuse phrases.)

Re dealing with a "power elite clique":

- 7. Make sure your own behavior is civil** (seek out feedback, videotape yourself, hire a coach to shadow you...)
- 8. Clearly communicate your expectations re civility and consequences** in numerous ways.
- 9. Trounce on incidents with no flinching**, regardless of special skills of offenders.
- 10. Make sure consequences are adequately averse.**
 - a. When it is clear there is NO immunity, regardless of one's value to the organization, the behaviors of others will change.
- 11. If necessary, remove the key offender**, which will bring the others in line.

Identify and Stop Workplace Bullying

From *Harvard Business Review's* "Management Tip of the Day," August 24, 2011

- **Confront.** Hold a series of impromptu meetings with the suspected bully and victims to gather evidence quickly. Make these gatherings out-of-the-blue, rather than planned in advance, to ensure you get the straight story.
- **Analyze and present.** Use an external framework to evaluate whether this is a true case of bullying. Document the evidence rather than relying on hearsay.
- **Expose.** Since bullies use fear of consequences as their main weapon, it's critical to expose their behavior. By outing bullies and labeling the behavior, you can take away their power.

WHAT'S AN OFFENDER TO DO?

1. **Start with the ABCD's**
 - a. **Antecedents:** What has led to your incivility? Any particular buttons?
 - b. **Behaviors:** What are the specific uncivil ones you demonstrate.
 - c. **Consequences:** What is reinforcing your bad behavior?
 - d. **Direction:** What you can do about it.
2. **Gather data**
 - a. Ask people directly for feedback.
 - b. Get surveys.
 - c. Keep a journal.
 - d. Videotape your meetings to see and hear yourself as others do.
 - i. Watch it with sound and image.
 - ii. With just image.
 - iii. With just sound.
3. **Find a great coach**
 - a. They're less self-serving than your own self-help would be, and can gather anonymous feedback.
4. **Dig Deeper on Your Own**
 - a. Keep a journal of when you are at your best and worst. See if you note patterns.
 - i. Time of day?
 - b. Notice if you disparage others whom you believe treat others unfairly?
 - i. This form of incivility, too, has consequences.
 - ii. If you hear of incidents of misbehavior, take notes, ask a few questions, and try to talk directly with the offender.
 - iii. Being proactive can help you to feel about yourself and could get others on track to more civil behavior knowing others are watching and care.
5. **Enlist the help of colleagues**
 - a. Use soccer referee hand signals at meetings to alert one another to certain behaviors
 - b. Penalize yourself a certain amount of money when by paying it to someone who points out your doing a habit you are trying to break.
6. **Four essential behaviors:**
 - a. **Listen fully:** Turn off cell/text/email during meetings and focus on the speaker.
 - b. **Increase sincere use of key words:** Please, thank you, excuse me, and I'm sorry.
 - c. **Take less credit, give more:**
 - i. In the short term, you'll come across as more civil. In the short, your generosity will build social credits.
 - d. **Think before you speak:**
 - i. The brief lapse could curtail and impulsive, uncivil comment or response.
 - ii. Physiologically: The amygdala portion of the brain doesn't get "hijacked;" the neocortex can do "it's thing."

* C. Pearson and C. Porath. *The Cost of Bad Behavior: How Incivility is Damaging Your Business*. New York: The Penguin Group, 2009.