



The Safety Zone

The Newsletter of the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust

Bullying Basics

Here's what you need to know

Ruth Namie, PhD, and Gary Namie, PhD, internationally recognized researchers, say the majority of bullies are opportunistic and terrorize with impunity – and that 80 – 90 percent of bullies are bosses. In their book, *The Bully at Work*, they've identified broad categories of bullies, cautioning that these categories are not rigid and that bullies can adopt any tactic at any time to accomplish their goal:

- **Constant Critic.** An extremely negative, nit-picking, perfectionist, this kind of boss or coworker is a whiner, complainer, fault-finder and often a liar. He or she masks personal insecurity with public bravado and aims to destroy confidence and encourage self-doubt.
- **Two-Headed Snake.** This Jekyll/Hyde boss or coworker plays favorites and has a passive-aggressive, indirect and often dishonest style of dealing with people and issues. He or she pretends to be nice while sabotaging you with "friendliness." This serves only to decrease resistance to giving information that may later be used against you. With a smile that hides naked aggression, he or she assassinates reputations.
- **Gatekeeper.** Most transparent of the controllers. Needs to establish self as "one up" on you, to order you around or to control your circumstances. Control of all resources (time, supplies, praise, approval, money, staffing and help) is the most important aspect of work. Approval must be solicited.
- **Screaming Mimi.** Stereotypical bully. Controls through fear and intimidation. Emotionally out of control. Impulsive. Explosive. Threat of physical violence becomes issue. Wants to instill sense of dread. Overbearing. Self-centered, insensitive to needs of others. Very worried about being detected as an imposter. Bombast masks incompetence.
- **The Workaholic.** This type of boss or coworker never seems to stop working, texting, tweeting or e-mailing



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news & notes

TOLL ON TARGETS

Bullies often target coworkers who exhibit a desire to cooperate and have a non-confrontational interpersonal style. According to a 2012 poll of more than 650 bully targets, the top five reasons they were bullied in the workplace are:

1. Bully threatened by target's technical skills.
2. Bully's abusive/toxic personality.
3. Target not a political game player.
4. Bully threatened by target's popularity with others.
5. Target perceived as weak.

One of the most detrimental aspects of workplace bullying is the impact on bullied targets' health and well-being. The Workplace Bullying Institute's 2003 survey shows the top five health-related issues that targets experience as a result of being bullied are:

1. Anxiety, stress, excessive worry.
2. Loss of concentration.
3. Disrupted sleep.
4. Feeling edgy, irritable, easily startled and constantly on guard (paranoia).
5. Stress headaches.



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Bullying Basics, *continued*

– even on weekends or late at night – making you feel guilty for having personal time.

Now that you recognize the general shapes and practices that bullying can take, do your part to prevent such bullying in your workplace.

Here's what you can do:

- Treat everyone at work with respect, and encourage coworkers to do the same.
- Know and comply with your organization's policy against bullying.
- Learn conflict resolution techniques so that you can deal effectively with bullying behavior.
- Never ignore bullying; report all incidents of bullying right away. If your supervisor is involved, report the situation to HR.
- Cooperate with investigations into bullying episodes.
- Work with counselors and HR to restore working relationships after a bullying event has been resolved.

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Got News?

Do you have news that needs to be circulated or have a subject you would like for us to address? Let us know by emailing the newsletter editor at tcreel@arkhospitals.org.

AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust Program is administered by Risk Management Resources (RMR), a division of BancorpSouth Insurance Services, Inc. www.bxsi.com. In March 2003 the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust was established. The program provides workers' compensation coverage to AHA members.

Risk Management Resources, the administrator for the program, assists members in the areas of claims management, safety and loss control. Tina Creel, President of AHA Services, Inc., is the Group Manager of the Trust and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the overall operation of the Group Trust.