



# EAP SUPERVISOR ENHANCEMENT NEWSLETTER

August 2024



## DEER OAKS PRESENTS

### Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series

*How to Lead a Team that Provides Great Customer Service*

Date: Monday, October 28, 2024

Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM CST

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### Table of Contents

Workforce Violence:  
For Managers • P. 2

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Benefits of a Healthy  
Work Culture • P. 4

---

Ask Your EAP! • P. 5

# WORKFORCE VIOLENCE: FOR MANAGERS

Workplace violence, the threat of violence against workers, can encompass a variety of hazards, such as verbal abuse, physical assaults, and even homicide. Workplace violence doesn't always stay in the work environment and can occur either at the workplace or outside it.<sup>1</sup>

## Types of Workplace Violence

Workplace violence can be overt or covert. Overt violence includes such things as obvious displays of physical, verbal, or sexual violence; covert violence includes less obvious behaviors, such as spreading rumors, pranking, isolating others, and withholding information.

## Different Types of Violence

### Physical Violence

- Assault
- Physical abuse
- Murder

### Psychological Violence

- Threat and verbal abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Bullying
- Mobbing
- Harassment

### Sexual Violence

- Sexual harassment
- Unwanted sexual attention
- Stalking
- Rape



## Workplace Violence Proximity Levels

*Type I:* External perpetrator (thefts, vandalism, assaults by a person with no relationship to the workplace)

*Type II:* Client/Customer (physical or verbal assault of an employee by a client/family member or customer)

*Type III:* Employee to employee (physical or verbal assault from an employee or former employee; includes harassment, stalking, and bullying)

*Type IV:* Domestic violence (personal relationship)

## Workplace Violence Statistics

Two million Americans reportedly are victims of workplace violence per year, with 1,000 killings taking place in job settings every year. Global trends suggest the issue spans across countries, work settings, and occupational groups.

Statistics on workplace violence are lacking, as research funding is often not available. Recent statistics are primarily available for developed countries, though broad surveys have noted global trends such as those noted above.





## What You Can Do to Prevent and Respond to Workplace Violence

- Develop a proactive preventative plan and incorporate this into a comprehensive workplace violence policy.
- Familiarize yourself and your staff with the warning signs of workplace violence.
- Train key staff on the preventative measures, plan, and appoint designated individuals to manage workplace violence situations.
- Secure the workplace: ensure the work environment is safe and revisit the procedures regularly with all staff to remind them of protocol (information should be accessible and updated regularly).
- Provide immediate medical evaluation and treatment after any incidents, and report violent occurrences to the police.
- Ensure victims are informed of their legal right to prosecute perpetrators.
- Debrief the incident with staff members. Encourage staff participation in the ongoing development of prevention plans.
- Offer post-traumatic counseling services and debriefing to help workers recover from a violent incident, including those not involved. Workplace violence affects the whole office.
- Investigate all violent incidents and threats, note trends in violent incidents by type or circumstance, and use these trends to inform policy and procedure changes.
- Beware of warning signs: Workplace violence can stem from minor incidents. It is important to note changes in behavior and the frequency and impact of behaviors on the staff. Stress is an important factor that can cause disruptive behavior, though not all disruptive behavior leads to workplace violence, and each situation is contextual and subjective.

### Reference

1. U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). (2002). OSHA fact sheet: Workplace violence. Retrieved May 23, 2024, from <https://www.osha.gov>



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Source: Dolan, E., & Schuette, B. (Ed.). (Updated 2024 [Ed.]). *Workplace violence: For managers* (B. Schuette, Ed.). Raleigh, NC: *Workplace Options*.

# BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY WORK CULTURE

The benefits of a healthy workplace culture are innumerable. Some of the most astounding benefits that a strong culture has to offer include:

- **Highly engaged and productive teams**—Research shows that when employees view their organization's culture positively, they are 3.8 times more likely to be engaged at work; in fact, a staggering 89 percent of "highly engaged" employees claim that the culture in their organization is positive.<sup>1</sup> Some of the markers that are associated with increases in employee engagement rates include workplace connections<sup>2</sup>; clear communication around organizational goals, objectives, and plans for implementation or execution<sup>3</sup>; community, inclusivity, and teamwork; learning and development opportunities<sup>4</sup>; frequent feedback; commitment to wellbeing and wellness programs; and above all, trust in senior management.<sup>5</sup>
- **Improved retention and recruitment**—In a study conducted by Deloitte, organizations that had the strongest workplace cultures were much more likely to attract and keep talent, including 59 percent less attrition.<sup>6</sup> Given that corporate culture is now more important than compensation or material benefits when employees decide whether to work for a certain organization, organizations with high employee satisfaction rates and employee experience stories testifying to a strong workplace culture are likely to have a larger pool of potential hires to choose from compared to their competitors, and are likely to hold on to new talent for the long-term—a needed perk amongst mounting evidence that suggests that Gen Z, on average, is spending significantly less time at a given job compared to older generations.<sup>7</sup>
- **Healthier employees**—While toxic work cultures are linked to poor health outcomes, the opposite is also true. Research shows that employees who think positively of their workplace culture tend to have lower heart rates and blood pressure, as well as stronger immune systems.<sup>8</sup> As this makes employees less likely to get sick, organizations that tout healthy workplace environments also observe 41 percent reductions in absenteeism and presenteeism.

- **Fewer accidents, injuries, and mistakes**—In addition to fewer absences and less sick days, founder and CEO of Choose People, Kris Boesch, reports that organizations with people-centric or "people-first" cultures boast 26 percent fewer mistakes, accidents, and work-related injuries.<sup>4,9</sup>
- **Greater customer satisfaction and higher profitability**—When employees feel healthier and happier in the workplace thanks to a positive work culture, research shows that such feelings tend to rub off on the customers they interact with, making for an improved customer service experience. Consequently, PwC insights reveal that organizations with strong cultures are a whopping 89 percent more likely to report higher customer satisfaction.<sup>10</sup>—but not only that, they are also more likely to report revenue increases up to four times that of their competitors (with an average increase of up to 682 percent for organizations with thriving cultures compared to just 166 percent for organizations with poor cultures).<sup>11</sup>
- **Organizational resiliency and adaptability**—Managers almost unanimously agree that a positive workplace culture creates more resilient teams.<sup>12</sup> In fact, a strong company culture is responsible for helping nearly 70 percent of organizations adapt better to the pandemic.<sup>13</sup> According to new insights from PwC, 67 percent of senior leaders cited a strong culture as the tool that helped change initiatives happen and helped them to maintain and drive successful outcomes.<sup>14</sup>

This article was excerpted from the Workplace Options (WPO) Blog post, "Tackling Toxic Workplace Environments" at <https://www.workplaceoptions.com/tackling-toxic-workplace-environments>. References are included within the original article.

*Source: Fournier, E. (2023, April 26). Benefits of a healthy work culture. In Tackling toxic workplace environments (B. Schuette, Ed.). Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options (WPO). Retrieved April 28, 2023, from the WPO Blog: <https://www.workplaceoptions.com/news-media/blogs>*

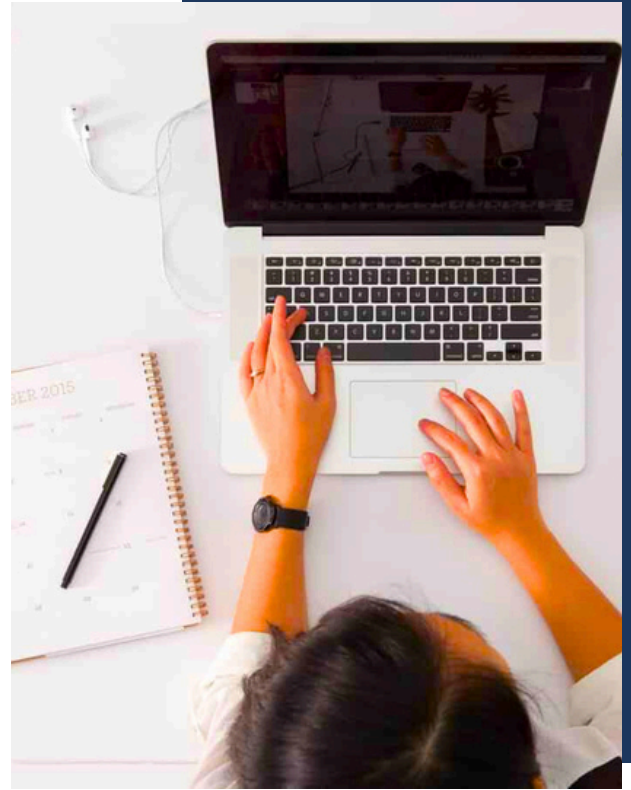
# ASK YOUR EAP!

**Q. I read how passionate employees are more enthusiastic and tireless in the pursuit of goals. Is there a way to help employees become passionate about the work they are doing, and can the EAP play a role in assisting me to make it happen?**

A. You can help employees be more passionate about their work by increasing their understanding of the big “why, what, and how”: Why am I doing this job? What’s its importance? How do my tasks contribute to the big picture? Start by sharing the company vision and goals. Go beyond the new employee orientation. Focus on how each employee’s work directly fits within the big picture. Doing so ensures employees understand how work flows throughout the organization and how their contribution impacts other departments and the final product. Give thought to these issues before presenting them to employees. A powerful maneuver is to let your employees participate in key meetings where they can see these internal customers. Finding other ways for employees to engage with other departments can also be rewarding. These steps bring strong context to what they do. Brainstorming ideas with the EAP can reveal to you their empathy and organizational knowledge, helping you find new ways to inspire your employees. Additionally, celebrating employees’ milestones highlights these connections and emphasizes the importance of their contributions.

**Q. As the new head of a work unit, I’m concerned about gaining acceptance. I understand that people will scrutinize me for a while. However, are there specific actions that more severely damage a manager’s credibility? Can the EAP guide me?**

A. New managers anxious for management’s approval and being recognized as admired leaders may forget that having happy, productive employees is key to your goal. Consider how the following behaviors can damage newly forming relationships, making them difficult to form 1) micromanaging; 2) staying hidden behind closed doors; 3) building personal relationships with one or two workers while ignoring the rest of the group; 4) failing to communicate transparently enough so employees aren’t wondering what’s going on; 5) showing favoritism when delegating assignments; 6) ignoring team input; 7) appearing disinterested in employees personally (e.g., being “all business”); 8) making promises to the work group that you do not keep or that management will not approve (employees will likely be angry with you, not management, for the disapproval). Seek support from the EAP to reduce worry and anxiety in a new supervisory position. You will be less likely to engage in these missteps.



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