GuardingMinds @ WORK

Suggested Actions and Resources

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public.

Engage your employees to improve civility and respect

Putting civility and respect On the Agenda is easy with these resources. A workshop slide presentation and facilitator guide help you have a productive conversation with your team about this psychosocial factor and each of the relevant statements from the Guarding Minds at Work survey.

If this factor shows up as a relative strength in your workplace, have a team discussion to find out why they scored this factor higher than the national average. This can lead to appreciation and understanding of what is already good. Policies and processes can also be developed or refined to continue to support positive civility and respect.

If this factor has been flagged as an area of concern in your workplace, engage all stakeholders in discussion about which actions might provide the best solutions. You can use ideas from the list below to begin the conversation. When everyone contributes to improving psychological health and safety, the responsibility is shared, the outcomes are more effective, and the effort is sustainable.

Below are actions and resources related to improving civility and respect. This list does not contain every solution. There may be other ideas that you find or think of and want to try. However, these suggestions can help provide a strong and cost-effective foundation for addressing civility and respect.

The practical strategies come from research studies, have been recommended as best practices, or have been applied effectively in workplaces. The resources included here are free. You can also find excellent services available at a cost from a variety of reputable providers.

Once you have reviewed the actions and resources below, we encourage you to use the Action Planning process to help you think critically about which combination of free, paid, or internal resources will best meet the needs in your workplace.

Actions by statements

If there are specific civility and respect statements from your Guarding Minds at Work survey that you want to address you may want to consider one of the actions or resources provided directly under the statement below. More general actions and resources, relevant to civility and respect, are also included at the end.

1. **People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.**
    - Everyone in the workplace needs to recognize the unintended consequences of their actions, the assumptions they may make about the motives of others, and the ability to intervene in a

respectful and helpful way when they witness inappropriate behaviours. Psychologically Safe Interactions is a way to facilitate the development of a team agreement about how people will interact in the workplace and hold each other accountable.

- When everyone has a different idea of what treating people with respect and consideration is, there can be a lot of misunderstanding and conflict. By specifically engaging the team in deciding which behaviours are appropriate and which are inappropriate, the group can begin to hold each other accountable in a positive way. Some resources that can help you to do this are:
  Helping Troubled Co-workers
  Personal Development
- Teach mindfulness practice.
- Work with your team to establish questions to guide both behavior and language, such as "Is it true?", "Is it kind?", or "Is it necessary?"
- Create and enforce guidelines and a code of ethics detailing expectations for appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

2. Our workplace effectively handles conflict among employees.

- Effectively handling conflict means that steps have been taken to help employees resolve conflict themselves and for supervisors to intervene promptly if that is not successful. Conflict resolution needs to result in changed behaviours and leave all parties feeling optimistic about future.
- Approaches such as those found in Resolving Conflict were created to be psychologically safe.
- Engage your entire team in thinking about how they may unintentionally impact each other using Psychologically Safe Interactions.
- Some employees may struggle with workplace relationships. Ideas for Resolving Conflict at Work is for them.

3. People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.

- Not all treatment that employees see as unfair will qualify as discrimination under human rights legislation. But striving for inclusivity can increase the perception of fairness for everyone. Inclusivity and Discrimination provides a conversation framework to compare best practices against what exists in your workplace.
- Treating all employees fairly requires understanding their unique challenges and needs. Supporting Newcomers provides some tips and strategies that can help you do this.

4. Unnecessary conflict is kept to a minimum in our workplace.

- Train employees to communicate more effectively, improve their emotional intelligence, and resolve conflict on their own. Conflict, if seen as a difference of opinion, can be healthy and valuable. But when differences are approached as personal attacks or with anger, conflict can be unhealthy. Ideas for Resolving Conflict at Work can help improve self-awareness and healthy communication skills.

- Creating terms of reference with your employees about how they will interact and how they will respectfully hold each other accountable when one is not complying can keep unnecessary conflict to a minimum. Psychologically Safe Interactions provides a process for doing this.
- Creating a positive environment where people feel safe and respected can help build resilience among employees. Building Stronger Teams provides numerous resources to help improve team dynamics and communication.
- Processes are put in place to manage differences of opinion in a psychologically safe way, such as clear decision-making processes, agendas, or protocols for meetings.
- Manage conflict in an effective and timely fashion and ensure follow-up with all parties involved.

5. My workplace has effective ways of addressing inappropriate behaviour by customers, patients or clients.

- Work with your employees to develop a customer, client, or patient code of ethics along with a process to inform, enforce, and respond to any violations. For example: "We value your business. We value our employees. We expect our employees to treat you with civility and respect all the time. In turn we expect you to do the same for our employees. Failure to comply with our policies can result in removal from our property and refusal of service."
- Provide specific support and training for employees who are most likely to experience difficult behaviour or complaints during the course of their work. For example, from difficult customers, patients, or clients.

6. People at work show sincere respect for others' ideas, values, and beliefs.

- Give people a chance to develop a skillset that includes being able to speak up safely and effectively without offending others or compromising their own values or integrity. You can do this through coaching, mentoring, or training. Allowing employees to practice leading meetings or presenting can also be useful.
- For those who are more sensitive or shy, you may use some of the information in Protecting Ourselves Against Bullying to help.
- To help team members stay focused on the topic rather than on personalities or characteristics that may differ from their own and cause potential conflict, Facilitating Team Discussions provides tips and strategies that may be helpful for successful team discussions.
- Another way to teach employees to contribute to a psychologically safe workplace is to have them complete the free modules under Being a Mindful Employee.

Additional actions and resources

- Ensure that supervisors and managers are present, available, and in contact with employees to more easily discern and resolve problems.
- Use non-discriminatory language in all communications as well as training when teaching employees.
- Maintain employees' confidential information in all communications.

- Provide resources on civility and respect policy when recruiting, hiring, and orienting employees.
- Maintain your policies for disrespectful behaviour, but also allow for constructive problem-solving. Intervene in all instances of disrespectful behavior.
- Ensure formal investigation, documentation, and resolution of incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including inappropriate client, patient, or customer behavior.
- Consider dispute resolution alternatives. For example, ombudsperson, informal third-party intervention, formal mediation.
- Systematically review Policy Recommendations to see where opportunities exist to improve how they impact psychological health and safety.

Use this space to jot down additional ideas and suggested actions:

To consider which actions are most likely to result in the outcomes you desire, use the Action Planning process to guide your decision making and help you identify timelines, milestones, budgets, responsibilities, and measures of success.

Thank you to Workplace Safety and Prevention Services for their generous contribution to the development of these action items. For more tools and resources, please visit Think Mental Health.ca

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