

PROMOTING RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE

A workplace culture of respect encourages innovation and idea sharing, as well as staff well-being, satisfaction, performance, and productivity. But what does respect in the workplace look like? This bulletin provides suggestions on fostering a respectful workplace and explains why it is important for every employer.

Many businesses and organizations have a diverse population, which allows for a broader range of experiences, ideas, and insights. When working with a team of leaders, a group of employees, peers, or direct reports, it helps to be cognizant of respect and what it may mean to you and them.

Respect in the workplace means treating everyone with courtesy and fairness and valuing their contributions, beliefs, and ideas. It is about accepting people for who they are and acknowledging their unique qualities and skills.



Demonstrated ways of mindfulness and respect in the workforce

- Treating individuals with fairness
- Valuing the individual and their contributions, both small and large
- Creating a culture of empowerment and value
- Communicating expectations and goals with transparency
- Displaying manners and positivity without judgment
- Building an environment of trust and inclusivity
- Facilitating learner engagement through employee/employer meetings, in-services, and educational sessions

- Recognizing and interpreting body language to understand learner participation and comprehension of information
- Encouraging activity engagement and teamwork
- Reinforcing existing culture and promoting a sense of purpose
- Fostering autonomy and a mindset of growth

Adopting an initiative-taking approach to promoting workplace respect may also mitigate the risks associated with management liability (Sekera & Yocobian, 2019). Job satisfaction and the presence and support of managers and leaders may help decrease turnover. Rude behavior and/or diminished courteousness may also be viewed as disrespectful and add to high turnover (Akella & Lewis, 2019).

Leadership skills are often part of individual opportunities, cross-training, and mentoring. Train the trainer. Be a resource and mentor, and display transparency and respect within all areas of the organization. Real-time feedback and a realistic job preview may help increase motivation and productivity and decrease turnover. Allow shadowing of the job before starting employment to see if the job is the right fit and flow for the potential employee and the person who may be cross-training.

Using theoretical framing can boost productivity and improve interactions through employee feedback, helping them feel valued and respected. It is important to be open to the perspectives that matter most to the workforce. Effectively managing novice employees also demonstrates respect (Schroth, 2019). Employees want to feel appreciated, and providing meaningful feedback enhances their sense of worth. This mutual respect often leads to a workplace where valued employees attract others to join the team.

Summary

Cultivating a culture of respect in the workplace is essential for fostering innovation, enhancing employee satisfaction, and driving overall productivity. Organizations can create an environment where all employees feel valued and engaged by implementing strategies that prioritize fairness, clear communication, and inclusivity. Cultivating a respectful workplace also helps improve retention rates and attracts new talent, ultimately leading to a stronger and more cohesive team.

References

Akella, D., & Lewis, V. J. (2019). The modern face of workplace incivility. *Organization Management Journal*, 16(2), 55-60.

Sekerka, L., Yacobian, M.M. (2019). Respect as a moral response to workplace incivility. *Philosophy of Management* 18, 249–271. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40926-019-00113-0>

Schroth, H. (2019). Are You Ready for Gen Z in the Workplace? *California Management Review*, 61(3), 5-18. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125619841006>