

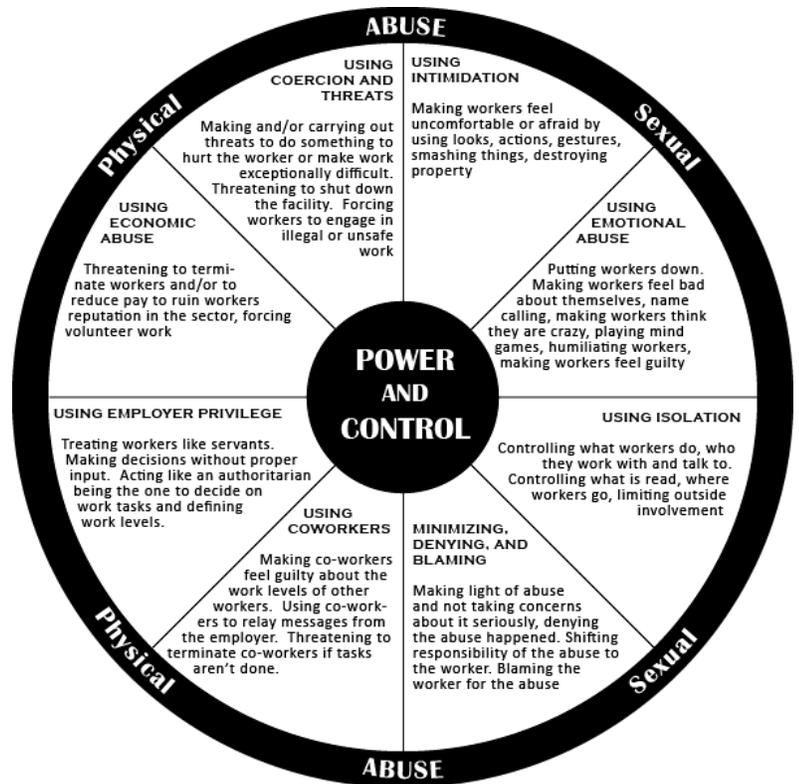
Workplace Bullying

What is workplace bullying?

Bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could 'mentally' hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.

What are examples of bullying?

It is important to note that the following is not a checklist, and only includes some examples of the ways bullying occurs in a workplace.



Examples include:

- Spreading malicious rumours, gossip, or innuendo.
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work.
- Physically abusing or threatening abuse.
- Removing areas of responsibilities without cause, and constantly changing work guidelines.
- Making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail.
- Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking.
- Assigning unreasonable duties or workload which is unfavourable to one person (in a way that creates unnecessary pressure).
- Criticizing a person persistently or constantly.
- Blocking applications for training, leave or promotion.
- Tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment.

How can bullying affect an individual?

People who are the targets of bullying may experience a range of effects. These reactions include:

- Shock.
- Anger.
- Feelings of frustration and/or helplessness.
- Increased sense of vulnerability.
- Loss of confidence.
- Low morale and productivity.
- Physical symptoms such as:
 - Inability to sleep.
 - Loss of appetite.
 - Stomach pains.
 - Headaches.
- Panic about going to work.
- Inability to concentrate.

What can you do if you think you are being bullied?

If you feel that you are being bullied, discriminated against, victimized or subjected to any form of harassment:

- Tell the person that his or her behaviour is not acceptable and ask them to stop. You can ask a supervisor or union member to be with you when you approach the person.
- Keep a record of events that have happened
- Remember, it is not just the character of the incidents, but the number, frequency, and especially the pattern that can reveal the bullying or harassment.
- Do not retaliate, you may end up looking like the perpetrator and will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation.

(Adapted from: [Violence in the Workplace Prevention Guide](#). CCOHS)

<http://socialscienceandhumanities.uoit.ca/workplacebullying/resources.php>

Scott, H.S. (2018). Extending the Duluth model to workplace bullying: A modification and adaptation of the workplace power-control wheel. *Workplace Health & Safety*, 66(9), 444-452. doi:10.1177/2165079917750934.