

What 4 things  
should you do  
when an employee  
says that they feel  
bullied?

# ABOUT US



Holistic HR is a HR Consultancy based in Worcester. We have retainer clients and offer training on various topics including bullying vs banter, harassment at work, EDI, and training on the updates regarding sexual harassment at work



Nicola set up Holistic HR after 20 years in HR, 2 children and a move from Watford to Worcester meant she had the opportunity to decide on what was best for her and her family. Passionate about Inclusion, and preventing bullying and harassment at work



## WHO IS THIS SESSION FOR?

- LINE MANAGERS
- PEOPLE WHO ARE NEW TO HR
- HR STAFF WHO ARE NEW TO DEALING WITH THESE ISSUES

# AGENDA



- Stats!
- Why do people bully?
- What sort of complaints are we receiving - discussion
- What do I do when the employee arrives in my office?
- What do I do next?
- Questions

**Outcome: You will have some practical tips to take away with you and put into practice.**

# How many people get bullied at work?

**30%**

US Workers experienced  
Workplace Bullying in  
2023

**19%**

British Employees stated  
they were victims of  
bullying in 2019

**4%**

British Employees stated  
they were victims of  
Sexual Harassment in  
2019

**8%**

British Employees stated  
they were victims of  
other types of  
Harassment in 2019

# Why do people bully others?

People bully because they do not understand others.

Instead of trying to understand they mock and marginalise groups so that they do not come into contact with them, do not feel uncomfortable due to their 'otherness' and therefore never have to make the effort to understand.



# What happens to the people who are bullied?

## What is the effect on them?

- They feel marginalised
- Low self esteem, mental health issues
- Affects other areas of their life too
- Employees may struggle to attend work, absence issues - which could then also impact them financially
- They may want to leave but struggle to find a new role as their self esteem is low
- This may also affect the morale of the rest of the team



**What sort of complaints are you receiving  
in your workplaces?**



Spreading  
rumours

Setting them up to fail

Making threats about job security  
or blocking someone's progress  
at work

Scapegoating

Aggressive behaviour

Name  
calling

Ignoring, isolating or  
excluding

Giving meaningless  
tasks

Belittling

# AN EMPLOYEE COMES TO US, WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY DO?

## Step 1

Listen! Without judgement.

If they are very upset - eg the incident has just happened then take them to another office, or for a walk - this can calm people down.

Find a quiet space

Have tissues!

Active listening - write notes and let them finish each point - avoid finishing their sentences, however tempting

Try not to agree it is a case of bullying at this stage, but you can empathise with what they are feeling. This takes practice.

Explain you'll have to act on this information. They may not want this, so make it clear whether they are 'just venting' or actually want to make a change. If the allegation is serious then you may have to take action, so let them know this.

# Step 2

If you have their agreement to take action then the next thing to do is to try to resolve this informally.

Speak to the other party and ask their perspective on what happened. They may not even realise that they have upset someone.

If this is the case then you can resolve by explaining the other perspective and they may realise what they said and agree not to do this again - ideal outcome!

You can also offer mediation between the two of them. This is a skill! You may have trained mediators in your organisation, if so use them! If not speak to the HR team and find out who could facilitate - external if necessary.

When you speak to the 'accused' remember that these people will have to work with each other after your meeting, so if possible use neutral language - 'it was noticed' 'I understand that this happened...'

# Step 3

Speak to HR!

If you are HR speak to the rest of your team! Remember to look after yourself too - the details of the allegation may not be nice, or may trigger you in some way, take a break if you need to.

If resolving the issue informally was ineffective then you will need to start a formal procedure.

Investigation meetings with all involved - accused, accuser and any witnesses. Make it clear they are private and confidential meetings.

If deemed necessary then move to disciplinary process - follow your policies with HR support.

Depending on the severity of the incident and the accused responses the disciplinary will result in a sanction

Alternatively the employee may wish to raise a grievance - in which case you would investigate as above.

# Step 4

Try to prevent this happening again.

The investigation and disciplinary process are hard for team members, don't want to keep going through that. Affects morale.

Implement anti bullying and harassment training

Have regular team meetings so you can gauge feelings

Run team building sessions

# To summarise...



1. Listen carefully to the employee
2. Resolve Informally
3. Formal process if necessary
4. Prevent re-occurrence

# CPD..

Try to improve your knowledge in the area further by:

- Finding your policy and reading it. If there are things you don't understand then ask your manager
- If you don't have a policy then start writing one - I will be putting one on the website soon
- There are a couple of blogs on my website
- ACAS and CIPD are good sources of information - up to date, if you google there may be links to old articles.
- Subscribe to HR News, People Management

Any  
questions?





# WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?





## NEXT STEPS....

WE OFFER TRAINING FOR ORGANISATIONS IN THESE AREAS - WE CAN RUN SESSIONS ONLINE FOR ALL OR PART OF YOUR STAFF GROUPS, OR WE CAN COME IN TO RUN A FULL DAY SESSION WITH HR, MANAGERS, AND EMPLOYEES OF ALL LEVELS.

WE ALSO HAVE SOME MORE WEBINARS COMING UP:

MAY  
21



Banter vs Bullying - what is the difference and when should you step in?

Online event

Tuesday, 21 May 2024 at 11:00 BST

JUN  
25



Sexual Harassment at work - get ready for changes in employment law

Online event

Tuesday, 25 June 2024 at 11:00 BST

FEEDBACK FORM INCOMING!

NICOLA CHARLWOOD

# HOLISTIC HR

[www.holistic-hr-consultant.com](http://www.holistic-hr-consultant.com)

[www.linkedin.com/in/nicola-charlwood-  
assoc-cipd-03865377](https://www.linkedin.com/in/nicola-charlwood-<br/>assoc-cipd-03865377)

07723 567700

