



Bullying

Introduction

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life, but define yourself”.

- Harvey S. Firestone

Agenda

- Recognize the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) Factor Description of Bullying
- Identify the Bullying Question on the DEOCS
- Recognize Bullying Indicators
- Recognize Bullying Outcomes
- Identify Strategies to Prevent Bullying

Factor Description (1 of 2)

An act of aggression by a military member or members, or Department of Defense civilian employee or employees, with a nexus to military service or Department of Defense civilian employment, with the intent of harming a military member, Department of Defense civilian, or any other persons, either physically or psychologically, without a proper military or other governmental purpose.

Factor Description (2 of 2)

Bullying may involve the singling out of an individual from his or her co-workers, or unit, for ridicule because he or she is considered different or weak. It often involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim. Bullying can be conducted through the use of electronic devices or communications, and by other means, as well as in person (Deputy Secretary of Defense Memo, 23 December 2015; DODI 1020.03, February 8, 2018).

Question on the DEOCS

Individuals in my workplace who are seen as “different” are targets of:

(Select all that apply)

1. Aggression
2. Abusive or malicious pranks
3. Active attempts to damage their reputation
4. Physical harm
5. Psychological harm
6. N/A

Bullying Indicators

- Individual(s) purposely excluded from activities/teambuilding events
- Evidence of suffering relationships between team members
- Individual(s) frequently reminded of small errors or mistakes in an effort to belittle them
- Members excessively teased to the point where they are unable to defend themselves
- Physical attacks or injuries

Bullying Outcomes

- Low individual and team commitment or morale
- Eroded mission readiness
- Low retention and high turnover of members
- Decreased trust and respect for each other
- Psychological injury(s) and extreme stress
- Physical injuries (abuse from others/self-harm)

Strategies to Prevent Bullying (1 of 5)

Create an environment that actively discourages bullying behaviors by:

- Prominently displaying options everyone can use to respond to or report bullying
- Publicizing official policies and procedures, including actions leadership takes towards those who engage in bullying
- Encouraging open discussions on bullying
- Educating members on the consequences of bullying

Strategies to Prevent Bullying (2 of 5)

- Clearly communicating your expectations that all interactions remain professional and respectful
- Establishing a buddy system that encourages personnel accountability
- Scheduling team-building activities on a regular basis
- Discussing supporting agencies eligible to receive reports and provide support to bullied individuals

Strategies to Prevent Bullying (3 of 5)

Incorporate a Strong Risk Management Prevention Strategy:

- Safely intervene immediately whenever you witness a bullying incident
- Monitor members for unexplained injuries, increased medical appointments, behavioral changes, declining grooming standards, negative demeanor, etc.

Strategies to Prevent Bullying (4 of 5)

- Model and encourage respectful behaviors toward all personnel
- Monitor, track, and evaluate your anti-bullying program through trend analysis (e.g. frequency of reports, DEOCS and focus group results, etc.)
- Encourage victims of bullying to report it immediately

Strategies to Prevent Bullying (5 of 5)

Reinforce zero tolerance policy through education, training, and awareness:

- Educate members on the elements of cyberbullying, including offensive text messages, images, and videos
- Encourage members to share their personal experiences of bullying to demonstrate how bullying can happen to anyone

Summary

When investigating bullying within the U.S. Military, clear patterns emerge. These patterns reveal that certain groups are more likely to perceive bullying in their units than others.

The DoD has indicated that those who engage in bullying (online or in the workplace) will be held appropriately accountable for their actions.

It is in every leader's interest to promote a safe, healthy, fair and dignified workplace where members are not bullied.