



U.S. Department of Defense

Factor Rating Interpretation Guide Workplace Hostility

What is Workplace Hostility?

Workplace Hostility measures the degree to which individuals in the workplace act in an angry or hostile manner towards others and focuses on the past three months. It includes behaviors such as insults, sarcasm, or gestures to humiliate a member as well as perception of others interfering with one's work performance or not providing assistance when needed.⁸

The following items are used to assess *Workplace Hostility* on the DEOCS using a four-point response scale from *Never* to *Often*.

How often does someone from your [unit | organization | Military Service Academy] ...:

- intentionally interfere with your work performance?
- take credit for work or ideas that were yours?
- gossip or talk about you?
- use insults, sarcasm, or gestures to humiliate you?
- not provide you with information and assistance when needed?
- yell when they are angry?

Why is it important?

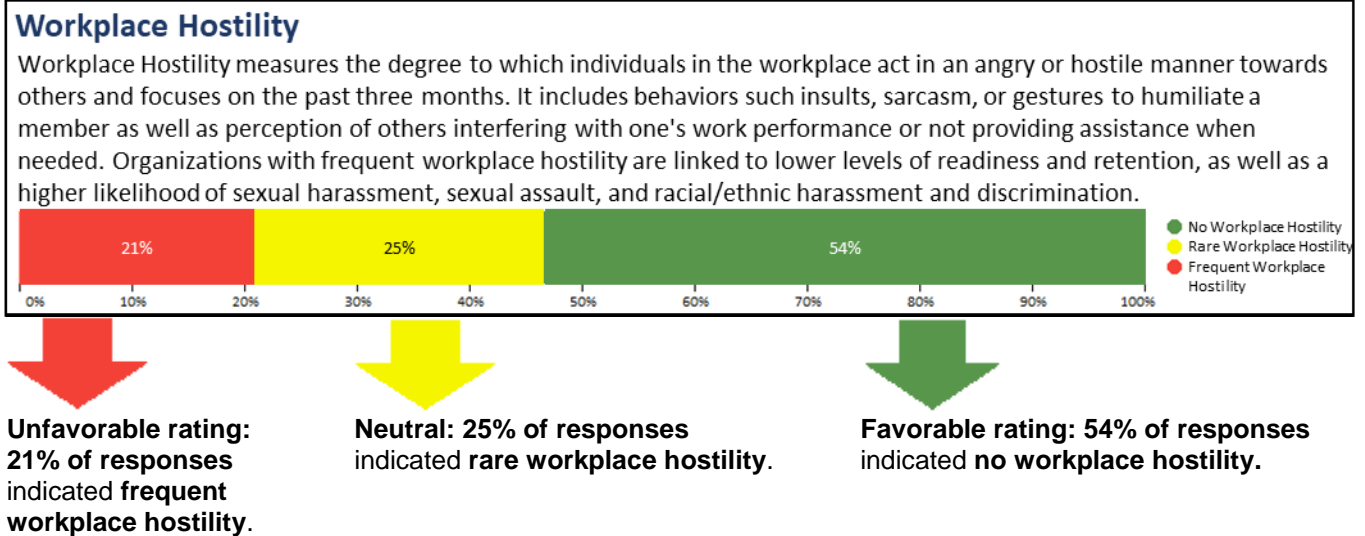
Studies consistently find that the presence of *Workplace Hostility* is associated with lower performance and readiness as well as an increase in turnover intentions.^{1,2,3} For example, a study that looked at healthcare workers found that *Workplace Hostility* has been proven to lower performance, increase absenteeism, and contribute to greater employee turnover rate and intentions.^{4,5}

In addition, the presence of *Workplace Hostility* is associated with an increased risk of sexual harassment.^{6,7} DoD research consistently finds that military personnel who experience *Workplace Hostility* are at significantly greater likelihood of also experiencing sexual harassment and sexual assault at the individual level.^{8,9} Beyond the individual level, levels of *Workplace Hostility* at an installation/ship emerged among the top 10 statistical predictors of installation level sexual assault rates, out of more than 20 climate and location-based risk factors.¹⁰

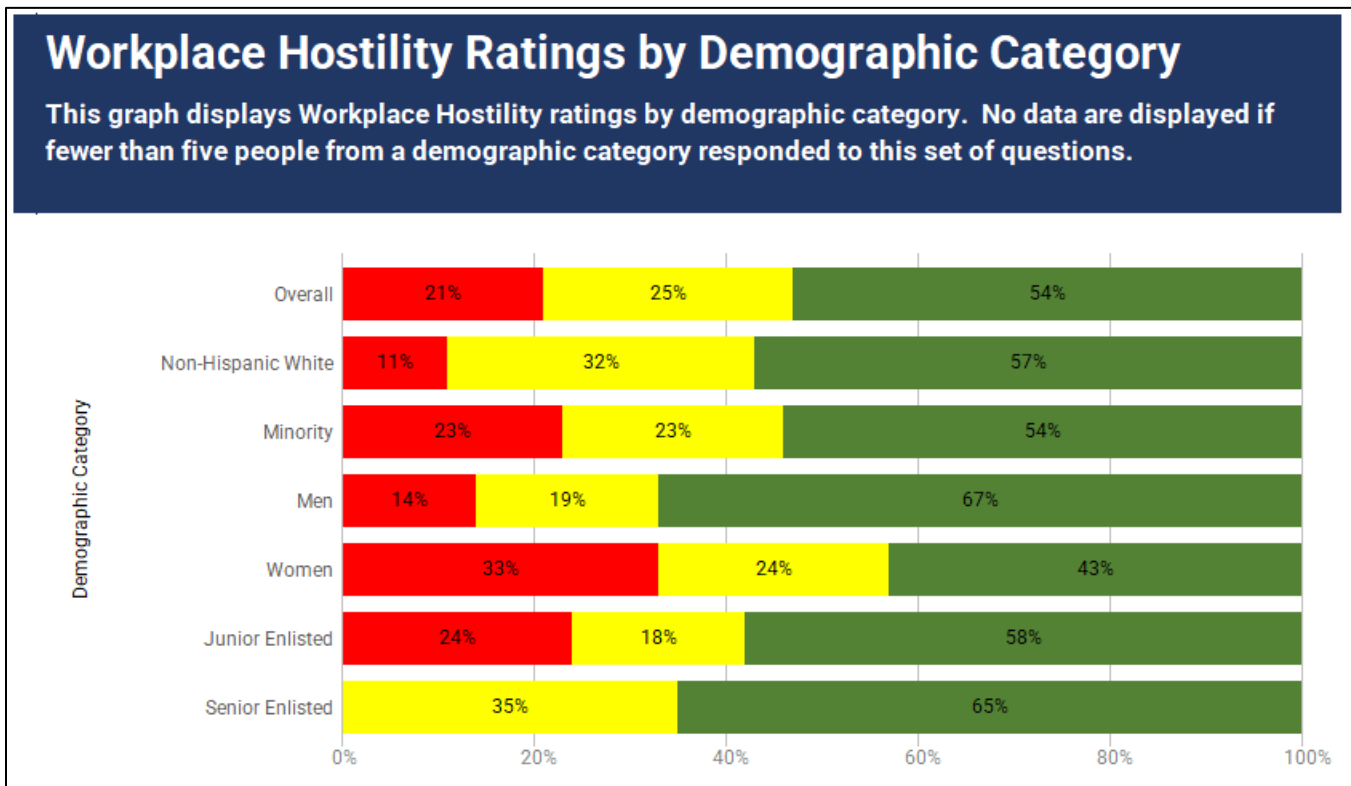
For more information on how to review your DEOCS results with these key outcomes in mind, please see the "Strategic Target Outcome Guide" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

How do I read my factor ratings?

The DEOCS dashboard displays results for *Workplace Hostility* in a stacked bar graph showing ratings for **Frequent Workplace Hostility**, **Rare Workplace Hostility**, and **No Workplace Hostility**. Because *Workplace Hostility* is a factor measured by multiple questions, you should interpret results as “X% of responses” (not participants). An example is shown below:



For the graph showing results by demographic categories, the percentages represent the percentage of responses from each demographic category that were unfavorable, neutral, or favorable.



The first bar will always show the overall results and will be the same percentages that are shown in the stacked bar graph. The next bars will represent various demographic categories

for your organization. These results can help determine whether some groups of people in your organization have particularly high or low perceptions of climate factors. In addition, you may have different categories than in the example above. If your organization did not have any participants from a particular demographic category or had fewer than five participants from a particular category, you would not see those categories in your graph. For more information on how the demographic groups are created, please see the “Data Overview” in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

In this example, the unfavorable ratings (marked in red) can be interpreted as:

- 11% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated frequent workplace hostility, while 23% of responses from minority participants indicated frequent workplace hostility;
- 14% of responses from men indicated frequent workplace hostility, while 33% of responses from women indicated frequent workplace hostility;
- 24% of responses from junior enlisted participants indicated frequent workplace hostility, while 0% of responses from senior enlisted participants indicated frequent workplace hostility.


The neutral ratings (marked in yellow) can be interpreted as:

- 32% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated rare workplace hostility, while 23% of responses from minority participants indicated rare workplace hostility;
- 19% of responses from men indicated rare workplace hostility, while 24% of responses from women indicated rare workplace hostility;
- 18% of responses from junior enlisted participants indicated rare workplace hostility, while 35% of responses from senior enlisted participants indicated rare workplace hostility.


The favorable ratings (marked in green) can be interpreted as:

- 57% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated no workplace hostility, while 54% of responses from minority participants indicated no workplace hostility;
- 67% of responses from men indicated no workplace hostility, while 43% of responses from women indicated no workplace hostility;
- 58% of responses from junior enlisted participants indicated no workplace hostility, while 65% of responses from senior enlisted participants indicated no workplace hostility.

You may also see trends over time for your *Workplace Hostility* unfavorable rating if there are previous 5.0 surveys with the same unit identification code (UIC) and the same commander/leader.

When applicable, trends over time are available in the dashboard by clicking on this icon: . They also appear in the PDF reports as a table. Even if your report includes trends over time, the results may not be comparable in certain circumstances. It is important to understand differences in roster size and roster composition at different time points as these items may impact comparability of trend results. Take a close look at the number of participants registered, surveys returned, and the response rate for any surveys for which trends are available to report; use caution when comparing trends over time if there are big differences in these numbers between surveys. Other things, such as deployments or changes in policy, may also make trends less comparable. For more information on factor rating trends, please see the “Data Overview” in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.



Finally, you may see an alert  for your *Workplace Hostility* ratings. This means that your unit's/organization's unfavorable rating for *Workplace Hostility* is **very high** compared to the other unfavorable ratings for this factor in your Service component. When applicable, this alert icon appears in the dashboard inside the "Risk Factors – Unfavorable Ratings" heading; click on the icon to see if *Workplace Hostility* is listed in the table. The alert icon may also appear in the *Workplace Hostility* section of the PDF reports. To identify whether your *Workplace Hostility* ratings receive an alert, cut-off scores were created by rank-ordering all unfavorable ratings for this factor within a Service component. If your unfavorable rating for *Workplace Hostility* is above your Service component's cut-off score, this icon will appear in your report. There are unique cut-off scores for each factor within each Service component. Because of this, you may notice that some of the factors for which you have an alert have very different ratings. For more information on how these alerts are created, please see the "Data Overview" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

How are my unit's/organization's ratings created?

Workplace Hostility ratings are created from the responses to six questions on a four-point *Never* to *Often* scale, as shown in the example below.

Workplace Hostility Questions	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
How often does someone from your unit or organization intentionally interfere with your work performance?	54% (15)	25% (7)	7% (2)	14% (4)	100% (28)
How often does someone from your unit or organization take credit for work or ideas that were yours?	61% (17)	21% (6)	11% (3)	7% (2)	100% (28)
How often does someone from your unit or organization gossip or talk about you?	50% (14)	29% (8)	21% (6)	0% (0)	100% (28)
How often does someone from your unit or organization use insults, sarcasm, or gestures to humiliate you?	86% (24)	7% (2)	7% (2)	0% (0)	100% (28)
How often does someone from your unit or organization not provide you with information and assistance when needed?	37% (10)	22% (6)	19% (5)	22% (6)	100% (27)
How often does someone from your unit or organization yell when they are angry?	36% (10)	46% (13)	18% (5)	0% (0)	100% (28)
	No Workplace Hostility	Rare Workplace Hostility	Frequent Workplace Hostility		Total responses 167
	$(15+17+14+24+10+10) / 167 =$ 54%	$(7+6+8+2+6+13) / 167 =$ 25%	$(2+3+6+2+5+5+4+2+0+0+6+0) / 167 =$ 21%		

The table above displays the percentage of responses (and number of responses in parentheses) for each question across the four response options (*Never*, *Rarely*, *Sometimes*, and *Often*). For the first question, 15 participants selected *Never*, this


represents 54% of participants that responded to this question ($15 / 28 = .536$ or 54%).


Note that percentages are calculated out of the total number of participants responding to that question and not the total number of participants taking the survey. Participants can skip questions, so you may notice that total responses to questions vary. In the above example, 28 people responded to the first question so all percentages in this row use 28 as the denominator. Only 27 people responded to the fifth question, so all percentages in this row use 27 as the denominator. In addition, factor ratings may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

- The **unfavorable** rating, named **Frequent Workplace Hostility**, is a combination of all responses of *Sometimes* and *Often* from the six questions.
 - For this example, two people selected *Sometimes* to the first question and four people selected *Often*. In addition, three people selected *Sometimes* to the second question and two people selected *Often*, six people selected *Sometimes* to the third question and no one selected *Often*, and so on. A total of 35 responses were unfavorable to these six questions ($2+3+6+2+5+5+4+2+0+0+6+0 = 35$).
 - To produce an overall score for **Frequent Workplace Hostility** representing unfavorable responses to these six questions, the total number of responses (35) is divided by the total number of people who responded to all of the *Workplace Hostility* questions. 28 people responded to the first question, 28 to the second, and so on for a total of 167 responses to all the questions. **This produces a Frequent Workplace Hostility of 21% ($35 / 167 = .2096$).**
- To create the **Rare Workplace Hostility** rating, the same process above is followed, except the score is created from only one response option. The *Rarely* responses are added from all questions.
 - For this example, there are 42 *Rarely* responses across the six questions ($7+6+8+2+6+13 = 42$). This total is divided by the total number of responses to all of the questions ($42 / 167 = .2515$). **This rounds to a Rare Workplace Hostility rating of 25%.**
- To create the **favorable** rating, named **No Workplace Hostility**, the *Never* responses are added from all questions.
 - For this example, that is $15+17+14+24+10+10 = 90$ total responses. This total is divided by the total number of responses to all of the questions ($90 / 167 = .5389$). **This rounds to a No Workplace Hostility rating of 54%.**

How do I know if my factor ratings are good or bad?

The DEOCS team is working on a data-driven approach that will help you understand what a rating means for an organization's likelihood of positive or negative outcomes. In the meantime, we recommend using the following strategies to help put your *Workplace Hostility* ratings into context and understand whether actions should be taken to address low favorable ratings:

1. If applicable, review the information in the alert icon  to see if your *Workplace Hostility* ratings are called out. This icon would appear in the dashboard and in the PDF reports if your unit's/organization's unfavorable rating for *Workplace Hostility* is very high compared to others in your same Service component. You should consider taking action to lower this rating.

2. Look at the Item Summary table on the *Workplace Hostility* details page to understand which questions may be driving your unfavorable rating. This factor is created from six questions, so compare the percentage of participants who selected negative responses to each question. If there are questions that have a higher percentage of participants who selected negative responses, these are the questions driving a higher unfavorable rating and could help you pinpoint more specific actions to decrease your unfavorable rating for *Workplace Hostility*.
3. Examine the bar graph showing the overall unfavorable rating for *Workplace Hostility* and the unfavorable ratings by various demographic groups. Look at each group's rating in relation to the overall unit/organization rating. If any groups have particularly high unfavorable ratings for *Workplace Hostility*, this could help you plan actions to decrease your unfavorable rating within areas of your organization.
4. If applicable, review your *Workplace Hostility* unfavorable rating trends over time. You can view these trends by clicking on this icon  in the dashboard; they also appear as a table in the PDF reports. Take note if your ratings are going up over time. You may need to take action to reverse this trend.

Factor Improvement Tools for Workplace Hostility

The following resources may be useful as you make plans or take action to improve your *Workplace Hostility* ratings. Each resource listing contains a description, a link, and the relevant audience. Some resources may be more appropriate for the commander/leader, unit/organization personnel, survey administrators, or the Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW); the relevant audience advises which group may benefit from use of the recommended resource.

- **Four Strategies to Repair a Toxic Culture from the Top Down.** Provides strategies for addressing toxic workplace cultures.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/heidilynnekurter/2019/12/23/4-strategies-to-repair-a-toxic-culture-from-the-top-down/?sh=5681a2dc40e0>
Audience: Commander/Leader, unit personnel, survey admin, IPPW

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