



Video: Sexual Harassment Overt Behaviors 2024

Sexual Harassment Overt Behaviors: Facilitation Guide



Overview

This facilitation guide and accompanying video have been developed to assist equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) professionals and practitioners in discussing *Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces*.

Additional information on how to conduct a facilitation can be found in *The Leader's Conversation* guide (available at [deomi.mil.](https://deomi.mil/))

This guided discussion is focused on the *Sexual Harassment Overt Behaviors* video. The video demonstrates potential behaviors one could see or hear in many environments. The facilitator can use the video and guide to discuss the demonstrated problematic behaviors and how the unit members and leaders can prevent, mitigate, or address them. Adherence to this facilitation guide is encouraged to ensure consistency in training delivery.

However, this guide is not all-inclusive and may be expanded based on the facilitator's experience. Throughout this guide, questions are framed to stimulate the facilitator's thoughts on areas to explore and consider in this process and the specific topic. Users should provide a controlled, safe, and non-attributional environment where individuals will be willing to share their perspectives. EO and EEO professionals, practitioners, and leaders can use this event to review and educate their members on policy and acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Sexual harassment is covered in Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1020.03, *Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces*.



Purpose

The objectives for this discussion:

- Define sexual harassment and what overt behaviors can look like.
- Discuss the video and the behaviors seen within it.
- Grasp how sexual harassment can affect the individual and the organization.
- Understand the escalation sexual harassment behaviors can take if not addressed.
- Discuss sexual harassment prevention strategies.

Preparation

This guide has been developed assuming that users have some basic facilitation skills and understand the facilitation process. Users should also review *The Leader's Conversation* guide for additional parameters, techniques, and information on facilitation (available at deomi.mil). *The Leader's Conversation* guide provides areas to consider, including the following:

- Site selection
- Ground rules the facilitation may use
- Question development
- How to conduct the discussion

Definitions

DoDI 1020.03 defines these terms as the following:

- Harassment is defined as behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to a reasonable person, whether oral, written, or physical, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and deliberate or repeated offensive comments or gestures of a sexual nature when:
 - Submission to such conduct is, either explicitly or implicitly, made a term or condition of a person's job, pay, or career.
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person.
 - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
 - Such conduct is so severe or pervasive that a reasonable person would perceive, and the victim does perceive, the environment as hostile or offensive.
 - Such conduct is used or condoned by any person in a supervisory or command position, of any form of sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a member of the Armed Forces or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense.
 - Such conduct includes any deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments or gesture of a sexual nature by any member of the Armed Forces or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense.



What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and deliberate or repeated offensive comments or gestures of a sexual nature. Behavior is sufficient to constitute sexual harassment if it is so severe or pervasive that a reasonable person would perceive, and the complainant does perceive, the environment as hostile or offensive. Unreported sexual harassment can affect the individual and the organization in multiple ways:

Individual	Organization
Fear of reporting	Passive bystanders
Low self-esteem	Lack of trust and morale
Depression or anxiety	Hostile work environment
Social exclusion	Culture of exclusion
Low productivity	Decreased readiness

Strategies to Prevent Sexual Harassment

As leaders, it is critical to be aware of our surroundings whether in the office or out in the field. Being able to create a healthy command climate where Service members feel heard and understood can make a great impact when it comes to reporting harassment. Some principles of prevention/strategies include the following:

- Discuss avenues (including anonymous ones) for reporting inappropriate behaviors.
- Discourage social media that constitute harassment and inappropriate behaviors,
- Clearly post policies and reporting procedures.
- Hold members accountable for leading/participating in inappropriate behaviors.

Notes:



Process

Before the participants' arrival, determine and prepare the setting for the guided discussion. Ensure the video is prepared to view (direct from the Cultural Portal at: <https://www.deomi.mil/Center-of-Excellence-Portal/Harassment-Prevention-and-Response/#sexual-harassment>) or may be predownloaded.

Video Description

Sexual Harassment Overt Behaviors

FOR FACILITATOR USE ONLY: The video opens with a female Service member on the screen giving an account of a situation that happened at the gym. She states that, while she was at the gym, CPL Kirkman approached her and told her that her shorts were riding up. He then said to her, "I didn't mind the free show, but maybe you should start charging admission." She says she mustered up a nervous laugh and that he finally left with a grin on his face. At work that day, she kept running into CPL Kirkman, and he made comments about the "sneak peek" he'd seen and how he "would like to see more." She let him know that the comments made her uncomfortable, and he said, "Well, maybe you shouldn't have a body that looks so good." The video concludes with her saying, "What do I even a say to that?"

Video Participants

- **Target:** Female
- **Perpetrator:** Male (CPL Kirkman)
- **Bystanders:** None



Directions

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Validate: explain the purpose or objective of the discussion/training.
3. Set expectations and establish ground rules.
4. Introduce the topic (using the notes you created based on the topic).
5. Explain how sexual harassment is defined.
6. Provide the handout (if used) to the participants.
7. **Read instructions:** You are about to watch a video that is made for awareness purposes only.
8. **Read instructions:** Answer the questions in your handout individually after watching the video. Then later, we will share your answers with the group.
9. Show the video.
10. Have participants answer the handout questions (5–10 minutes). Please encourage them to use critical thinking as they view the questions.
11. Lead a discussion based on the questions used.

Facilitator Notes

Suggestions: Display the questions on a bulletin board, butcher paper, or PowerPoint, or prepare them in a handout. Explain to the participants that they will need a pen and paper (or handout) to answer the questions you will use during the guided discussion. **The anticipated responses (ARs) after each question can assist the EO professional in identifying potential discussion points.**

***Facilitator Note:** The facilitator should be prepared to discuss the questions (or similar questions) with the participants.

***Give students ample time to answer the questions.**

Reflection Questions

Think about questions you may wish to ask the participants.

Question and AR:

Question and AR:



Facilitator- Developed Questions

Below are potential questions and ARs for use in guiding the discussion. Before the session, the facilitator should review them and may develop their own. The provided handout matches the questions provided below. If you modify or add additional questions, modify the handout accordingly.

***Facilitator Note:** The facilitator should be prepared to discuss the questions (or similar questions) with the participants.

- **What did you observe in the video?**

AR: The female Service member is uncomfortable with the suggestive comments that CPL Kirkman has made. The initial comments occurred in the gym. Later that day when she got to work, CPL Kirkman continued to make inappropriate, suggestive comments about her body. She let him know that she was uncomfortable with these comments. However, he dismissed her concerns, laughing them off saying, “Maybe you shouldn’t have a body that looks so good.” The female member states that she is unsure of how to handle this situation and she does not know where she can turn to.

- **Based on the behavior shown in the scenario, can the comments be perceived as sexual harassment?**

AR: According to DoDI 1020.03, the comments made are considered sexual harassment. Harassment is defined as behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to a reasonable person, whether oral, written, or physical, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. As noted, such conduct includes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature by any member of the Armed Forces or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense. Given that the female target explicitly stated to the male that his comments were making her uncomfortable and that he dismissed her feelings with the comment, “Well maybe you shouldn’t have a body that looks so good,” is an example of overt sexual harassment.

- **If you were a bystander in this scenario, what could you do?**

AR: As a bystander in this scenario, you could approach the target and ask how she feels about the comments CPL Kirkman made to her at the gym and in the workplace. If she indicates that she is uncomfortable, let her know that these continued behaviors could be sexually harassing. Ask her what she would like to do about it and that you were a witness. Let her know that, if she wishes, she can talk to the EO advisor, and offer to go with her if she desires. If you feel is safe to do so, you could also approach the perpetrator separately and politely explain your interpretation of what you saw and that you perceive his actions as inappropriate, unacceptable, and potentially sexually harassing. Educating the individual on the behaviors and impacts may successfully stop the behaviors, especially once he understands there was an outside witness.

- **What risk or protective factors can influence this scenario?**

AR: Risk factors:

- One risk factor is the victim’s sex and rank. Junior ranked females are more likely to experience sexual harassment than males and more senior ranked females. Junior ranked females are also more likely to experience sexual harassment if the perpetrator is senior to the target.
- Another risk factor could be a general permissive environment. Perpetrators may demonstrate inappropriate behaviors if their past incidents were not addressed or if they observed similar interactions by other members that were not addressed.



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Protective factors:

- One protective factor could be a friend who provides support or advice when encountering this situation, or a bystander that intercedes or addresses the situation. Organizations must ensure Service members understand that all allegations of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and will not be tolerated.
- Another protective factor can be a climate that supports a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and other unwanted behaviors. If leaders takes allegations of such behavior seriously when reported, they will become unacceptable in the environment. Additionally, taking these complaints seriously and following through with appropriate action can prevent perpetrators from harassing other targets.
- **As a leader, how can you empower your team to intervene if they witness someone being sexually harassed?**

AR: Leaders can educate team members on how to identify sexual harassment and to express that harassing behaviors can be subtle or overt and can even be in the form of electronic means. They can educate members on strategies they can use to intervene in different scenarios, such as pulling the targeted member aside and removing them from the situation. Leaders can foster climates where individuals feel supported when reporting sexual harassment and confident that reports will be taken seriously.

Lead the Discussion

Open the discussion by asking volunteers to share their responses with the group based on the questions used. As you do so, keep in mind:

General Considerations

- Ensure all participants have an opportunity to share their thoughts.
- Encourage open communication among participants.
- When applicable, ask clarifying questions.
- Use anticipated responses to help the group when needed.
- Avoid “why” and closed-ended questions.
- Remind participants of the ground rules when necessary.
- Remember to let participants know that you are listening.
- Take notes for your summary and conclusion.
- Paraphrase when participants are unclear with their answers/assist them in reaching the objectives.
- Let the discussion be fluid with little to no disruptions or corrections.

Examples of Other Questions That Can Be Asked

- In your own words, how would you describe the difference between overt and subtle sexual harassing behaviors?
- What are some ways your organization can support individuals who report harassment?
- Where can a Service member go to report sexual harassment?
- As a leader, what behaviors can you show to create an environment where others feel open to report harassment?

Close the Session

***Facilitator Note:** During the conclusion, paraphrase participant comments to show that they were heard. The provided conclusion is an example on how to close out the guided discussion.

End your discussion by restating the objectives covered at the beginning and provide closing comments.

Summary:

Restate the initial objectives:

- Define sexual harassment and what sexually harassing overt behaviors can look like.



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- Discuss the video and the behaviors seen within it.
- Grasp how sexual harassment can affect the individual and the organization.
- Understand the escalation sexual harassment behaviors can take if not addressed.
- Discuss sexual harassment prevention strategies.

Potential Closing Comments

Some might consider the behaviors exhibited in this scenario as harmless or simply dating-type (approach) behaviors, but they are not. Service members should feel comfortable in their work and personal environment without the fear of being sexually harassed. Whether at the gym or in the workplace, sexually harassing behaviors need to be addressed. If you make a suggestive comment and someone says they are uncomfortable, stop and do a self-evaluation. Then, do not continue the behavior.

If allowed to continue, these behaviors can escalate into something even more serious (e.g., sexual assault) and foster a variety of negative organizational climate changes, such as a hostile work environment, a lack of trust in leadership, low unit cohesion, and low morale. Identifying inappropriate behaviors and intervening early are crucial to developing and maintaining positive, cohesive, and professional environments.



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Handout

Video: Sexual Harassment Overt Behaviors

1. What did you observe in the video?
2. Based on the behavior shown in the scenario, can the comments be perceived as sexual harassment?
3. If you were a bystander in this scenario, what could you do?
4. What risk or protective factors can influence this situation?
5. As a leader, how can you empower your team to intervene if they witness someone being sexually harassed?