

# The Right Side of the Line

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Creating a Respectful and  
Harassment-Free Workplace

Participant Materials

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## Pre-Workshop Assessment

For each statement below, circle the number that reflects the level of your knowledge and skills before completing the Workshop. At the conclusion of the Workshop, you will complete a Post-Workshop Assessment and compare your ratings to those on the Pre-Workshop Assessment.

1. I can describe how and why maintaining a respectful and harassment-free culture benefits my organization.

High 4 3 2 1 Low

2. I can describe how and why maintaining a respectful and harassment-free culture benefits me.

High 4 3 2 1 Low

3. I can explain the difference between inappropriate, prohibited and illegal behavior.

High 4 3 2 1 Low

4. I can identify behaviors that could escalate into more serious situations.

High 4 3 2 1 Low

5. I can respond appropriately when others engage in unacceptable behaviors to minimize the potential that the behaviors could escalate into more serious situations.

High 4 3 2 1 Low

## Introduction

This Workshop is designed to help organizations build respectful and harassment-free work environments.

Organizations and their employees must take a proactive approach to creating and maintaining respectful organizational cultures in order to remain legally compliant, to ensure adherence to organizational policies and to thrive and prosper. Regardless of your position title or level in the organization, it is your job—and the job of every employee—to help create a professional workplace by demonstrating appropriate behavior, following organizational policies and complying with the law. By the end of the Workshop, you will be able to recognize and respond appropriately to unprofessional, prohibited and illegal behaviors in the workplace before they escalate into costly lawsuits and lost productivity.

## Purpose and Learning Outcomes

The purpose of the Workshop is to help you develop and/or improve your skills and knowledge in building a respectful and harassment-free culture in your organization.

When you have completed this Workshop, you will be able to:

- Describe how and why maintaining a respectful and harassment-free culture benefits you and the organization
- Explain the difference between inappropriate, prohibited and illegal behavior
- Identify behaviors that could escalate into more serious situations
- Respond appropriately when others engage in unprofessional, prohibited or illegal behaviors

## Agenda

- Introduction to the Workshop
- Discussion of Video Vignettes
- Wrap-Up Activities

## What Makes Me Feel Respected at Work?

**Directions:** Write down in the space below examples of the behaviors or actions of people you interact with in your organization that make you feel respected and valued. What do they specifically do or say that makes you feel respected at work?

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## Unacceptable Workplace Behaviors

Type of Behavior	Definition
Unprofessional	Behaviors that are inappropriately offensive, disruptive or disrespectful.
Prohibited	Behaviors that are impermissible by organization policy.
Illegal	Behaviors that are in violation of the law.

preview copy only



**Video Observation Form:  
Vignette #1: "Just some good, clean fun..."**

Scenario #	Type of Behavior	Notes/Questions
1: "Just some good, clean fun..."	Unprofessional	

**Discussion Questions:**

- What specific behaviors did Aaron's coworkers engage in that are unprofessional?
- How do Aaron's coworkers view their actions?
- What is Aaron's reaction? How does he see this?
- How are the coworkers' behaviors on the "wrong side" of the line?



- If the coworkers continue these behaviors, how could the situation possibly escalate into something more serious?
- How could everyone who is involved in this situation respond to get on the “right side of the line?”

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**Questions for managers:**

- What specific behaviors did Aaron's coworkers engage in that are unprofessional?
- If you observed this situation or someone brought it to your attention, what would be your responsibility as a manager?
- If the coworkers continue these behaviors, how could the situation possibly escalate into something more serious?
- What should you do if the situation continues?

## The Right Side of the Line: It's Our Job

- To help create a respectful and harassment-free workplace, it's our job to stay on the "right side of the line."
  
- Staying on the "right side of the line" means:
  - Treating each other with dignity and respect.
  - Knowing the boundaries that separate unprofessional, prohibited and illegal behaviors.
  - Recognizing situations that can "cross the line" and escalate into something more serious.
  - Responding appropriately and respectfully to defuse a situation where people engage in unacceptable behaviors that cross the line.
  
- Staying on the "right side of the line" also means that it's our responsibility to:
  - Know and abide by our company's policies about unprofessional and prohibited behaviors.
  - Remember that federal laws prohibit discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex (with or without sexual conduct), religion, national origin, age, disability or retaliation for complaining about discrimination or participating in complaint proceedings. The conduct must be sufficiently frequent or severe enough to create a hostile work environment or result in a "tangible employment action" such as hiring, firing, promotion or demotion.
  - Keep in mind that states, local jurisdictions and our organizations can and do set higher standards than federal law that we must follow.

## Let's "M.E.E.T." - Video Analysis

**Directions:** In the space provided below, make some notes about what you see the coworkers in the video specifically do or say to use all the steps in the "M.E.E.T." model to successfully de-escalate the issues and resolve the situation that they've created.

<b>"M.E.E.T."</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>M</b> ake time to discuss	
<b>E</b> xplore differences	
<b>E</b> ncourage respect	
<b>T</b> ake responsibility	

## Let's "M.E.E.T." - Case-Study Analysis

**Directions:** Decide what actions the coworkers in the case study should take to use the "M.E.E.T." model to respond appropriately to inappropriate behaviors. These actions should keep the incident from escalating into a more serious situation. Write your ideas in the space provided below.

"M.E.E.T."	Appropriate Actions
<b>M</b> ake time to discuss	
<b>E</b> xplore differences	
<b>E</b> ncourage respect	
<b>T</b> ake responsibility	

## "Let's M.E.E.T." - Application Plan

**Directions:** Identify a situation back on the job where you could use the "M.E.E.T." model to prevent a situation with one or more coworkers from escalating into a more serious situation and to promote a mutually respectful working environment.

(Alternately, you could identify a situation that occurred in the past where the "M.E.E.T." model might have been useful to help de-escalate a situation.) Write a short description of the situation in the space provided below. Then identify actions you could take to use each of the four steps of the "M.E.E.T." model to deal with the situation successfully and respectfully.

**What is the situation?**

**How can you apply the four steps of the "M.E.E.T." model to deal with the situation?**

M -

E -

E -

T -