



Welcome to the fourth edition of the Not Sure? Newsletter. This month we will discuss **Bullying**. What it is, what it isn't, some tips on what to do if you get bullied, and how to create healthier relationships at work.

What is considered bullying at work?

Bullying is... "Repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety."

Bullying can include the following behaviours

- aggressive or intimidating conduct
- belittling or humiliating comments
- spreading malicious rumours
- teasing, practical jokes or 'initiation ceremonies'
- exclusion from work-related events
- unreasonable work expectations, including too much or too little work, or work below or beyond a worker's skill level
- pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner, including peer pressure



What is the difference between instructions at the worksite and bullying?

Bullying has got nothing to do with giving instructions, or with any reasonable requests asked from your Supervisor.

Obviously, no one likes to hear that their performance need improvement, however, without receiving feedback we wouldn't be able to grow professionally. It is important that we do not take feedback personally, or negatively.

Ask your supervisor: How can I improve? What can I do to become a better Apprentice? Ask questions, show participation and be involved.

Sometimes it is a good idea to be humble, and prepared to correct those work issues on time. After all, eventually you will be in the Supervisor's shoes.

What should I do if I think I am being bullied on the work site?

- **Do not feel bad**, it is not your fault if you are being Bullied. Don't be scared or ashamed.
- **Talk to your Field Officer**, explain the situation, and what happened. Your Field Officer will act to fix the situation quickly.
- **Talk to your supervisor**, or to a WHS representative. If you don't feel comfortable, talk to someone else on the work site.
- **Take time to do some self-reflection:** Are you over-reacting? Do you have a problem with constructive criticism? Or do you feel unfairly targeted?
- Talk to the person that is supposedly bullying you. Say "I" statements instead of blaming, but wait until you calm down
- Try to **respond and not react**
- In case of serious concern, organisations like Safe Work can help you.
- **Try to stand up for yourself but in a safe way.** If you react with anger to anger, you may only make things worse, like throwing a match stick on petrol!
- Contact Fair Work Ombudsman

What if the Bully is you?

Sometimes at the work site certain people, put together just don't click. But that does not mean that we need to become Bullies in order to be heard and respected!

There is always a way, which is trying to communicate calmly about any issue, before it gets out of hand. Ask yourself, why am I reacting this way? Can I try to be a better person? Can I learn to manage my anger?

In the next issue I will touch on Anger Management and Emotional Intelligence to help you. It is extremely important to treat all your workmates with respect. You need to learn to tolerate even that colleague that you don't really get along with!

***Don't be the
Bully!***

***Do something if
you do get
Bullied!***



Ending on a positive note, here are some tips to create healthy relationships at work.

Remember: it starts with you too!

- Try to go out of your comfort zone
- Be nice to everyone: you don't know what is happening in another person's life
- If you are prone to anger issues, remove yourself from hostile situations
- Try focussing on the problem you have with the work colleague, not the person in itself
- Avoid the need of blaming or being right
- If there is an issue speak up! It is important to get at the bottom of the issue before it blows out of proportion
- Learn to receive feedback, try not to take it personally
- Accept that people are different, and they will have a different opinion from you. If the issues between you and another staff member can't be solved, talk to your field officer

Remember: Bullying can happen anywhere!

- At TAFE or College
- At work
- At home
- On Public Transport
- On Social Media
- Even in your own family

Additional Resources

How to deal with workplace bullying, video:



SafeWork and bullying resources, and what they can do.

<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/bullying/workplace-bullying-response-service-standards>

The following safe work brochure, explains bullying, and gives some more tips and information:

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/workers-guide-workplace-bullying.pdf>