

NAVIGATING WORKPLACE DYNAMICS:

*Recognizing and
Addressing
Inappropriate
Behaviour*

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INTRODUCTION

In any workplace, maintaining healthy boundaries is essential for fostering a respectful and inclusive environment. Recognizing that everyone has unique backgrounds and experiences, it's important to be non-judgmental and supportive of others while prioritizing our own well-being.

Here's a guide on recognizing inappropriate behaviour and addressing it professionally:

SOME KEY IDENTIFIERS OF HARASSMENT

- Preventing individuals from expressing themselves or speaking to others.
- Yelling, threatening, or constantly interrupting colleagues.
- Unwanted sexual advances, gestures, or comments.
- Making rude, degrading, or offensive remarks.
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours.
- Name-calling, intimidation, or belittling behaviours.
- Isolating, ignoring, or setting up individuals for failure.
- Mocking beliefs, values, or personal choices.

WHAT ARE MICROAGGRESSIONS?

Microaggressions are subtle behaviours that communicate negative or derogatory messages to marginalized groups. They can be expressed through actions, words, or gestures and are typically rooted in stereotypes or biases.

Microaggressions may manifest in many ways and develop into a greater conflict over time. These subtle behaviours can contribute to a hostile or unwelcoming environment, undermining the well-being and sense of belonging of Indigenous peoples in their own communities or workplaces.

WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH?

Trauma-informed approach emphasizes recognizing and understanding the effects of trauma on individuals' mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health. This approach acknowledges that trauma can be revealed in many ways in people's daily lives, and its effects may not always be obvious. Therefore, it is essential to foster a safe and supportive environment that respects individuals' experiences and responds sensitively to their needs.



BOUNDARY INTRUSION

Boundary intrusions in the workplace refer to situations where established professional boundaries are crossed or violated. Boundaries will be unique to each individual, based on personal experiences and relational preferences. Boundary intrusions can occur for a variety of reasons, and impact people in different ways as well, whether it is a physical boundary, or emotional one that has been crossed. Recognizing that each of us hold boundaries in our own way is important in understanding others when they feel their boundary has been crossed, and when helping others to understand your boundaries in the workplace.

RESPONDING TO BOUNDARY INTRUSIONS

If you experience a boundary intrusion, it's important to address it assertively. Here are some self-guided responses you can use:

- Express how you feel and why the behaviour is inappropriate.
- Clearly communicate your boundaries and expectations.
- Firmly assert your right to privacy and personal space.
- Refuse to engage in discussions or activities that make you uncomfortable.
- Seek support from HR or a trusted colleague if necessary.

BEHAVIOUR CHECK–SELF ASSESSMENT

Recognizing that we each understand and experience boundaries in our own way, incorporating your own worldview into your self-assessment. One example is incorporating the Seven Sacred Teachings, also known as the Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers, wherein we acknowledge that our actions and words may be misunderstood, potentially leading to issues in the workplace. Each of the seven teachings honours one of the basic virtues that helps to guide the way we live, in traditional learning and relationship building. Assess your behaviour to ensure you promote healthy boundaries and positive interactions with colleagues.

HUMILITY

- Do you actively listen to others and seek to understand their perspectives, including an openness to receiving/sharing feedback?
- Are you mindful of your surroundings, team needs, and your role within the team?

TRUTH

- Do you respect differing opinions and refrain from passing judgment?
- Do you approach conflicts with an inclusive and collaborative problem-solving mindset?



WISDOM

- Do you share valuable information and insights with others?
- Do you respond to situations with a calm and clear mindset?

LOVE

- Do you offer support to stakeholders, co-workers, and management when needed?
- Do you contribute to a positive morale and emotional culture?

RESPECT

Do you refrain from engaging in gossip about others?

Do you fulfill commitments and obligations in a timely manner?

TRUST

Do your actions reflect positively within your community?

Do you build trust within your team through reliability and honesty?

BRAVERY

Do you advocate for yourself and others when needed?

Do you take responsibility for your actions and their consequences?



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