



Am I Being Bullied?

This self-assessment tool has been designed to help you evaluate your current situation, manage any feelings of self-doubt you may be experiencing, and to provide you with guidance as you reach out for help.

The Canadian Institute of Workplace Bullying Resources defines workplace psychological harassment as:

- A variety of tactics directed at a person or group of people,
- repeatedly used over a period of 3 months or more,
- with or without conscious intent,
- to cause some form of harm (e.g., embarrass, humiliate, degrade, diminish, shame, or silence),
- by use of verbal or non-verbal tactics (e.g., in person, by letter, or electronically) towards a person or group of people.

Helpful information as you evaluate and determine your next steps

- Take time to review the definitions in the attached appendix. These will be useful terms to apply when you are describing your experience.
- Review your organization's definitions, policies, and procedures. Your company's policies must align with the [OHS Act](#), including assurance that you are protected against retaliation. Canadian Federal employees are protected against harassment, bullying, and any acts of retaliation for reporting this abuse.
- Review all provincial [legislation](#) found in most provinces and territories.
- Understand that false complaints are considered malicious and/or acts of harassment. Clarity can be found on our website, or you can call OHS, Human Rights, Labour Standards, your Union, or WCB for information.

You do not need to go through this alone. Experiencing workplace bullying or harassment is painful and can cause physical and psychological harm. Fortunately, times have changed and there are solutions for you no matter how complicated it may seem.

We know that shame will often keep people silent. Silencing and isolating the target only fuels the people who harm others. Staying silent does not hold anyone accountable.

It is helpful and wise to talk to someone about your options. Someone who can help you navigate workplace systems and their unique or complicated processes and develop a strategy for your situation, including next steps. Be sure to see someone who is trained, qualified, and experienced in workplaces systems, and the injuries targeted workers sustain. Start by calling us for a brief assessment/consultation.

The combined services of an experienced and knowledgeable coach and qualified counsellor will be most effective! If you wish to process this further with an objective and experienced professional, contact us for a confidential supportive consultation.



It is important to choose your recovery, with or without justice.

Linda Crockett



Workplace bullying is **never** due to a flaw or lack in the one being targeted. No one is perfect. Fact is, if you *were* perfect, you would be bullied for being perfect.

Workplace bullying **IS** due to a flaw or lack in the bully.

Those who are offending others must be held accountable in order for change to occur.

If you are being bullied, seek support from someone who is trained, qualified, and experienced in this area.

Linda Crockett MSW, RSW, SEP, CPPA

Self-assessment questions

1. While at work or performing work duties, have you been yelled at or shouted at in a hostile manner? Whether behind closed doors or in front of others, this is unprofessional. No one deserves to be treated in this manner.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

2. Have colleagues or leaders refused your requests for assistance, especially in a safety or high- risk situation? For example, you are feeling attacked or threatened by a client or contractor, and colleagues do not respond.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

3. Has a leader(s) or peer(s) lied to you, set you up to be accused of something you haven't done, or created false rumours about you?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

4. Has someone been repeatedly glaring at you, or rolling their eyes when you speak?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

5. Are you repeatedly excluded or ostracised at work-related social gatherings?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

6. Do you experience someone repeatedly storm out of the room when you enter?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

7. Are you given the silent treatment? Does someone repeatedly ignore you, turn their back to you, start texting on their cell, or seem (perhaps pretend) to fall asleep, whenever you enter the room or speak in a meeting? Is this a pattern?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

8. Are you often deprived of recognition and/or praise for which you are entitled? Is someone else always taking credit for your work?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

9. Is someone repeatedly failing to return your calls, memos, or emails? Even if they have stated that they just don't like you, this is unprofessional and immature behaviour.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

10. Is someone interfering and/or sabotaging your work activities? Work relationships? Your reputation? Be sure to collect evidence.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

11. Have you been the target of derogatory name calling or gossip? Be sure to document.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

12. Are you given unattainable workloads or deadlines? And is this happening just to you, or a few people and not to others? Is favoritism happening?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

13. Are you subjected to temper tantrums when disagreeing with someone? Are you documenting this? It is important that you do.

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

14. Are you constantly interrupted, ignored, or oppressed when speaking?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

15. Do you fear that attempts are being made to turn other employees against you?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:

16. Do you feel anxious when coming to work in the morning? Depressed? Fearful? Tearful?

Yes No

How often does this occur? Daily Weekly Monthly

Your thoughts:



DEFINITIONS

Workplace Psychological Harassment

A variety of tactics directed at a person or group of people,

- repeatedly used over a period of 3 months or more,
- with or without conscious intent,
- to cause some form of harm (e.g., embarrass, humiliate, degrade, diminish, shame, or silence),
- by use of verbal or non-verbal tactics (e.g., in person, by letter, or electronically) towards a person or group of people.

Unpacking this formula further:

- **Variety of negative behaviours and tactics:** rumours, lies, ostracism, gossip, humiliating or embarrassing someone (in isolation or in front of peers), withholding positive recognition and taking credit for their work, insulting, diminishing comments, yelling, threatening (subtle or aggressive), micro-managing, micro aggressions, gaslighting etc. *See definition of microaggression below.*
- **One person or a group:** can be leader of staff, peer to peer (lateral violence), subordinate to leader. This can also be a mix of people (two or more) which is now called mobbing, who are using negative behaviors and tactics towards one or more people. *Look below for definitions of lateral violence and mobbing.*
- **Over a period of three months or more:** research states these negative behaviors and actions occur for a minimum period of 6 months or more. However, with societies growing awareness, we are seeing valid cases of 3 months or more. Prior to 3 months we see examples such as rudeness, meanness, abrasiveness, incivility, unprofessional, etc. This does not disregard the impact of this negative behaviours. These are in fact your early warning signs that need to be stopped immediately. Otherwise, it will lead to bullying (psychological harassment or psychological violence e.g., gaslighting). *See definition of gaslighting below.*
- **With or without conscious intent:** far too often employers have denied complaints because they could not prove intent. This has been a mistake. It is far too difficult to prove intent. If you understand this type of abuse, you will know that people who act out with negative behaviors and actions, those who fit the profile of workplace bullying, typically lack self-insight. They certainly will not admit or be accountable for their actions. They are also very good at blaming, sabotaging, convincing those who are untrained or lack knowledge in this area, and are unaware of the subtle nuances embedded in this abuse. If you want to get to the truth and prevent further harm, contract a trauma informed, well trained, and experienced, workplace investigator, to sift through the complexities and nuances of this abuse. *See more information below re: investigators.*
- **To cause some form of harm:** loss of psychological safety, damaged trust, lost self-confidence or self-esteem, employee is now more silent and isolating, anxiety/panic attacks, increasing days off due to illness, loss of joy, motivation, and/or respect for the organization, work is now a place of stress, depression, physical illness caused by stress, suicidal ideation, job termination, resignation, premature death due to cardiac

arrest, stroke, or suicide. These losses can lead to physical and/or psychological injuries. These injuries can also become a permanent diagnosis if left untreated. Losses also include the threat of job termination, resignation, loss of income, health benefits, investments, and ostracism from their profession.

Research Definition of Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying signifies emotional abuse, encompassing subtle and/or obvious negative psychosocial behaviours embodying aggression, hostility, and intimidation, generally characterized by persistence, exhibited by workplace insiders and/or outsiders operating individually and/or as a group, to an individual employee or a group of employees during the course of the latter's work. Being interpersonal and/or organizational in level, the display of negative behaviours, which most often bears the mark of influences from within and/or outside the workplace, occurs privately and/or publicly, in real and/or cyber forms, in the context of an existing or evolving unequal power relationship between the parties.

P. D'Cruz, Noronha, E. (eds.), Concepts, Approaches and Methods, Handbooks of Workplace Bullying, Emotional Abuse and Harassment 1, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5334-4_1-1 © Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2019.

Academic Bullying Defined

Academic bullying happens because the academic hierarchy creates a large difference in power between principal investigators who fund and drive the research and the lab members who carry out the research. Bullying can consist of inappropriately changing authorship positions, taking credit for ideas or intellectual property for one's own benefit, verbally abusing others in a regular and progressive way, ridiculing or publicly shaming people, and threatening a bad recommendation or the loss of a job position. Most but not all cases follow the direction of the power, with principal investigators and others who hold more power bullying those with little to no power." Morteza Mahmoudi

<https://www.science.org/content/article/academic-bullying-desperate-data-and-solutions>

CCOHS Website

"Bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could 'mentally' hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression."

Mobbing “Mobbing at the workplace refers to such cases as verbal harassment, aggressive words, sarcasm, slander or social isolation repeatedly targeted at a specific person at a specific period of time. Previous studies indicate that wellness and health of the victims who have been subjected to mobbing at workplace were affected adversely.

Mobbing at Workplace -Psychological Trauma and Documentation of Psychiatric Symptoms *Noro Psikiyatrs Ars* 2019 Mar;56(1):57-62. doi: 10.29399/npa.22924. Epub 2018 Oct 26.

Gaslighting Otherwise seen as a campaign of psychological violence. Giving false information or direction and then denying it. Making derogatory, intimidating, comments, and threats, and denying it.

Their actions do not match their words i.e.: charming one moment, rageful or bitter the next. Unpredictable. Keeping target confused.

Attempts to have others align with them. Make others believe the target is the problem i.e., mentally unstable, or incompetent

Everyone else is to blame, everyone else is a liar.

Wearing people down – over time – with some or all the above tactics.

Lateral Violence Also known as ‘horizontal violence’ or ‘workplace bullying,’ is disruptive and inappropriate behavior demonstrated in the workplace by one employee to another who is in either an equal or lesser position. (Coursey, Rodriguez, Dieckmann, & Austin, 2013).

Microaggressions Unintentional and subtle but offensive comment or action directed at a minority group.

Examples of Microaggression:

Saying, “You are pretty for a dark-skinned girl”

A situation where someone tells a person who is LGBTQ that they do not “seem gay”.

“Woman enters the room, and the patient assumes that she is a nurse instead of a doctor.”

Microaggressions refer to everyday verbal or non-verbal snubs or derogatory actions — whether intentional or unintentional — directed toward individuals of marginalized groups.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-are-microaggressions-4843519>

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RESPONSIBLE HELP IS AVAILABLE TO YOU!**



**CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF
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