Cyberbullying: 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 at: deomi.mil

This guided discussion is focused on the cyberbullying 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. Bullying is a form of harassment that is covered in DoD Instruction 1020.03, Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces.

Purpose

The objections for this discussion:

- Define cyberbullying
- Discuss the video and the behaviors seen within it
- Grasp how the fear of harassment can affect the individual and the organization
- Understand the escalation bullying can take if not addressed
- Discuss bullying 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 at: deomi.mil. The Leader's guide provides areas to consider, including:

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

Definitions

It is important to note that cyberbullying is a form of harassment. Department of Defense Instruction 1020.03 defines these terms as follows:

- 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.
- Bullying is defined as a form of harassment that includes acts of aggression by Service members or DoD civilian employees, with a nexus to military service, with the intent of harming a Service member either physically or psychologically, without a proper military or another governmental purpose.
  - May involve the singling out of an individual from his or her coworkers or unit for ridicule because he or she is considered different or weak.
  - Often involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim.
  - Can be conducted through electronic devices or communications and by other means, including social media and in person.

What constitutes bullying?

As outlined in the DoD Instruction 1020.03, bullying is evaluated by a reasonable person standard and includes, but is not limited to, the following when performed without a proper military of another governmental purpose:

- Physically striking another person in any manner or threatening to do the same
- Intimidating, teasing, or taunting another person
- Oral or written berating of another person to belittle or humiliate
- Encouraging another person to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning, or dangerous acts
- Playing abusive or malicious tricks
- Branding, handcuffing, duct taping, tattooing, shaving, greasing, or painting another person
- Subjecting another person to excessive or abuse use of water

Notes:

Impacts of bullying

Individuals who experience bullying may be targeted because they are seen as different. Bullying can also occur once the workday is over through cyberbullying (texts, social media, etc.). Victims of cyberbullying may experience psychological distress from the situation if left unreported. Organizationally, productivity and mission readiness may decline. To help prevent bullying, senior leaders should instill a command climate that encourages reporting of harassing behaviors. All reports should be taken seriously and resolved in a timely manner. Appropriate actions should be taken when necessary.
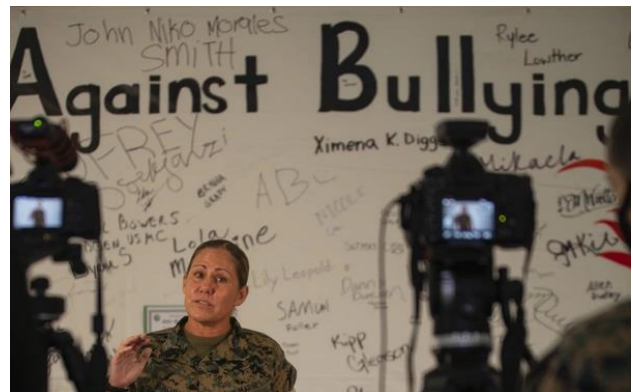
Process

Before the participant's arrival, determine and prepare the setting for the guided discussion. Ensure the video is prepared to view (direct from Harassment Prevention and Response (deomi.mil) or may be pre-downloaded).

Video Description

CYBERBULLYING
FOR FACILITATOR USE ONLY: The video displays three male Service members, SCPO Wooten, SFC Job, and SFC K. SFC Job confides in SCPO Wooten that SFC K has told him people are giving him "crap" for an award he was given. The video shows SFC K receiving harassing text messages and tells SFC Job he does not want to report the behavior because of "how it would look." SFC Job tells SCPO everything he has heard from SFC K because he has noticed the behavior has been taking a toll on SFC K. SCPO Wooten concludes the video by wanting to sort the situation out with the information he was given. **Video Participants** • **Victim**: SFC K • **Perpetrators**: Other unit members • **Bystanders**: SFC Job & SCPO Wooten

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 (Use the notes you created based on the topic).

5. Show and explain how cyberbullying is a form of harassment.

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. As you watch the video, understand that cyberbullying is a form of harassment.

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 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.

Facilitator- Develop 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.

- Describe the behaviors SFC K is receiving and how they relate to cyberbullying.

AR: SFC K received multiple harassing text messages after he won an award. Not only did the bullying take place during work hours it also occurred outside of work. A few bullying behaviors defined in DoDI 1020.03 include teasing or humiliating someone through oral or written communication. This scenario displays how individuals can use technology, such as texts and gaming devices, to bully someone thus, which constitutes cyberbullying.

- What are the potential impacts of this harassing behavior? What if they are allowed to persist?

AR: The potential impacts are low morale in the organization and decreased mission readiness. In this scenario the male is being bullied for having won an award making him feel excluded from his peers. The targeted individual may be fearful to report the cyberbullying because it can erode trust between organizational members. The behavior can affect group cohesion and distract from the daily tasks/mission.

- In this video, SFC Job is a bystander. Is there any other action he could take?

AR: While on the fence about it, SFC Job reports the harassing behavior his friend is experiencing to a senior mentor. He could also directly intercede with the coworkers on the issue in an attempt to get them to stop. Lastly, he could encourage and support his friend to notify the commander about what he is experiencing if other options don't resolve the problem. Allowing these types of behaviors to continue can cause them to escalate into larger problems. It should be stated that this behavior is disruptive, unacceptable, and distracts others from the overall mission.

- What could happen if the behavior is not reported and who could be impacted?

AR: If the behavior is not reported, the victim may start to feel excluded from those harassing him. Individually, targets of bullying may experience mental and physical distress from being harassed. Not only will this affect the targets productivity at work, it will also affect the family and family. Organizationally, mission readiness may decline and unit cohesion may erode.

- How can you prevent occurrences of similar behaviors in your unit? What actions can you take as a leader to address and correct this issue?

AR: Understand the importance of bystander intervention and train members on intervention techniques. Develop different types of training to raise awareness on the issue. Provide research resources and training to all DoD personnel. Hold discussions in a controlled environment where all can speak freely. Use the DEOMI website to gather more information about the Principles of Prevention and create a zero-tolerance environment for such behaviors in the organization. Hold each other accountable and encourage members and leaders to correct perceived issues.

Think about other questions you may wish to ask the participants.

Reflection Questions

Question and AR:

Question and AR:

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 close-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 then in reaching the objectives
- Let the discussion be fluent with little to no disruptions or corrections

Examples of other questions that can be asked:
- In your own words, how would you define cyberbullying?
- Where have you seen these behaviors in your organization or past organizations?
- What are some preventative measures to avoid a hostile environment from occurring?
- As a bystander, what can you do to encourage someone to report harassing behaviors?
- How can these behaviors, if gone unreported, affect mission readiness?

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 cyberbullying as a form of harassment.
- Discuss the video and behaviors within it.
- Grasp how the fear of harassment can affect the individual and the organization.
- Understand the escalation bullying can take if not addressed.
- Discuss bullying prevention strategies.

Potential Closing Comments
During this period, we explored how cyberbullying can impact the individual being harassed and the organization. As seen in this scenario, harassment can take many forms. Individuals being discriminated against may be fearful to report the behavior especially if the behavior coeame from a supervisor. If harassing behaviors are not addressed, mission readiness can decline, and a hostile work environment may occur.

Everyone has a role in preventing harassment. To mitigate harassing behaviors, we must be proactive, address allegations without bias, and take appropriate actions as necessary. Some might consider the behaviors exhibited in this scenario as harmless, but they are not. They can bring division, a lack of trust, and low morale. As leaders and members, it is important that we be aware of these behaviors and impacts and do what we can to proactively prevent, diffuse, negate, and address concerns if they appear.

Handout

Video: Cyberbullying

1. Describe the behaviors SFC K is receiving and how they relate to cyberbullying.

2. What are the potential impacts of this harassing behavior? What if they are allowed to persist?

3. In this video, SFC Job is a bystander; is there any other action he could take?

4. What could happen if the behavior is not reported and who could be impacted?

5. How can you prevent occurrences of similar behaviors in your unit? What actions can you take as a leader to address and correct this issue?