



Strand² Squared



A Paradigm Shift Solution

Sexual Harassment to Sexual Assault: The Workspace

“In all societies, both women and men are powerfully conditioned to repress the daily realities of (sexual harassment and workplace glass ceilings) and to collude with the rest of society in keeping these dimensions of shared experiences hidden.”-William Keepin

Sexual Harassment has been a problem of the workforce since people have been working together. In the era of #MeToo, it has achieved community awareness- but is by no means a new occurrence. Since 1998, many places of employment have hosted some form of sexual harassment training. According to one study, 71% of 955 organizations administered some form of sexual harassment prevention training, yet 48% of the participants reported, that despite training, they still experienced some form of sexual harassment. According to the 2019 Gallup poll, 62% of US citizens report that they believe sexual harassment is a major issue in today's workplace.

In the wake of the cultural shift illustrated by #MeToo movement, agencies and organizations need to get better at promoting a safer work environment for their employees beyond hosting a meaningless training or checking some sort of compliance box.

A comprehensive sexual harassment prevention program would work beyond a training presentation. It would be delivered in a holistic manner utilizing the ecological model or by taking a public health approach. This presentation will offer a holistic model to prevent sexual harassment. It will talk about the role of leadership, the impact of saturation, the benefits of individualizing response, addressing organizational culture and creating a culture of respect and zero tolerance for disrespect. The presenter will offer tools that can be implemented, supported by policy and reflected in program evaluation.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious area of concern that can and does progress beyond harassment and into criminal behavior. It can be liability to ignore criminal conduct by supervisors and rank-and-file employees. It is essential to address harassment behavior and to create a safe and healthy work environment. It is also extremely profitable to maintain a healthy work environment and is well researched that when employees feel safe and supported at work, they do a better job and have more prolific outputs.

Objectives:

- to define sexual harassment
- to identify when sexual harassment becomes criminal and how to address crime at work
- to illustrate that the shift in culture is creating low tolerance for sexual harassment
- to discuss liability in failing to protect staff
- to discuss a holistic ecological response to sexual harassment
- to articulate the benefits of professional wellness and healthy work environments