

How to deal with Harassment and Discrimination

DISCLAIMER: *This publication/kit is designed to provide information in regard to the subject matter covered **only as a precursor to any type of legal, or corporate HR action.** Use it with the understanding that the author is not engaged in rendering legal or professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought. The purpose of this publication/kit is to educate. The author shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any persons or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this publication/kit.*

INTRODUCTION

With this **Free Downloadable “confronting harassment” Kit** you can take a simple step to gain control of your circumstances. Whatever your personal situation, you are not alone, many people had, or still have, similar ‘challenges’. I too have been the brunt of, as well as witness to, many forms of discrimination and harassment in my personal and my business life.

Although I consider myself an outspoken and relatively fearless person, at no time have I been comfortable verbally confronting hostile, disdainful and utterly insensitive and thoughtless people. Often those conversations would deteriorate and I’d feel foolish, as if I should apologize for being “*too sensitive*” or “*unable to take a joke*”. At those times I would regret my attempt to verbally confront my harasser(s) since, having it backfire, it would often result in more harassment.

So, due to my frustration and pain and that of friends who had similar experiences, I decided to develop an effective response; a deterrent to these alarming or just wearisome situations.

This Free Kit aids in countering difficult situations in a non-verbal and non-threatening or, equally, a non-fearful manner. This Kit is intended to help *you* communicate *your* determination to no *longer tolerate harassment*, discrimination, ignorance or truly unkind insensitivity. Ideally, the Replacement Word List reflects *your* circumstances and *your* personal uniqueness. If not, use *your* own words to best reflect *you*.

One, download or print out the **Free Kit**. Two, using the **Sample Letter** as a guide, hand-write or type in the **Fill In The Blanks** template (1_____) with the words provided in the **Replacement Word List**. Or, use your own words if you prefer.

When your Fill In The Blanks ‘practice letter’ is completed, Three, write it out in your own handwriting (or type it). Before printing, address the letter and envelope with the name (or address, or title, or whatever) of the individual(s) to whom your letter is to be sent – make sure you keep a copy for yourself. When ready, calmly hand the sealed envelope to the addressee(s) and walk away OR mail it – whichever way suits *you* best.

If the recipient(s) clearly disregards your letter, it’s best to inform a family member, a friend, a supervisor, a human resources officer or a lawyer of your situation, of your letter, and what was the response to your letter. Date everything, keep a record/journal. Be courteous, even kind, but, equally, be doggedly persistent until your concerns are resolved.

SAMPLE LETTER

Date

Full name of addressee

I **believe** myself a **decent** person who would **prefer** to **get along with** the people in my life. In a **work** environment I **place value on** treating **co-workers** as I would like to be treated. It appears you may not have the same level of **respect** for me, as I **know** I have for you. From your **comments** and **attitude** displayed **toward me**, I am concerned you may have **derogatory views** about my **gender**. This concern has placed me in the **difficult** position of writing this letter requesting you **view** me in a **manner** that I find more **business-like**. For the moment, would you **acknowledge** that my **gender** is a part of my **personal uniqueness** and that, obviously, this **personal uniqueness** is present wherever I go. Now, can you imagine **associating** with people knowing that a unique part of you could be **devalued** because of prejudice or ignorance. I live with this **frustration**, potentially each day. At times, this can be very **disheartening**. Yet, when I remember all the **wonderful and accepting** people I know, I regain my faith in the basic **decency** of the ordinary **human being**. It is **important** for me, if we are to continue **working together**, that we proceed in a **respectful and professional** manner. At this time, in an effort to **diffuse** a potentially **difficult** situation, I would rather not discuss this letter with you or expand on my feelings. Instead, the next time we meet, if you **behave toward me** as requested, I will behave as if there never had been any **misunderstanding** between us. However, if you wish to pursue this matter further, because you genuinely do not understand the impact of your behavior, I prefer we communicate in writing. Alternatively, if you must discuss this in person we will need to arrange for a neutral, mutually agreed upon, third party to be present.

Sincerely,

Signature

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Date

Salutation

I (1_____) myself a (2_____) person who would (3_____) to (4_____) the people in my life. In a (5_____) environment I (6_____) treating (7_____) as I would like to be treated. It appears you may not have the same level of (8_____) for me, as I (9_____) I have for you. From your (10_____) and (11_____) displayed (12_____), I am concerned you may have (13_____) (14_____) about my (15_____). This concern has placed me in the (16_____) position of writing this letter requesting you (17_____) me in a (18_____) that I find more (19_____).

For the moment, would you (20_____) that my (21_____) is a part of my (22_____) and that, obviously, this (23_____) is present wherever I go. Now, can you imagine (24_____) with people knowing that a unique part of you could be (25_____) because of prejudice or ignorance. I live with this (26_____), potentially each day. At times, this can be very (27_____. Yet, when I remember all the (28_____) people I know, I regain my faith in the basic (29_____) of the ordinary (30_____). It is (31_____) for me, if we are to continue (32_____), that we proceed in a (33_____) manner. At this time, in an effort to (34_____) a potentially (35_____) situation, I would rather not discuss this letter with you or expand on my feelings. Instead, the next time we meet, if you (36_____) as requested, I will behave as if there never had been any (37_____) between us. However, if you wish to pursue this matter further, because you genuinely do not understand the impact of your behavior, I prefer we communicate in writing. Alternatively, if you must discuss this in person we will need to arrange for a neutral, mutually agreed upon, third party to be present.

Sincerely,

Signature

REPLACEMENT WORD LIST

1. believe, consider, regard, think, feel
2. considerate, sensitive, decent, cordial
3. prefer, like, choose, wish, hope, elect
4. get along with, enjoy, like, feel good about
5. work, home, volunteer, community project, social, team, business
6. treasure, place value on, believe it worthwhile, insist on
7. coworkers, peers, supervisors, subordinates, salespeople, business owners, professionals, people, teammates, roommates
8. respect, compassion, thoughtfulness, consideration, courtesy
9. believe, think, feel, know
10. language, comments, behavior, conduct, manners, attitude
11. language, comments, behavior, conduct, manners, attitude
12. toward me, around me, near me
13. negative, hostile, critical, derogatory, unkindly, degrading
14. thoughts, feelings, impressions, views, ideas
15. weight, height, appearance, age, gender, color, race, ethnic origin, state of health, disability, personal life, personal history
16. difficult, unenviable, unhappy, painful, uncomfortable
17. treat, view, address, behave toward, speak to, look at
18. manner, way, fashion
19. acceptable, positive, courteous, compassionate, thoughtful,
20. acknowledge, accept, consider, admit, concede, grant
21. weight, height, appearance, age, gender, color, race, ethnic origin, state of health, disability, personal life, personal history
22. personal uniqueness, individuality, distinctiveness, singularity, identity
23. personal uniqueness, individuality, distinctiveness, singularity, identity
24. meeting, associating, fellowshiping, interacting, sharing space, working together, socializing, connecting, affiliating
25. rejected, ridiculed, despised, ostracized, degraded, devalued
26. cruelty, insensitivity, sadness, hostility, frustration
27. discouraging, lonely, disheartening, frustrating
28. wonderful, caring, kind, decent, sensitive, accepting, professional, enlightened, supportive
29. kindness, decency, goodness, benevolence, charity
30. human being, person, individual
31. important, crucial, vital, necessary, critical
32. meeting, associating, fellowshiping, interacting, sharing space, working together, socializing, doing business, living together

- 33. courteous, respectful, kind, compassionate, thoughtful, considerate, dignified, professional, enlightened
- 34. diffuse, avoid, prevent
- 35. difficult, explosive, uncomfortable, sensitive
- 36. behave toward me, speak to me, improve your attitude, look at me, address me, treat me
- 37. difficulty, misunderstanding, problem, confusion, obstacle

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