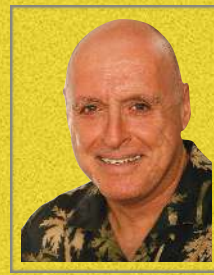


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 252 Getting a Handle on Workplace Bullying – Part 2

Yesterday we began our conversation on the topic of workplace bullying, defining the issue and talking about laws that deal with it. I'm Jerry Roberts, today we give some ideas on how to prevent the problem before it gets out of hand and you're facing costly legal trouble. That's next, on The Extra Point.

To catch up on this issue you can download transcript #251 from [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com).

Harassment in all forms is a big negative for any organization, and the attention on this subject is increasing. There have been lawsuits in Guam and costly judgments handed down. Any employer that ignores the reality of this is playing a dangerous game.

If you're a small business and you're tempted to say you're too small to hire someone to deal with human resources, or you didn't know about the laws, I don't think that will get you very far. The only protection you have is to stay ahead of the trouble, and here are a few ideas that can help.

1. Establish a code of conduct and put it in writing. Have everybody read it, discuss it at meetings, and make sure people sign off that they understand it from beginning to end.

2. Know what bullying looks like. Workplace bullies aren't always easy to identify. We all can recognize screaming, humiliation, threats and unfair demands, but there are a lot of other ways bullies torment their victims, and these are often out of sight from the general workplace population. Maybe it's loading someone down with additional work, declining a vacation request, severe micromanagement, or even giving negative performance reviews.

3. If you're not sure if you have a problem call me and I can set you up with an inexpensive and totally anonymous survey that will get you

the answers you need.

4. Get training on harassment and bullying, and hold every worker accountable for what they learn. The training should not be a one-shot deal. A lot of employers schedule these courses annually because they have a lot to risk. If you don't think your company is in a good position to get hit with a judgment for \$50, \$75, \$100 thousand — or more — maybe your training should be more frequent, too. If you've got a workplace culture problem you'll need to strive to change it, and create a new one where workplace civility is the foundation.

5. If you have managers who maintain that a little "heavy handedness" and "tough love" are necessary, and that the younger generations are all babies and snowflakes, etc., line them up with your HR manager and attorney for a reality check. They're welcome to their opinion but the organization has to comply with laws.

6. Address all bullying quickly and decisively. Be proactive. The authorities understand that it's a major problem and is widespread. The biggest indictment against your organization is not that it happens, but what you did to prevent it, and especially what you did to fix the issue once you knew you had it.

Organizations that don't make a commitment to end workplace bullying and harassment are setting themselves up for big trouble. Get ahead of trouble before it happens to you.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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