Job Place Bullying Committee

January 25, 2012

Present: Carolyn Fallahi, Eva Vrdojak, Kathy Hermes, Kate McGrath, Meg Levvis

Absent/Excused: Sally Lesik, Jacqueline Cobbina-Boivin, Susan Gilmore

1. Contact Rosa and ask her about the sexual harassment policy and what is happening with that. We want a copy of the current policy and once their changes are made, we will make ours. Kate will call Rosa and ask.
2. Sexual assault poster…. Put together a poster on x, y, z …. Put together the poster on what to do if you are assaulted.
3. Vicky Magley about the study at UConn…. Kathy contacted her and have not heard back. President of UConn was going to do a study about workplace bullying. Want to get a similar study for here. There is a search for a new HR director. It would be nice to not only think up some questions for the candidates in the meeting, but also this might be something a new HR director could take on.
4. Possibility of a bullying survey. Kate and Kathy did a questionnaire some years ago. Did a survey monkey. Got bogged down in wording. There was a national study…. Zogbee pole…. In 2007. Also one at Minnesota and pulled questions from there. Zobbee one is proprietary. U. of Minnesota did one. Kathy wasn’t able to find out any information from UConn’s study yet. They were trying to stay away from protected class. Got bogged down there. What classes they may fit into. Maybe we don’t need to use identifiers at all.
5. Put a definition of what bullying and abusive relationships are in the survey.
6. Arizona State University has done some research on bullying…. Jess Alberts.
7. HR…. Questions for the candidates. They are coming at the end of March. Good to have CCW represented is a good thing. Also good to have people there to ask about bullying and sexual harassment. There will be one sort of phone question on mutual respect and civility. That does not cover abusive conduct. Especially where the union contract has no clause about abusive conduct between union members. Part of the test for the HR person is how well they will work with union members. What kind of questions could we ask? Put on the agenda for the 13th. CCW maybe has a number of questions they want to ask.

What will you do if someone in the administration is accused of a sexual assault?

Can you give us an example of what you’ve done in the past and how you handled x, y, z. Job description on-line on HR website…. Have to have HR experience. Preferred qualifications …. Advanced degree and experience in a public university. Asked – requirements include working with collective bargaining, etc. Needs 7 years experience with increasing responsibilities.

Have you ever had a situation where people are all in the same bargaining unit, there is not civility policy, and there is no wording in the contract about abusive conduct, and one person is bullying the other. What would you do?

If someone is being harassed at work, what is done? Depends if it is illegal harassment or not. Mediation is a bad idea. It is intimate violence. You don’t put someone being bullied in the same room and say work it out. Mediation doesn’t work usually.

Incivility policies from other universities in the report. Let’s come up with recommendations.

Legal harassment: in employment law there are protected classes. If you are being harassed because you are a woman, that is illegal. If I just hate you and I belittle you and sabotage your work, and do this on a day to day basis, this is not hostile environment. Not doing it because in a protected class, doing it because I hate you. Bully by nature….. exert control. Kathy will send the civility statement. There is an antiviolence policy based on the law in the state of Connecticut. The antiviolence law and policy could potentially cover psychological violence. That is so rare for court cases. It has to be so extreme. There is a case in Indiana. A doctor screamed at a nurse in such a way that she had PTSD. That is psychological violence. In some situations, people need to go directly to the police.

Questionnaire: concern with the bullying…. Definition important. Strong-handed management or more involved? Benefit of the survey, may also help them to realize that they are being bullied. Partly institutional. Workplace bullying institute….. good definition. See if we can find a definition. They make the point that it needs to be repeated behavior usually.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 29th, 12:15 p.m., in Carolyn’s office.