RESOURCE GUIDE: INAPPROPRIATE WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

As Evans School students enter the workplace, and engage in professional development activities, it is important to be aware of information and resources should you experience unprofessional or inappropriate behavior. Though we hope that all interactions with professionals will be positive, we understand some encounters can be uncomfortable, inappropriate or harmful. This resource is meant to help students identify and navigate options for how to handle inappropriate situations when they arise — whether this happens in a workplace setting, at a professional networking event, or in a personal situation like an informational interview.

FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE, BUT NOT SURE WHY? EXAMPLES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- Unwelcome behavior that offends, intimidates, or humiliates others because of particular personal characteristics (gender, sexuality, religion, age, race, ability etc.)
- Utilizing power dynamics as a tactic to create fear, undermine, coerce, manipulate, or intimidate others
- Workplace bullying (repeated and unreasonable actions, comments, or behavior) directed towards others that creates an unsafe, uncomfortable, or fearful workplace environment.
- Excessive, one-sided gestures: texts, calls, letters, gifts
- Unwelcome advances, requests for favors, or sexually suggestive remarks or physical behavior, including:
  - Restricting a person's movement/normal work environment, unwanted contact: pinching, patting, rubbing, etc.
  - Making jokes, derogatory comments, slurs, epithets, etc.
- Supervisor or colleagues not complying with disability rights laws, or organizations taking advantage of marginalized communities in order to profit from the exploitation
- Comments or Statements:
  - “I'm surprised that your English is so good. You write really well for a ________.”
  - “You're smart and work so hard for a _____ person.”
  - “Where are you really from? So, like, what are you?”
  - “You can't use that bathroom.”
  - “Oh, you [don't have kids/aren't married/are single] - you don't mind staying late to finish that project, right?”
  - “We can't hire someone who [insert marginalized identity, etc.]. They just wouldn't be happy here.”

*This list is not exhaustive. Unfortunately, inappropriate behavior is not limited to the work environment. You may encounter it in your daily life. Be aware that these behaviors may occur in other non-workplace, but still professional situations, like networking events or informational interviews.

DEFINITIONS

Harassment includes conduct that is unwanted, unwelcome, and uninvited behavior that demeans, offends, or threatens individuals resulting in a hostile environment and/or fear for safety. This conduct can be directed at an individual because of their actual or perceived race, religion, citizenship, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, or ethnicity. Includes:

- Sexual Harassment may involve physical or verbal conduct. Gender-Based Harassment, which involve stereotypes based on perception of an individual's identity.

Inappropriate Workplace Behavior includes actions that are unreasonable and disruptive, and can also violate common standards or norms; can create a hostile work environment, may impact safety, physical or mental health, as well as result in decreased cohesion or productivity.

Microaggressions are verbal statements, nonverbal or environmental slights and actions, or incidents regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as racial or ethnic minority.

Macroaggressions are large-scale, overt aggression (through verbal communications or nonverbal actions) towards a certain marginalized community. Also includes exclusion that is purposeful and deliberate.

BEFORE YOU START A PROFESSIONAL AND/OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Know the name and contact of your supervisor, their superior, and your HR representative.
- Identify a few people that you can keep updated about your time in the job, ideally from at least two different kinds of relationships (e.g. personal life, peer group, and administrators/faculty).
- Familiarize yourself with your rights and the various policies within your organization.
- If you are experiencing harassment or a hostile work environment, you may hesitate to share your experience with others. Please remember that you are entitled to an environment free from harassment.
INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OUTSIDE OF THE WORKPLACE

- If you feel you are being harassed, or are experiencing inappropriate behavior in the workplace:
  - Remove yourself from the situation (wrap up the conversation as politely as possible).
    - Alternatively, if you feel comfortable doing so, tell the offending party that their actions are inappropriate and that they should stop.
  - Get to a place where you feel safe. Document the incident in writing (whether personally or through formal channels), and confide in someone you trust (when you feel comfortable doing so; however, timeliness of reporting should be considered).

CONSIDER BEFORE MEETING A NETWORKING CONNECTION

- Verify the name and contact of the person that you’ll be meeting. What type of contact information are you comfortable sharing (i.e. personal email, school/work email, personal number, LinkedIn profile, social media accounts, etc.)?
- Decide on an appropriate, mutually agreed upon location to meet (public or frequently accessed space).
- Know your own personal boundaries. Know the information you prefer to limit sharing (i.e. intimate, personal information unrelated to professional career or professional goals).
  - It is completely fine to limit, and you should not feel obliged to share information about your dating life, social plans, information on close (personal) networks/friendships, social media accounts, etc.

EVANS SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Want to talk to someone, or are unsure what resources would help? You may reach out to the Evans School Student Services team for any reason.
- Please inform Career Development regarding inappropriate situations that may have taken place:
  - At an Evans School Career Development event, or an event co-sponsored or endorsed by Career Development
  - Between an Evans School alum, staff, or faculty
  - With an employee or organization that is affiliated with and recruits at the Evans School
- Career Development may offer options or strategies to assist -- for example, speaking with the internship program on your behalf or assisting you in finding a different opportunity.
  - Contact: Evans School Career Development at 206-221-7698 or evansjob@uw.edu.

AVOIDING UNINTENTIONALLY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- Prior to starting a position, familiarize yourself with company policies (e.g. workplace dating), reporting procedures, and possible outcomes.
- Attend professional development opportunities to better understand what constitutes sexual harassment and inappropriate workplace behavior.
- Note that perceptions differ: what one person views as funny, playful, or casual comments and behaviors can be experienced by others as lewd, degrading, intrusive, and/or highly inappropriate.
- Do not assume that others are welcoming of physical contact, even if you don’t perceive them as inappropriate (rubs, massages, hugs, patting, etc.).
- Do not utilize company equipment (telephones, computers, printers, etc.) to share, view, or communicate inappropriate or personal images, videos, or messages to anyone.
  - Remember that any public organization is subject to public records requests, & government employees are subject to rules on lobbying.
- Consider your behavior during social functions hosted by your organization or where colleagues are present.
  - Professional behavior is expected at all events, including informal ones, and including those where alcohol is served.
POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

- If you feel comfortable, immediately notify your supervisor of the situation. If the offending party is your supervisor, and you do not feel comfortable informing them of the concern/behavior, see other options below.

- If you want to speak to a confidential resource to identify potential strategies, better understand your options, or create a safety plan, reach out to a confidential Health and Wellness Advocate (206-685-4357 or hwadvoc@uw.edu). They are available to all UW students at no cost.

- SafeCampus (206-685-7233) also assists with developing a safety plan and is available 24-7 for phone consultation. They will keep your information private and discreet and will only consult or share the information you provide in order to assess potential risk to the larger community. You can also call SafeCampus anonymously.

- Check your company’s employee handbook and internal website to see what the procedure is for handling formal complaints.

- Document what’s happening. Take notes for yourself about the date, time, place, other witnesses, and comments. This may include taking screenshots or keeping personal copies of texts or emails.
  - Save documentation on your own devices.

- Contact the UW Title IX Coordinator (information below) if additional support is needed on addressing the issue.

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ADDITIONAL CAMPUS CONTACTS & RESOURCES

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<th>SafeCampus</th>
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<td>206-685-4357</td>
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