

Addressing Workplace Violence Role-play

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Describe at least three types of workplace violence.
- Apply problem-solving skills to “real life” scenarios involving workplace violence.
- Discuss several appropriate ways to approach supervisors about problems.

Time Needed: 20 minutes (2-hour training); 30 minutes (3-hour training)

Materials Needed

- ❖ Flipchart
- ❖ Addressing workplace violence scenarios (Handouts A, B, and C)
- ❖ PowerPoint Slide #16 Workplace Violence Continuum

Preparing to Teach This Lesson

Before you present this lesson:

- ❖ “Workplace Violence Continuum” (PowerPoint Slide #16, or create on flipchart paper)
- ❖ Make extra copies of Handouts A, B, and C Addressing Workplace Violence Role Plays

Detailed Leader’s Notes

A. Addressing Workplace Violence Role-play (20-30 minutes)

1. We will now discuss and practice how to help create safer workplaces, including identifying and addressing factors that contribute to a potential workplace violence situation and knowing where to go for help.
2. Remember:
 - When we’re talking about workplace violence, which includes everything from repeated harassment to someone being injured or killed.
 - It also includes violence caused by:
 - **robbers,**
 - **customers,** clients or the people being served (like students in a school),
 - **co-workers,**
 - **family members** or acquaintances that come into the workplace.

3. Each small group will need to come up with a way to address the problem in their scenario and act that out for the group or re-write the scenario with the solutions. Once you have been assigned a scenario, answer the following questions:
 - What should the business owner have in place to prevent this kind of problem? Think about the kind of **training** the employer should provide employees, what **rules** should be established, and **how the store could be set up**, to make it safer for employees
 - Who else can you ask for help or support?
 - How should you approach the manager about this?

Then create a role-play of your solution to perform for the group or read aloud the changes you made to the scenario. You may use as many members of your group as you like, and bring in outside characters to address the problem.

One person from your group needs to be prepared to report on what the employer should do.

Then your group will demonstrate its role play or read aloud the changes implemented in the scenarios.

4. *Divide the group into small groups of 3-6 participants. Give participants copies of Handout A, B or C. Have extra copies available.*
5. *After about 10 minutes, bring the group back together. Ask several of the groups (or all, if there is time) to act out their ideas/read aloud for addressing the workplace violence scenarios. After each scenario, ask the group if anyone else has something different they would say in this situation. If so, ask that participant to come up and act out their response.*

Role Play—Workplace Violence

- **Report:** What should the business owner have in place to prevent this problem?
 - Training
 - Rules
 - How the workplace is set up
- **Role play:** What could you do to deal with this problem, as the worker?

ANSWERS for Handout A: Jayden's Story

The employer should:

- Establish a policy that an adult must always be in the store
- Establish a policy about what workers should do if there is an angry customer
- Train workers about the policy, and about how to act when confronted with an angry or irrational customer
- Post the police emergency number (911) at each work station to remind staff to call the police if threatened, in order to defuse the situation and reduce the risk of violence
- Place return and exchange policy signs prominently around the store

Other possible help: Jo or other co-workers; parent; teacher or other adult; state or federal OSHA agency

Jayden could:

- Ask the employer what the policy is for dealing with angry customers, and ask for training
- Suggest to the supervisor that a co-worker (Jo?) help close
- Involve co-workers or others in approaching the supervisor
- Find out about and suggest working with security staff (if in a mall)
- Get help from parent, teacher or other adult in approaching the supervisor

ANSWERS for Handout B: Taylor's Story

The employer should:

- Establish a clear policy forbidding violence, abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, and harassment of all kinds
- Train supervisors and managers to recognize bullying, abuse, and other violations of these policies and know how to respond to violations
- Train workers about this policy and the ramifications of violating the policy
- Let workers know that they can come to the store manager or supervisor (or other adult) and confidentially relate any concerns about their own safety or the safety of other workers.

Other possible help: Casey or other co-workers; parent; teacher or other adult; state or federal OSHA agency; EEOC

Taylor should:

- Tell the manager about Devin's behavior
- Tell a parent, guidance counselor, or other trusted adult, about Devin's behavior, and to get help thinking about solutions.
- Report the problem to the EEOC or state agency if the employer does not address it.

ANSWERS for Handout C: Andy's Story

Employer should

- Establish a clear policy forbidding violence, abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, and harassment of all kinds
- Train supervisors and managers to recognize bullying, abuse, and other violations of these policies and know how to respond to violations
- Train workers about this policy and the ramifications of violating the policy
- Let workers know that they can come to the store manager or supervisor (or other adult) and confidentially relate any concerns about their own safety or the safety of other workers.

Other possible help

- Other co-workers; parent; teacher or other adult; state or federal OSHA agency; EEOC

Andy could

- Tell the manager about Jamie's behavior
- Tell a parent, guidance counselor, or other trusted adult, about Jamie's behavior, and to get help thinking about solutions.
- Report the problem to the EEOC or state agency if the employer does not address it.

Summary

Time Needed: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

- Paper and pens for participants
- Flipchart and pens

Detailed Leader's Notes

A. Summary

a. How many of you can picture asking your employer a question about a concern you have?

- It's important to know your rights, but it's also important to think through how you want to approach your supervisor with a problem.
- It's usually helpful to talk it over first with your parents, teachers, co-workers, union representative, or someone else you trust.
- If necessary, there are agencies to help you, like OSHA or the federal or state labor law enforcement agency.

b. Remember:

- You know how to recognize hazards.
- You have ideas about what the employer can do to fix the workplace, and what workers can do to work safely.
- Follow the safety rules, but also think for yourself, and find ways to share your ideas.
- You know your rights and responsibilities, and where to get help. Do it, when you need to.

c. Are there any questions?

B. Post-Workshop Assessment

1. We are now going to conduct a Post-Workshop Assessment Activity.
2. *Write each question on a flipchart, with 3 columns below, with the following 3 headings: True – False – Don't Know. Give each participant 5 sticky notes numbered 1-5. Ask them to place a sticky note in one of the answer columns for each question. TALLY the post-its.*

Post-Workshop Assessment

	True	False	Don't Know
1. A hazard on the job is something that can injure you, make you sick, or harm your mental health. True			
2. The law says your employer must give you training about the health and safety hazards on your job. True			
3. The kinds of jobs that teenagers can get are all pretty safe. False			
4. Of the three main ways to reduce or eliminate hazards at work, the best way your employer can protect you at work is to provide you with safety gear False			
5. If you and your co-workers don't want to be hurt during a robbery, you need to show your strength. Don't let the robber push you around. False			

3. *Tally the results on the workshop form.*
4. What worked/what did you like? *Record on flipchart under the "+".*
5. What could be improved? What would you change? *Record on flipchart under the "delta," or triangle, sign.*
6. *On the sheet of paper, please put today's date (tell them the date), and write down the answers to this question: "What was the most important thing you learned today?"*
7. Thank you everyone you have completed the workshop on workplace violence prevention!

Handouts

1. Finding Hazards Pictures (from PowerPoint slides #1-4)
2. Teen worker rights fact sheet (from your state: if necessary, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/talkingsafety/>, click on your state, click on “Student Handouts” and copy Handout #12)
3. Role-Play: Addressing Workplace Violence (Handouts A, B, and C)

Handout A: Addressing Workplace Violence Role Play

Jayden works at a clothing store in the mall and had a customer come in last week to return an item of clothing. It was against store policy to accept the return, and the customer became very angry and yelled repeatedly at Jayden before leaving the store. Jayden doesn't know what to do if something like this happens again. Jayden worries something similar or worse could happen to a co-worker. Alex is Jayden's supervisor.

Alex: I'm afraid I'm going to need you to close up tonight. You've done that before, right?

Jayden: Yes, but I'm worried—there was a customer in here last week who got really angry.

Alex: Well, I'm afraid I don't see any other options. I'm sure it won't be a problem. If you want to work here, you have to be willing to pitch in when we need you.

Jayden: OK.

Later, Jayden sees a co-worker getting ready to leave.

Jayden: Hey, would you be willing to stay and close up with me? I'm a little nervous about that guy last week.

Jo: Sorry, I only work till 8 tonight. Yeah, it can be a little scary, but I close up all the time on my own. You'll get used to it.

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1. Discuss the following questions in your group. Then work in your small group to come up with a different ending to the story. Think about:
 - What should the business owner have in place to prevent this kind of problem? Think about the kind of **training** the employer should provide employees, what **rules** should be established, and **how the store could be set up**, to make it safer for employees.
 - Who else can Jayden ask for help or support?
 - How should Jayden approach the supervisor about this?
 2. Practice role playing your new ending with your group. You may use as many members of your group as you like, and bring in outside characters to address the problem. You will perform for the class later or re-write the scenario that includes solutions and read it aloud to the rest of the group.

Handout B: Addressing Workplace Violence Role Play

Taylor works at a movie theatre concession stand. Devin is Taylor's shift supervisor, who makes fun of Taylor at work, including in front of customers. Yesterday, Devin tripped Taylor "as a joke." Taylor is talking to a co-worker, Casey, about the situation.

Casey: You really should report what Devin did to the manager.

Taylor: I don't think manager will do anything. Devin will just find out I told on him and be even meaner to me.

Casey: Well, it's not fair that Devin just gets to keep bugging you.

Taylor: I guess I just need to toughen up.

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1. Discuss the following questions in your group. Then work in your small group to come up with a different ending to the story. Think about:
 - What should the business owner have in place to prevent this kind of problem? Think about the kind of **training** the employer should provide employees, and what **rules or policies** should be established, in order to decrease workplace bullying and harassment.
 - Who else can Taylor ask for help or support?
 - How should Taylor approach the manager about this?
 2. Practice role playing your new ending with your group. You may use as many members of your group as you like, and bring in outside characters to address the problem. You will perform for the class later re-write the scenario that includes solutions and read it aloud to the rest of the group.

Handout C: Addressing Workplace Violence Role Play

Andy works at a clothing store as a cashier. Jamie is Andy's supervisor and trainer who has been rubbing Andy's shoulder frequently, including in front of coworkers. Yesterday, Jamie shook Andy's shoulders and it ended up hurting. Andy talks to his coworker Jenny about it"

Andy: Jamie has been rubbing my shoulder for the past few days and it bothers me.

Jenny: I don't think it's a big deal, Jaime smiles when it's happening. It's probably just a joke.

Andy: Okay, I'll chill about it.

Jenny: Alright bro. Good luck.

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3. Discuss the following questions in your group. Then work in your small group to come up with a different ending to the story. Think about:
 - What should the business owner have in place to prevent this kind of problem? Think about the kind of training the employer should provide employees, what rules should be established, and how the store could be set up, to make it safer for the employees.
 - Who else can Andy ask for help or support?
 - How should Andy approach his supervisor about this?
 4. Practice role playing your new ending with your group. You may use as many members of your group as you like, and bring in outside characters to address the problem. You will perform for the class later or re-write the scenario that includes solutions and read it aloud to the rest of the group.