
The Mathis Group's

Messenger

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Treating Employees With Dignity Will Reduce the Chances of Litigation

By Dr. Keith Mathis

A hostile work environment is becoming the norm. Supervisors who have managed by intimidation for years often fail to realize that their behavior is fueling the antagonism in the workplace. "Hostile work environment can refer to a person's hostile or offensive working environment and conduct can be intentional or unintentional" (Brandett, P. 57).

When we fail to respect workers, at least four areas of behavior will tend to worsen.

First, disrespect may cause employees to question management.

If a supervisor uses intimidating tactics and creates a hostile work environment, workers will often respond by showing disrespect for their leaders and questioning their decisions. Other employees, especially those who are disgruntled, will likely copy this behavior. In a very short time, hostility, negativity, and skepticism can become a part of the organization's culture.

Second, disrespect causes people to question the competence of others.

We tend to think more highly of people who treat us well. When we are mistreated, we frequently react in one of two ways: First, we may take it personally and assume that the disrespect is a result of our inferiority. Second, we may react by externalizing it. Usually, this means we blame the offending party or we judge them as incompetent. We may say to ourselves, "If they knew what they were doing, they would know my way is right." Have you ever had a person who was afraid you might know more than he or she does?

Third, disrespect causes people to question company ethics.

When management abuses employees and no one takes the initiative to stop the bad treatment, workers will begin thinking they are not valued as employees or as human beings. This often leads to a questioning of the ethics of the company. If poor treatment is allowed to continue, it sends a message about the practical ethics and values of the organization.

People begin to believe that no one really cares. After the belief becomes firmly entrenched, employees will start talking about it among themselves in the form of rumors and gossip.

Each person must do his or her best to reinforce a culture in which people care about each other and show respect. When we consistently demonstrate such concern, it eventually becomes engrained in the culture of the organization. A faithful demonstration of humane treatment requires respect toward others 100% of the time.



(continued on page 2 Reduce Chances of Litigation)

*Appreciation makes people feel
more important than almost
anything you can give them.
E.C. McKenzie*

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The Mathis Group Is A PMI Registered Educational Provider

The Mathis Group has become a Project Management Institute (PMI) Registered Educational Provider (R.E.P.). We are committed to enhancing the ongoing professional development of PMI Members, PMI-certified Project Management Professionals (PMP), and other project management stakeholders through appropriate project management learning activities and products. We have agreed to abide by PMI established operational and educational criteria, and are subject to random audits for quality assurance purposes.

We have three courses to offer as a R.E.P. They are *Project Management Fundamentals*, *Comprehensive Project Management*, and *Mastering Project Management*.

Project Management Fundamentals is a 1-day course offering 7 PDUs (professional development unit). This basic course provides core project management skills. Participants will explore ideas and actions to be more effective throughout the entire project management process.

Comprehensive Project Management is a 2-day course offering 14 PDUs. This intermediate course provides competencies to monitor and lead a single or multiple projects' scope, critical path, scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts.

Mastering Project Management is our 3-day course offering 21 PDUs. This intensive course includes applicable hands-on activities and team exercises which will reinforce project management core competencies.

Fix what's broken, whether it's a machine or a process. People don't need to be burdened by problems that could be corrected.

*Joanne G. Sujansky
Motivational speaker and writer*

(continued from page 1 *Reduce Chances of Litigation*)

Fourth, suing is the ultimate demonstration of hostility.

Lawsuits are common when people want to prove a point or take a stand against a company. Many companies try to prevent suites from going to trial because of the negative publicity to produces. In some cases, the person is paid a handsome sum of money to drop the charges and settle out of court. Yet, offended employees will continue to sue until bad treatment is no longer tolerated in the organization.





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