

Greetings from bullyland

Seven wide ranging items this time.

Survey submissions continue to arrive.

About 15 new subscribers in the last month.

*** **

- 1./ The search for a 'good' doctor
- 2./ Round table discussion on workplace bullying from BC Business magazine.
- 3./ Saskatchewan moves on 'anti' workplace bullying law.
- 4./ Local groups news.
- 5./ Toronto Conference/ Good consultancy resource
- 6./ Two books (you remember them) to consider
- 7./ Psychologically Healthy Workplace Collaborative

1./ The search for a 'good' doctor

Second only to the 'do you know any good lawyers' question is the request for 'good' doctors.

No we don't have any 'pet' doctors who are aware of stress as a cause of ill health.

The problem is three fold. Firstly in the word 'good'. Secondly in the idea that a 'good' doctor will be 'good' for everyone. Thirdly the idea that it is the doctor's fault if they are not a good fit for you.

'I always buy my vegetables at the same store and they are always old, wilting and not really edible...'
- well change the d*mn store where you shop then!

Your relationship with your doctor is a personal one; a relationship is two way.

Karen I believe (this is Stephen typing) has a 'good' doctor - but I might not get on with her doctor at all.

Do you know any good friends or lovers would be a foolish question.....

So its to do with personality, taste, connection, age, gender, background.

We do recommend some psychiatrists and other mental health/ counsellors who will be of use in dealing with specialist aspects of your ill health.

Many 'good' doctors will be aware of their lack of specialist knowledge of this area (PTSD and so on) and will always refer you to a specialist.

This is good practice, not simply palming you off because they don't care/ don't believe you.

*** **

So if you feel the need for a different doctor you have to go shopping.

The word 'doctor' comes from the Latin - doceo, to teach. This is the kind of relationship which I believe you should seek.

Each province handles a register of doctors slightly differently.

A search for College of Physicians and Surgeons (insert name of province here) should find your local site.

In British Columbia go to this page:

https://www.cpsbc.ca/cps/physician_directory/search

Accept the disclaimer

This brings you to a search page.

Enter the city you are interested in.

Select 'General Practice (including CCFP - Family Practice)' in the specialty menu.

Check the box by 'Accepting New Patients'.

Then click 'Search'.

This will give you a list of Family Doctors accepting new patients.

Then either get on the phone, or on the bus or bike and start trying some out.

Remember you are shopping.

Have some questions to ask to get the information you need to make a decision.

Have these questions prepared and well written.

Such as: 'I believe my current health is affected by bullying at my workplace. Have you any experience of, or interest in, the effects of workplace bullying on health. If not could you suggest another local doctor with this knowledge?'

There, that was easy.....

*** **

2./ Round table discussion on workplace bullying from BC Business magazine.

Stephen is one of the three 'experts' featured in this article from the May edition of BC Business magazine. (Should be available at newsstands for another week or so.....) The different stances, approaches and ideas make for a stimulating read.....

Battling the bully

If you have panic attacks, insomnia and chronic anxiety, you could be a victim of workplace bullying. Our experts discuss ways to fight back.

A recent BCBusiness story on Workplace bullying ("Bad boss, bad boss," Dec. '06) clearly hit a nerve. We received an overwhelming response from readers, revealing an ugly undercurrent beneath the facade of today's high-performance workplace. We decided to explore the issue further by convening a panel of experts to explore the causes, effects and potential solutions to this disturbing trend.

First, the bad news about workplace bullying: expect to see a lot more of it . As employers are forced to turn to increasingly diverse talent pools, you can bet there will be resistance from the old guard - resistance that will manifest itself in inappropriate workplace behaviour.

The good news? While there's no silver bullet, recognizing the problem is an important first step. The solution begins long before counselling or legal charges; it starts with training that promotes acceptance and open communication throughout the workplace.

Larry Axelrod is a consultant with The Neutral Zone Coaching and Consulting Services Inc., specializing in mediation and conflict resolution. Sue Paish, a lawyer with Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, mediates and investigates human rights complaints, and helps local companies develop and implement workplace policies. Stephen Hill is cofounder of No Bully For Me, which hosts a website and facilitates support groups for victims of workplace bullying. They joined BCB editor Tracy Tjaden and associate editor David Jordan for a spirited, frank and enlightening discussion about a disturbing, but very real, issue haunting today's workplace.

BCBusiness: First, some definitions: what is bullying, and how is it different from harassment?

Stephen Hill: I see the difference as harassment being about who you are and bullying being about what you do. So if I call someone a lazy bastard, I'm talking about what they do. If I call them a lazy black bastard, I'm talking about who they are.

Sue Paish: You're right - harassment is conduct that's based on characteristics we can't change. The definition of harassment is founded in demographic characteristics that we have no control over, and they're articulated in legislation. In B.C., they are age, race, religion, marital status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and the presence or absence of a criminal conviction that would affect your ability to work. But a lot of workplaces have developed policies that incorporate the legal concept and also incorporate conduct that isn't connected to the legally prohibited grounds, which brings bullying under the harassment umbrella.

BCB: How do you know when you're in a bullying situation, or how does it typically begin?

Larry Axelrod: Bullying is often perceived as the schoolyard situation, with the big bully trying to take the lunch money from the smaller kid. In workplaces it takes on a very different dynamic than that, and it's often more subtle. It has to do with a lot of workplace issues and relationships. It's psychologically coercive, it's degrading and it's demeaning.

SP: Bullying is all about power. And it can be very insidious and very subtle. In fact, I think the higher degree of sensitivity around bullying right now has reduced the level of extroverted bullying and increased the level of manipulative conduct, which I call bullying.

SH: Did I know the first time I was bullied? No. I had no idea when it was. It was gradual. And the effects it has are very subtle and very peculiar. At first you disassociate what's going on at work with the odd health symptoms you're suffering. You don't make the link, "Oh, I'm having this stuff going on at work but why am I unable to sleep? Why can't I feel my fingers, my toes? Why is my eyesight going? Why am I shaking?" For me, it was actually finding a page of listed symptoms of workplace bullying, and some of the behaviours as examples of workplace bullying. I saw the list on one side, saw the list on the other side and told my wife and she burst into tears with recognition. said, "Well, okay, let's move forward." So, it's subtle. It's not like going home with a black eye from school.

SP: That's why a lot of times complaints won't come forward until a long way into the case. People will rationalize something that is happening at work that is having an effect on them by saying, "This must be something that I have done wrong," or "This must be because I have too much stuff in calendar." We find ways of rationalizing to a point that people don't realize that they have experienced bullying or harassment until there are some pretty serious physical indications

BCB: What are the common causes of workplace bullying?

LA: One reason bullying occurs is related to work clashes: the senior executive needs the work to get done and they're monitoring and bullying the staff to get it done. It might be related to perceived lack of performance or competition for resources or recognition. A lot of pressure exists, coercion exists, and it's experienced as bullying. Another reason is a dislike of an individual: "I don't like something about you or who you are, and I'm going to make sure you know it by the way I treat you." And it starts to

lead to more subtle things like being the subject of gossip, negative comments, being ignored, excluded, shunned. These are all ways of trying to diminish the other person and the person ends up feeling devalued, diminished, harmed.

SP: I challenge you on the intent, that harassment comes from a dislike. I would be a little more general and say a misunderstanding about a characteristic. Someone might think, ""Why do we have these women proceeding into executive positions in the workplace?" The conduct that is characterized as harassment isn't because the perpetrator hates women; it's because they haven't really bought into this idea that girls belong in executive positions. Another person might wonder, "Why the hell should you be given every Friday night shift off? Because we work in a 24/7 shift environment and I don't care if you're of a religion that requires that you don't work after sundown on Friday. It's not that I necessarily dislike you or even dislike your religion or your ethnicity - I just don't get it." So when I'm forced into a work environment with a bunch of people who are older or younger, different gender, different race, different religion and, God forbid, different sexual orientation, I'm uncomfortable. And I react in a way that is inappropriate."

SH: As far as being coerced into a workplace where you felt it wasn't your demographic, we have some people who say, "I've recently arranged a settlement from my employer. I was there for 25 years and bullied for 24." Well, we have three choices if we're uncomfortable at work we can stay and try and improve the situation, we can stay and try to find a new job to move into, or we can get the hell out. Those are the only three choices we have. That's it. Just like any relationship.

SP: I find a lot of bullying and harassment situations arise because people feel that the change they are experiencing has been thrust upon them beyond their control. I hear this a lot: "Well, hang on a second, who's supposed to leave here? I've been here for 25 years. What gives you the right to come in now and tell me..."

LA: One of the pieces that's missing when we look at the choices that exist is that we're not talking about the choice of improving the relationship. I'm a little less fatalistic about the ability to actually develop a relationship that at first is uncomfortable and not working into something that can actually work. And sometimes you need to have some assistance in doing that, and that's where you look to the organization or mediators or somewhere else. It's not about personality, and it's not about characteristic. In the end, it's about how we're treated and we can always change how we treat each other if we find the reasons to do so.

SP: I agree. It's a problem with socialization and a problem with the workplace culture. It is absolutely critical in dealing with harassment and bullying that you create cultures where it is okay for an individual to go into their colleague's office and say, "You know what? The way you spoke to me in the meeting today was really hurtful. You may not realize that, but I was really hurt." And not have people run around with their hair on fire.

BCB: Stephen, from your experience of talking to the victims of workplace bullying, how often do you think option A - staying and trying to resolve the issue - is successful?

SH: One per cent.

LA: And I would say it's successful 90% of the time if it's done well.

SH: Seventy per cent of targets are either fired or are forced to leave.

SP: But how often do people who fell they are a victim of bullying or harassment actually sit down with the perpetrator and have that conversation?

SH: Being really hurt, being bullied, causes mental anguish. When you've been bullied for a while, you're nuts; you're unable to make a decision, you're unable to concentrate, you can't speak. What's the first thing people do when they start torturing someone to get information out of them? Destabilize them? Deprive them of sleep. You wake up every night at three with replays of what happened the day before. Finally you fall asleep, exhausted, at 10 to six. You get up at six, off to work, another day happens, another day to process. Friday you feel almost normal because you've got a couple of days to recover. Sunday afternoon you start having panic attacks again. You start getting anxious. Again you

have an Sunday night where you can't sleep. You start the workweek without sleep. And you expect that person to be a rational, civilized, analytical human being entering into a very, very difficult situation and trying to negotiate and express themselves?

LA: I've seen that when I end up going situation that's pretty dire, because quite that's when they bring a mediator in. I have two observations. One: we don't learn early on how to intervene on our own behalf in a more successful way before we end up in that emotionally difficult place. The second is that, when we're there, there's still an opportunity to recover from that and recover the relationship, but that quite often needs the support of someone to come in and help them. And that's where mediators and organizational systems can be in place to help support the person, provide advisers, give them port foundation in order to go forward fear to try it is overwhelming, but if know they've got a structure behind. and some guidance on how to go about it, they can still try and meet then because they may still want to stay where they're working rather than to leave.

BCB: That sounds a bit idealistic. It's not always a pleasant world out there. And people do not always walk into their boss's office and say, "You know, what you said in that meeting hurt me."

SH: I don't think it's a question of being idealistic. I think it's a question of remembering what we know. For example, the most important exchange of the day is "good morning," the second most important is "please," the third is "thank you," and the fourth is "good night" That's been trained out of us. And I think some of the language we use trains it out of us.

BCB: Can any of you comment from your personal experience on recent trends or developments in bullying and harassment? Has it been more or less prevalent in the workplace? Has it been of a different type?

SP: We are about to face a period in our workplaces like no other. With the labour shortage, employers are going to be relying on people who are from very different demographic makeup's. We are going to be retaining more older people in the workplace. We are going to be seeing more women in the workplace. And we have to rely on immigrants if we are going to fill the work vacancies that are predicted in the next 10 years. If we thought learning to come to work with two genders in the workplace was tough, just wait until you get the demographic stir-fry that we are about to enter in the next 10 years. That's one thing. The second thing is: as a society we are starting to learn how to talk about being respectful to people who come from different demographic backgrounds, but we cannot talk about sexual orientation in a productive, respectful way in the workplace. And if we thought learning how to understand different shift scheduling to accommodate people from different religious backgrounds was tough, wait till we start talking about how to really respect and work successfully with people who are not extroverted heterosexuals. We are not ready.

SH: Everything old is new again. I'll pass around a survey that began in 1946 and has been repeated every year since. The results have been exactly the same since 1946. Ask managers what employees want from their jobs, and they say good wages, job security, promotion and growth opportunities. Ask employees what they want from their jobs: appreciation for work done, feeling in on things, sympathetic help on personal problems. The first three things I hear from people who are targeted by bullies in the workplace are, "I'm kept out of the loop, I'm treated differently from other people and I get no sympathy or support." They don't say, "Well, for another five dollars I'll put up with this." So for employers, this is good news in a way, because it's not going to cost money, it's going to cost imagination. It's going to cost some real education in terms of everybody in the workplace taking responsibility.

LA: I see a daunting trend and a promising trend. The daunting trend has to do with the increased accountability that is now being placed in our workplaces. The increased stress for success only continues to grow, and those forces do create a culture where bullying manifests itself. "I need to succeed, and I'm accountable now, so don't get in my way or else I'm going to have to move through you." On the promising side, I see examples such as the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. We all know that medical residents have been one of the most bullied groups through the years. But there's a fundamental change, and the trainers are being taught new skills. The Royal College has gotten involved and said, "Intimidating your students is not a good way to help them learn." I hope to see that trend continue, realizing that intimidating anybody is not a healthy way to get them to succeed.

BCBusiness May 2007

*** **

3./ Saskatchewan moves on 'anti' workplace bullying law.

This from Saskatchewan.

Like the way it talks of education and respectful workplaces; don't like the word 'ban' as alone it means nothing.....

Province to ban bullying in the workplace

Angela Hall
The Leader-Post

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

A legislated ban on psychological harassment in workplaces won't take effect until the province and the public have some time to get ready for it, Labour Minister David Forbes says.

A bill to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which will expand the definition of harassment, passed third reading Tuesday, setting the stage for Saskatchewan to become only the second province to outlaw workplace bullying.

Bill 66 is slated to receive royal assent on Thursday, but it won't take effect until it's proclaimed. Cabinet will consider when the changes should come into effect, but it will be in a matter of months, Forbes said.

"It's really important that this bill, this amendment, has a strong implementation. We need to develop an interpretative guide, training of the occupational health officers, that type of thing, to make sure that when we have the official date it comes into force that the workplaces in Saskatchewan are ready for it," Forbes said.

Quebec is the only other province to address psychological harassment in the workplace, which it did through amendments to its Labour Standards Act in 2004. Forbes said the Quebec model provides some good examples of what bullying is, which Saskatchewan can draw from.

"Public education will be a key part of this because clearly people want to know what constitutes psychological harassment and bullying in the workplace," he said.

With the changes, a special adjudicator will hear appeals of decisions by occupational health officers on harassment matters.

The bill came about this spring after the Opposition spent days criticizing the NDP government's handling of past harassment allegations against former Department of Environment employee Murdoch Carriere, and the decision this year to pay him a six-figure settlement to settle a lawsuit he launched after his firing in 2003.

Sask. Party MLA Nancy Heppner said the changes proposed in Bill 66 probably wouldn't have had an impact in that situation, but added the Opposition is supportive of "any legislation that will actually help people in the workplace."

"Our concern was and continues to be the lack of will to enforce that legislation by the NDP government," said Heppner.

© The Leader-Post (Regina) 2007

Copyright © 2007 CanWest Interactive, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.. All rights

reserved.

4./ Local Groups

Check our local groups page for other resources.

This from Claire on Vancouver Island - 6 months more to get a solid group going.....:

Hi Karen and Stephen

Just wanted to let you know that I spoke with the ED at WorkLink and she wants to continue the support group for another 6 months, and then we will assess again. So, that's great news.

As far as getting people in, the points you raise are interesting. We have put meeting announcements in the paper and on the radio, without much visible result. Participants have said they like having the meetings at the Worklink office since there is nothing to indicate that they are going there for the bullying group -- they could just be meeting an advisor for job search -- so that way it's pretty anonymous. As for the fear of meeting someone they know -- that's a biggie, because Victoria is a small town in many ways.

We'll keep at it, and all the promotion you can give us at your end is much appreciated.

Claire

*** **

Calgary:

We had our first meeting on May 24 at the home of one of our [4!] members. The time went so quickly and we each talked a bit about our own situations, then some thoughts about where we would like this group to go etc. Our next meeting is on June 28 at 6:30.[Contact ddodswor@shaw.ca for details]. Please post an announcement of our next meeting.

Dianne

*** **

Nova Scotia

Hi Karen and Stephen

I am a member of the Nova Scotia Bully Group PAWBS (People Against Workplace Bullying Society).

We now have a website up and running at www.bullybgone.com .

If you would add our link to your resources page it may be of assistance to visitors of both our sites.

Respectfully

Edward Giles
Website Manager BullyBGone.com for PAWBS

Washington State

The support group in Gig Harbor, Washington, has had to reschedule the training with Dr. Namie. On July 7, Dr Namie will be doing training on Workplace bullying - causes and cures - at 12-3 in Gig Harbor. Our support group is sponsoring it. Please post my phone number and our group's email address with this information.

thanks -- Martha
home: 253-649-0117
email: marthaleah@comcast.net
support group email: stopthebullies@comcast.net

*** **

5./ Toronto Conference/ Good consultancy resource

a) Not yet investigated but here is news of a Toronto area conference on respectful workplaces.

(quote)

Hi NBFM;

Just wanted to let you know about the conference I read about run by Lancaster House on Bullying and harassment: employer responsibilities, employee remedies. Their phone number in Toronto is 416-977-6618. I have found some of their conferences really useful.

Gillian Joseph
Research Associate
Centre for Families, Work & Well-Being
University of Guelph

b)Hi All

We just had the opportunity to attend a workshop on Bullying and Harassment in the workplace. It was put on by Nova Scotia Workers Compensation Board, NS Federation of Labour, NS Government Employees Union -NSGEU, and NS department of Environment and Labour.

Although my personal opinion is that this was nothing but a smoke screen by these organizations, this workshop was well presented.

In fact, I don't believe I could say enough to express how well organized and prepared the facilitator was. I recommend that your groups press these Departments to obtain the services of this consulting firm, to put on one of these workshops. They can be contacted with the following info.

KOSTER Consulting and Associates
Denise Koster, B.A.A., [P.H.Ec.](#)
Toronto Ontario Canada
Cell (416)729-3974
Office (416) 778-7200
Email koster@istar.ca
Website www.kosterassociates.com

There was such a large interest in this workshop that about 400 people had to be turned down for seats at this session.

Just thought I would pass this along.

Ed Giles
PAWBS www.bullybgone.com

*** **

6./ Books

a) I (Stephen typing) just read this new novel and was impressed.

'Then we came to the end' by Joshua Ferris, pub: Little, Brown

This is a first novel. It is about office 'culture'. It uses the first person plural ('we') throughout. This perfectly gives the feeling of any individuality being extinguished, for the common 'good'. Spooky, funny, scary and in the end uplifting - we can do better than this.

b) Recommended by a member:

Barbara Colorosa has a new book: Extraordinary Evil.

She was asked to address students in Rwanda about bullying in the schoolyard. The students turned out to be adults; so she apologized for bringing worksheets illustrated with stick-figures--to ones she used for talking to little kids. The students got the ideas instantly and immediately related her characters The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander to the dynamics of the Rwanda genocide.

She states that the impetus for the Bully's behaviour is Contempt.

I recommend that everyone read Dr. Robert Hare's Snakes in Suits and Barbara Colorosa's Extraordinary Evil.

7./ PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE COLLABORATIVE

can be found here:

<http://www.phwc.ca/>

Good initiative, but seems a little self-congratulatory perhaps..... maybe we can get them involved in sorting out some bad workplaces.....

*** **

Take care

Karen and Stephen

--

No Bully For Me

On the web:

<http://www.nobullyforme.ca>

or

<http://www.nobullyforme.org>

Email: nobullyforme@gmail.com

Privacy: You have received this message as you have contacted No Bully For Me and/or are on our e-mailing list.

If you want to be removed from our mailing list please send us an email with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. Thank you.

Karen and Stephen

No Bully For Me