

HR MATTERS

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Business Etiquette

Q: *We have a manager who works here that is always using foul language. He doesn't stop even after we have asked him to, saying I am too sensitive? What can we do to get this guy to use proper workplace etiquette?*

A: When some people hear the word "etiquette," they picture finger sandwiches and garden parties. But don't let that fool you. In today's workplace, incivilities not only drain employee morale, but also reach deep into employer pockets. Employers are finding out the hard — and legal — way that "manners" are fast becoming a critical part of everyday workplace life. You can't just ignore rude behavior because there is nothing outwardly "sexual" about it. General rudeness can in fact be used to support a claim of hostile environment/sexual harassment.

Also, consider "monkey see, monkey do" tendencies. If supervisors and managers are rude, employees could see this as a green light for similar behavior. There is no place for rudeness, foul language or sarcasm in today's workplace. It is important to make sure that your employees and supervisors are properly trained on Unlawful Harassment to work toward limiting this behavior -and- you and your employees' potential liability exposures.

If you would like to know how to teach your staff appropriate workplace behavior, please call 916.444.6200.



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