



Speak Up: How to tell your story if you are a target of bullying

This guidance on speaking up and sharing your experience as a target of bullying draws inspiration from the strategies outlined in "How to Bust the Office Bully: Eight Tactics for Explaining Workplace Abuse to Decision Makers" by Dr. Sarah J. Tracey, Dr. Jess K. Alberts, and Kendra Dyanne Rivera.

1. **Be Rational:**

- Narrate your story in chronological order (beginning-middle-end).
- Prepare a written version before discussing it with your supervisor.
- Pinpoint 3-5 specific incidents for discussion.
- Practice telling the story to someone you trust first.
- Develop an outline to guide your discussion with your supervisor.

2. **Express Emotions Appropriately:**

- Convey a vivid portrayal of the abuse without losing emotional control.
- Manage emotions by imagining the experience happening to someone else and you were telling the story as someone who observed this.
- Rehearse telling the story calmly and confidently.
- Take deliberate pauses if needed to regain composure.

3. **Provide Consistent Details:**

- Document the abuse details as they occur whenever possible.
- If no log exists, reconstruct incidents on a calendar with as much detail as possible.
- Seek input from co-workers who witnessed the incidents.
- Maintain consistency by referring back to previous reports.

4. **Offer a Plausible Narrative:**

- Support your story with published reports and research on workplace bullying.
- Keep stories clear and straightforward, avoiding overly sensational details.

5. **Stay Relevant:**

- Exclude unnecessary or exaggerated details.

- Focus on the inappropriate behaviors of the bully.
- Discuss your situation with other affected colleagues and present a unified front to your supervisor if possible.
- Encourage your supervisor to consult with other bullied employees.

6. Highlight Your Competence:

- Showcase your career achievements and positive performance reviews.
- Share the efforts you have made to counteract the bully's behavior.
- Explain how the bully's actions negatively impact workplace performance.

7. Consider Others' Perspectives:

- Acknowledge the potential disbelief in the reported events.
- Recognize that the bully may be unaware of the impact on you and others.
- Explain the broader negative effects of bullying on colleagues and departmental work.

8. Be Specific:

- Utilize specific, concrete language.
- Identify the bully and outline problematic behavior.
- Provide specific dates, locations, times, and involved individuals.
- Encourage questions or requests for clarification from the listener.