

Spring 2025, Vol. 19 No. 1

Equipping for the Future: Teaching Anti-Harassment Practices Within Management Courses

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ABSTRACT

Management curriculum would benefit from incorporating applied case analyses for creating anti-harassment cultures within today's businesses. Applying the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) standard for respectful workplace practices to authentic business cases allows students the opportunity to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes as sexual harassment. This article provides instructors with guided classroom discussions that allows students to examine respectful workplace practices, analyze harassment occurrences, and develop strategies to prevent workplace harassment. Defining harassment and examining the EEOC's policies allows business classrooms to share in the efforts to promote positive workplace environments.

Key terms: Harassment Prevention, Respectful Workplace, #MeToo, Sexual Harassment

INTRODUCTION

The #MeToo movement which began in 2017 highlighted the need for continued harassment prevention efforts within the workplace; this moral movement scrutinized behaviors perceived as sexual harassment across gender identities and sexual orientations, fostering conversations on consent and workplace ethics (Kessler et al., 2023). High-profile sexual misconduct cases, such as Harvey Weinstein, Ben Affleck, Mario Batali, Dustin Hoffman, Ken Friedman, Kevin Spacey, Bill Cosby, Ryan Lizza, Mark Halperin, Matt Lauer, Charlie Rose, Louis C.K., Nick Carter, Al Franken, and Roy Moore (Dolmestch, 2020; Hemel & Lund, 2018; Traub & Van Hoose Garofalo, 2019) additionally confirmed the proliferation of sexual misconduct behaviors, exposing actions that remained concealed for decades (Hershcovis et al., 2021). Many of these prominent cases involve situations where a single individual purposefully and egregiously committed a series of harassing acts against several subordinate victims, over 85 in Weinstein's case (R. Jackson, 2018); however, despite increased awareness, recognition, and media coverage of sexual harassment, continued misconduct confirms that education focused on sexual harassment prevention remains necessary today.

In addition to individual cases, a wide variety of organizations including Walmart, Chipotle, Applebee's, IHOP, and Konos, Inc., have experienced legal issues and public

scrutiny for sexual misconduct, organizational retaliation, and a lack of concern for employee protections in their workplaces (EEOC, 2020, 2021; Graff, 2017; Robb, 2017). Despite the differences in scope and nature, recent media coverage and increased awareness by employees regarding harassment issues confirms that businesses continue to struggle with creating anti-harassment cultures. Jenner et al. (2022) stated a comprehensive approach integrating both organizational initiatives and individualized interventions could enhance workforce awareness, provide critical support to victims, and contribute to the prevention of sexual harassment. Extending the need for a multifaceted approach to harassment prevention, Steinbauer (2024) recommends that college students can more effectively learn harassment prevention behaviors and practices by experiencing and evaluating authentic and often uncomfortable harassment scenarios. With the importance of protecting employees and reducing this widespread problem, management education could play a part in harassment prevention initiatives by addressing this topic early and often in the classroom.

The goals of this article are to (a) review current anti-harassment policies, (b) allow students to apply the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Respectful Workplace Practices to recent EEOC harassment cases, and (c) offer guided classroom discussion points which clarify forms of workplace misconduct and promote appropriate organizational practices. Defining harassment, examining the EEOC's policies, and exploring the impact of the #MeToo movement will also be explored. The use of case studies as a means to teach harassment prevention benefits students by helping promote critical thinking, student engagement, and applied learning (Herreid & Schiller, 2013).

The topic is relevant to human resource (HR), management, and leadership faculty for reviewing workplace routines and policies as well as instructing emerging business professionals regarding this topic. This article contributes to the existing body of knowledge by examining contexts for workplace sexual harassment and considering how EEOC's respectful workplace recommendations can be applied within business operations. Providing a foundation of sexual harassment policies and research, along with authentic harassment cases with applied curriculum instructions, helps academicians and trainers to tackle a necessary and often challenging topic.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Harassment addresses any form of discrimination which violates employment laws including Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 1991 amendment to the Civil Rights Act, 1967 Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (Becton et al., 2017). Despite social media and workplace conversations regarding sexual harassment allegations, how sexual harassment is defined has not fundamentally changed (L. Jackson, 2018). Harassment is described as offensive conduct considered severe or pervasive in which a reasonable person would consider the words or behaviors to be intimidating, hostile, or abusive (EEOC, 2018). Although the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964, it was not until 1980 with the establishment of the EEOC as well as court interpretations that (a) sexual harassment was considered

discrimination under the Civil Rights Act, (b) guidelines for determining what behaviors constituted discrimination were issued, and (c) given certain criteria, employers were determined liable for harassment behaviors in the workplace (Back & Freeman, 2018; Sherwyn et al., 2001; Soni & Soni, 2018).

Although the core definition of sexual harassment has not changed in over 40 years, the subjectivity and ambiguity of related terms such as “hostile environment” and “reasonable person” complicates individual and organizational awareness of this matter and obscures how company policies and employee training programs are approached (Rawski et al., 2022; Roehling & Huang, 2018). Although the definition remains unchanged, the lens by which misconduct is viewed and classified has evolved to encompass egregious demands for sex, sexual advances, unwanted sexual encounters, sex talk, requests for sexual favors, off-color/offensive/sexual jokes, stereotypical/demeaning comments, and verbal/physical conduct which are perceived to be sexual in nature, drawing more corporate attention and responses to this issue (Gertner, 2018). The importance of this is that the perception of the victim indicates whether the action was harassment, not the intent of the harasser (Mujtaba & Kuzak, 2023). Furthermore, associated negative conduct of microaggressions or microinequalities have also recently emerged as workplace issues can often become misclassified as sexual harassment despite failing to meet the severe or persistent behavioral standards (Lobban et al., 2022; Tonowski, 2018). Evolving classifications and interpretations of sexual harassment makes this topic essential for continued educational review and focus.

#MeToo

Initially used in 2006 by Tarana Burke within her nonprofit agency to support and rally sexual harassment and assault victims, the term “Me Too,” which now has gone viral, has prompted increased awareness of the undisclosed and troubling incidences of sexual harassment abuses (Fortado, 2018; Garcia, 2017; Shugerman, 2017). Media attention revitalized the term in 2017, when actress Alyssa Milano asked victims of sexual harassment, who had previously been marginalized or silenced, to voice the extent of misconduct in the U.S. by posting #MeToo on social media platforms; within 24 hours #MeToo went viral creating an international dialogue regarding the ubiquity of sexual harassment and assault (Brockes, 2018; Fortado, 2018; Garcia, 2017; Greene, 2018; Prasad, 2018; Xiong et al., 2019). Within a few weeks, #MeToo had been shared in over 77 million Facebook posts and tweeted over 2.3 million times within 85 countries, and within the first year, over 19 million disclosed sexual harassment experiences via #MeToo (Prasad, 2018). Millions of people shared sexual harassment experiences, highlighting that even with the goal of preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, it still remains pervasive (Hersch, 2024). Many women acknowledged their harassment had occurred years ago, past the current statute of limitations for legal actions (Haller, 2018; Hanzen et al., 2021). The #MeToo movement marked a remarkable revolution in that it gained extensive momentum quickly and was not based on any new law or legal finding but developed from the consensus that sexual harassment in the workplace was pervasive and unacceptable (Tonowski, 2018).

Considered one of the most momentous social and labor movements (Asardag & Komorowski, 2025; Windham, 2017), #MeToo has galvanized women to counter institutionalized sexism (Burke & Carolissen, 2018; Groucutt et al., 2018), shed light on workplace rights and sexual harassment reporting procedures, allowed victims to be heard, and generated related and relevant media conversations including #hertoo, #himtoo, and #timesup (Fortado, 2018; Nomamiukor & Wisco, 2024; Xiong et al., 2019). Recent research has highlighted complex reactions to #MeToo, reflecting deeper concerns which Williamson et al. (2024) stated could help therapists understand and treat trauma. #MeToo was not isolated to public figures; many business executives, including Mark Hurd of Hewlett Packard, Don Charney of American Apparel, Roger Ailes of Fox News, and Mark Light of Signet Jewelers resigned amid sexual misconduct accusations (Hemel & Lund, 2018). Organizational leaders and HR practitioners now suggest that businesses, both inside and outside of the U.S., consider sexual harassment pervasiveness, which become spotlighted with #MeToo, as a fiduciary threat and a workplace compliance risk, analogous to cyber security or foreign corruption, inducing businesses to examine failures within company cultures and consider the expansion of company policies (Crabb, 2018; Hemel & Lund, 2018; Taylor, Vigil, & Madalena, 2018).

EEOC Respectful Workplace Initiatives

With increased workplace awareness, organizational initiatives, and legal clarification regarding behaviors deemed as sexual harassment, the EEOC recognized the need for additional initiatives. In October 2017, after an 18-month taskforce investigation, the EEOC launched new respectful workplace initiatives and anti-harassment training recommendations which focused less on legal liability standards and term meanings and more on respect for both employee, supervisors, and workplace civility (EEOC, 2018). The EEOC asserted that workplace incivility had become the “gateway drug” to workplace harassment and focused change recommendations and efforts toward employers who have ignored employee complaints, failed to create proper complaint structures, or neglected to take actions in response to substantiated complaints (Lewis, 2018; Karrow, 2022; Traub & Van Hoose Garofalo, 2019). In addition to training recommendations, the EEOC also introduced a new private online portal for employees to file charges of harassment allowing employees to conveniently seek help from the EEOC if they felt their employer was not preventing or responding to sexual misconduct in the workplace (EEOC, 2018).

The EEOC, through their respectful workplace initiatives, recommended five core principles in order to prevent or address harassment misconduct: “(a) committed and engaged leadership; (b) consistent and demonstrated accountability; (c) strong and comprehensive harassment policies; (d) trusted and accessible complaint procedures; and (e) regular, interactive training tailored to the audience and the organization” (EEOC, 2017a, p. 2).

Utilizing these core principles, the EEOC assists employers in preventing the occurrence of workplace misconduct, appropriately responding to workplace

harassment, promoting practices which encourage workplace civility, and enhancing employer's compliance efforts. Table 1 summarizes the proactive EEOC's Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment (2017a) recommendations. These practices were aimed at creating organizational cultures which clarify what are prohibited sexual harassment behaviors, establishing policies which value and respect all employees, and effectively communicating harassment prevention policies (Burrell, 2024; Przybyla, 2017; Zugelder et al., 2018).

Table 1. EEOC Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment

Prevention Principle	Prevention Strategy
Leadership & Accountability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly, frequently, and unequivocally state that harassment is prohibited; policies must be comprehensive, easy to understand, and regularly communicated to all employees 2. Incorporate discrimination policies and procedures within the organization's operational framework 3. Allocate sufficient resources, staff time, and leadership energies for prevention efforts 4. Provide authority to create, implement, and manage prevention strategies 5. Assess, evaluate, minimize, and/or eliminate harassment risk factors 6. Maintain and confirm multiple avenues for employees making a complaint 7. Regularly and effectively train all level of employees regarding harassment policies and complaint system 8. Task all employees for creating and maintaining a culture of anti-harassment 9. Impose prompt, consistent, and proportionate discipline when misconduct or retaliation occurs 10. Conduct anonymous employee survey regularly to assess if harassment is occurring 11. Partner with outside resources to evaluate the organization's harassment prevention strategies
Comprehensive and Effective	Policy should be clearly written in all languages used by employees, regularly communicated, periodically reviewed, and include the following:

Harassment Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application to all levels of the organization, including applicants, clients, customers, vendors, etc. 2. Unequivocal statement that harassment based on protected characteristics is prohibited 3. Description, including examples, of prohibited conduct 4. Description of where employees can find information 5. Description of multiple complaint system avenues 6. Encouragement to report misconduct, even if they are unsure if the conduct violates policy 7. Organizational statement committing (a) prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation, (b) keeping identity of reporter, victims, witnesses, alleged harassers confidential when permitted by law 8. Encouragement of employees to participate in investigations of alleged harassment 9. Assurance of thorough and impartial investigation and immediate and appropriate corrective action
Effective and Accessible Harassment Complaint System	<p>An effective complaint system should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be fully resourced to respond promptly and thoroughly 2. Be translated into all languages used by employees 3. Be offered in multiple avenues, including paths to report complaints against senior leaders 4. Be responsive to complaints provided through bystanders 5. Describe information about what will be requested 6. Commit to neutral, safe, and documented investigations 7. Confirm the protection of privacy of all stakeholders to the greatest extent possible, consistent with relevant legal requirements 8. Confirm that retaliation will result in imposed sanctions 9. Ensure that alleged harassers are not prematurely presumed guilty or disciplined 10. Include a process to convey resolution to complainant and alleged harasser

Effective Harassment Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Championed by organizational leaders 2. Repeated and reinforced regularly 3. Provided to employees at all organizational levels 4. Clear and understandable instruction, in all languages used by employees 5. Tailored to specific workplace/workforce 6. Conducted by qualified trainers and designed to engage participants 7. Routinely evaluated and revised 8. Include descriptions of prohibited harassment, tailored examples for the organization, and information about employee rights and responsibilities 9. Encouragement for all employees to report misconduct 10. Description of the complaint process system, identification of contact information, and explanation of type of information which will be requested 11. Assurance that employees who report will not be subjected to retaliation 12. Explanation of complaint system, confidentiality rules, and the range of possible consequences for engaging in misconduct 13. Identification of how to minimize risk factors 14. Provide opportunities to ask questions
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(Retrieved from EEOC Promising Practices for Harassment, 2017a)

Additionally, these harassment prevention practices provide resources for workplace landscapes and institutional characteristics, where sexual harassments may more likely occur. All organizations and industries are susceptible to misconduct; however, environments where (a) men outnumber women, (b) leadership is male dominated, (c) organizational power structures are hierarchical, (d) entry- and lower-level employees are dependent on supervisors for promotion and pay increases, (f) power is highly concentrated on a single individual, and (g) employees are isolated, working with a single supervisor in a non-collaborative environment are contexts which are ripe for potential misconduct (Burrell et al., 2024; Burrow et al., 2021; Gertner, 2018; Hinze, 2004; Hoffman, 2024). While isolated workers may provide for environmental conditions suitable for potential abuse, peer to peer harassment also impacts businesses. Fortado (2018) suggest that peer to peer sexual harassment constitutes the majority of women who report misconduct.

Harassment Prevention Instructional Activities

HR, management, and leadership faculty should tackle topics of creating respectful workplaces. With learning objectives to (a) develop shared understanding of sexual harassment in the workplace and respectful workplace initiatives, (b) analyze workplace harassment occurrences, and (c) apply organizational strategies to prevent workplace harassment, academicians can begin the process of training future leaders to understand anti-harassment laws, embrace anti-harassment cultures, promote safe and productive work cultures, practice open communication strategies, and develop a commitment to discrimination prevention. We have integrated this activity into an upper-division HR management class as well as an organizational culture and leadership class; we have found that students who have a base knowledge of management tend to have sufficient knowledge of the legal, ethical, and professional standards needed to apply curriculum concepts.

Two activities are provided within this analysis; our analysis provides easily adopted curriculum discussion and reference support for faculty to use. Activity 1, described below, allows students to meet the first two learning objectives of creating shared understanding and analyzing workplace harassment. Activity 2 addresses all three learning objectives including allowing students to recommend strategies and processes which will help to reduce or prevent sexual misconduct. Appendix A provides a summary of each of the cases discussed in Activity 2 as well as discussion questions aimed at extending each of the cases. Use of these activities can involve in-class discussions, group activities, out-of-class assignments, or online applications; however, we feel in-class discussion and in-class group activities provide the optimum curriculum experience for this topic, by allowing students to respectfully consider multiple authentic scenarios.

The EEOC provides instructional resources aimed at promoting harassment prevention discussions. Activity 1, see Table 2, provides students with five relevant harassment cases, the EEOC's findings in each scenario, and applicable classroom discussions for each situation. Each case and topic provide common occurrences of sexual harassment which can be examined and dissected. Allowing small groups of students to review and report to the class on each individual case allows students to analyze workplace harassment occurrences and clarify perceptions regarding this topic. Additionally, asking student groups to describe pertinent concepts within each case allows students to mutually identify how anti-harassment fits into businesses, increases critical and application thinking, helps students to recall and relate harassment constructs, and begins to build a personal anti-harassment framework.

Table 2. *EEOC Case Descriptions*

Case: Grocery Store Sexual Harassment / Female to Male Harassment

- Link: <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/two-young-men-report-sexual-harassment-new-jersey-grocery-store>
- Overall Findings: Two male employees were sexually harassed by female supervisor
- Relevant Considerations: Initially legal scholars and courts rejected the notion that supervisors who demanded sexual favors from subordinates or the sexual misconduct between co-workers was the sexual discrimination behavior described under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, suggesting that businesses were not legally responsible for these actions (Grossman, 2015; Zugelder et al., 2018). However, the court's interpretation in subsequent cases has evolved and determined that Title VII does address sexual harassment claims within the workplace. With increased awareness regarding workplace harassment came the notion that men's experiences of harassment were valid and required attention; while most evidence indicates that women are more likely to be the victim of sexual harassment, evidence clearly exists that men also experience this type of harassment from both male and female perpetrators (Street et al., 2007).

From 2010 to 2016, the EEOC reported that approximately 12,000 cases of sexual misconduct were consistently reported each year and estimated that 87%-94% of workplace harassment victims, despite sex, did not file formal complaint charges (Haller, 2018). In 2017 the EEOC reported a 50% increase in sexual harassment suits and a 12% increase in sexual harassment charges (EEOC, 2018). Following #MeToo, charges of harassment increased; in 2017 6,696 charges were filed. In 2018 the EEOC received 7,609 charges and in 2019 they received 7,514 charges; in 2020 the EEOC reported a reduction in filed charges at 6,587 and in 2021 they reported 5,581 charges (EEOC, 2022). While charges of harassment have declined recently, in 2022 the EEOC reported 98,411 charges of alleged harassment and 27,291 charges of alleged sexual harassment between 2018 and 2021 (EEOC, 2022).

Although sexual harassment protections are now viewed as standard protections, workplace analysts argue many sexual harassment cases can be questioned for meeting the unwelcome, severe, or pervasive standards (Taylor et al., 2025). Research has revealed that men often more tolerant of sexual harassment than women and are less likely to report workplace sexual harassment behaviors (Reilly et al., 1986). Despite the creation of organizational policies and reporting procedures, sexual harassment charges have remained continuous (EEOC, 2018) and underreporting of sexual harassment incidences continue to plague business environments (Gonzales, 2022).

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- Key Discussions:
 - Retaliation for complaining cannot be tolerated.
 - Both sexes are protected from sexual harassment
 - Extended Conversations:
 - Trans Ocean Seafood paid \$75,000 in November 2017 on behalf of three female employees who complained of receiving continuous sexually explicit comments and jokes by a male coworker (EEOC, 2017b).

Case: Young Mexican Restaurant Employee / Harassment of a Minor

- Link: <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/sixteen-year-old-claims-she-was-harassed-pennsylvania-mexican-restaurant>
- Overall Findings: 19-year-old shift supervisor sexually harassed 16-year employee; restaurant cited for failing to fire supervisor
- Relevant Considerations: Women and minority groups have been shown to be at a higher risk of bullying and harassment in the workplace (Österman & Boström, 2022). In a 2016 speech given to the Society for Human Resource Management, Victoria Lipnic, EEOC Commissioner, concluded that 30 years of research revealed that current workplace harassment training programs had not resulted in meaningfully reducing workplace harassment occurrences (Folz, 2016). In 2016, the EEOC initiated a comprehensive taskforce investigation regarding the pervasiveness of sexual misconduct in the workplace. This taskforce concluded that despite improvements to workplace environments and the court system holding workplace harassment as actionable discrimination, workplace landscapes continue to struggle with maintaining and sustaining anti-harassment cultures (EEOC, 2018).

Sexual harassment of minors provides an added layer of importance for anti-harassment education and training in both college programs and workplaces. Because of the vulnerable nature of a minor in the workplace, dependency on adult support, a lack of workplace experience, susceptibility for abuse, and underdeveloped cognitive and decision-making abilities, today's businesses must proactively consider how to create and advance anti-harassment policies and thorough investigative systems which protects all employees especially minors and other at-risk populations. Investigations may be conducted internally by HR or externally; additionally investigations may involve interviewing the accuser, accused, and witnesses. This process should conclude with a clear next course of action including possible disciplinary measures, policy changes, and support resources (Blumell & Mulupi, 2025).

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- Key Discussions:
 - Businesses are responsible to investigate sexual harassment claims.
 - Resources available to employees who have been harassed.
 - Extended Conversations:
 - In January 2018, Indi's Fast Food Restaurants, Inc., paid \$340,000 to 15 former female employees, some of whom were minors at the time of the alleged sexual harassment (Greenwald, 2018).
 - A class action lawsuit, *Neal v. MDOC*, addressed instances of sexual misconduct by male correctional staff against incarcerated women within the Michigan prison system, culminating in a settlement of \$100 million (Fedock et al., 2021).

Case: Fast Food Employees / Harassment off Worksite

- Link: <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/fourteen-year-old-reports-sexual-harassment-and-assault-kansas-fast-food-restaurant>
 - Overall Findings: Fast food employee was harassed by supervisor when giving her a ride home; employees were not informed of the company's anti-harassment policies
 - Relevant Considerations: Sexual harassment may occur both within and outside of the workplace as well as within and outside of working hours. Harassment can occur at office parties, external organization functions, and work conferences/trips. For some victims, verbal sexual harassment may seem less hostile and even more typical than physical harassment (McDonald, 2012); however, emotional, psychological, and physical harassment remains illegal when it meets the severe or pervasive standard.

Lim and Cortina (2005) determined that sexual harassment victims rarely experience misconduct in isolation, but rather often experience mistreatment, incivility, bullying and other types of abuse along with sexual harassment. Organizations whose culture does not value employees' well-being and whose leaders do not model and promote anti-harassment cultures are more susceptible to the normalization and continuation of harassment behaviors.
 - Key Discussions:
 - Harassment which occurs off the worksite may be illegal.
 - Employer is responsible to inform employees of its sexual harassment policy.
 - Extended Conversations:
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- Wynn Resorts were fined \$20 million for failing to report and investigate several sexual harassment claims made against Chief Executive Officer Steve Wynn (Schult, 2019).
 - In 2022, The University of California agreed to pay nearly \$700 million to victims of sexual assault by gynecologist and oncologist, James Heaps, over the course of his career at UCLA (Dyer, 2022).

Case: Long History of Harassment at the Bagel Shop / Pervasive Harassment Problem

- Link: <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/teenage-girls-report-sexual-harassment-california-bagel-shop>
- Overall Findings: Multiple women complained of sexual harassment over several months; two employees quit because of manager's sexual misconduct
- Relevant Considerations: Court cases including the 1986 Supreme Court case, *Meritor Saving Bank v. Vinson* and the 1993 case *Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc.* established that sexual harassment was in fact illegal under the Civil Rights Act (Back & Freedman, 2018; Hersch, 2024; Soni & Soni, 2018). Pervasive sexual harassment refers to unwelcome sexual behaviors, which can be verbal, visual or psychological, that create an intimidating or threatening work environment. Behaviors such as sexual jokes, appearance comments, inappropriate memes, offensive rumors, ongoing mocking are few examples of pervasive harassment.

Additionally, *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson* (1986) and *Barnes v. Costle* (1977) concluded that supervisors who demand sex create quid pro quo (an adverse retaliatory consequence for accepting or refusing sexual advancement) and foster a hostile work environment (physical or verbal conduct within the workplace which is severe or pervasive making it impossible for a reasonable person to do their job); thus, employers should be held liable for wrongdoings that remain within the scope of employment. These groundbreaking cases and EEOC policies have confirmed that employers who are negligent in exercising reasonable care to protect and educate their employees can be liable for sexual misconduct occurrences within the work environment (Barnes, 2023; Berkowitz & Gossellin, 2020).

With the establishment of quid pro quo and hostile environment harassment, subsequent cases have allowed businesses to provide an affirmative defense regarding sexual harassment charges. In *Burlington Industries v. Ellerth* (1998) and *Farager v. Boca Raton* (1998), employers argued less liability if they had established anti-harassment policies and reporting procedures, despite whether victims utilized the procedures. The Ellerth and Farager cases have prompted the widespread adoption of specific sexual harassment policies and

reporting procedures to both correct and prevent workplace harassment occurrences (Lawton, 2004); however, an organization's ineffective formal reporting procedure or measures can lead to under-reporting or increased misconduct (Mansour et al., 2021).

- Key Discussions:
 - Sexual harassment may be severe or pervasive.
 - Organizations must take immediate steps to stop sexual harassment after a complaint has been filed.
- Extended Conversations:
 - Two joint Colorado based potato-packing companies, Smokin' Spuds, Inc. and Farming Technology, Inc. agreed to pay \$450,000 for sexual harassment and retaliation charges (Greenwald, 2015).

Case: Sexual Jokes at the Golf Club / Co-workers Harassing Speech and Blaming the Victim

- Link: <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/teenagers-report-sexual-harassment-california-golf-club>
- Overall Findings: Male co-workers harassed female co-workers with inappropriate sexual jokes. Victims' complaints were dismissed when told this type of behavior was expected
- Relevant Considerations: Victim blaming can become an adverse reaction to a harassment claim. This type of retaliation occurs when the accused directly or indirectly implies that the person who experienced the abuse prompted the harm, essentially placing the onus on the victim for their own harm (Mansour et al., 2021).

Organizations can implement various strategies aimed at minimizing victim blaming. Promoting bystander training and reporting expectations, developing employee support systems, committing to thorough investigations, and developing cultures of accountability and transparency are a few mechanisms which can minimize victim blaming (Mansour et al., 2021).

- Key Discussions:
 - Harassment can be from co-workers.
 - Blaming the victim cannot be tolerated
 - Extended Conversations:
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- In September 2018, McDonald workers in 10 U.S. cities protested a lack of organizational response and protection regarding the persistence of sexual harassment in the workplace (Fortado, 2018).
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Furthermore, we have provided an additional list of instructional summary questions below which allows for the instructor to further elucidate these cases. These questions, listed in Table 3, are aimed at helping students to critically consider the topic and apply multiple policies.

Table 3. Activity 1 Follow-up Discussion Questions

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1. What can/should organizations do to prevent retaliation behaviors?
 2. What do you feel are common employee misconceptions regarding sexual harassment and sexual harassment prevention within today's organizations?
 3. How can organizations reinforce their anti-harassment policies?
 4. What are potential hazards when investigating sexual harassment claims?
 5. Where does a company's responsibilities begin and end regarding sexual harassment between and among its employees?
 6. Is a written handbook policy sufficient deterrent for harassment prevention?
 7. How should organizational disciplinary policies differ when addressing severe or pervasive cases?
 8. In what ways should an organization protect the privacy of victims, witnesses, and those who have been accused?
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To fully address this topic, students should not only understand how to identify occurrences of misconduct, but also recommend and apply strategies to prevent workplace harassment; Activity 2 addresses all three learning objectives by moving beyond shared understanding and allowing students to strategize policies and organizational program changes. As in Activity 1, the EEOC has provided multiple recent examples which afford students with an instructional opportunity of case analysis and strategy application. MWM, Inc.; Chipotle Services LLC; Tegra Medical LLC; Walmart Stores East, LP; Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC; and James Cars of Hamburg, LLC provide a variety of case examples, allowing students to propose strategies and new organizational initiatives for promoting anti-harassment cultures. This analysis will briefly summarize each case. Each case will follow with at least one of the prevention principles recommended by the EEOC's respectful workplace initiatives in Table 1 and instructional follow-up questions and discussions aimed at helping students strategize

organizational improvements. This process is aimed at immersing students within authentic situations allowing them to advocate future organizational changes.

MVM, INC

MVM, Inc Case Summary

Based in Ashburn, Virginia, MVM provides security contractors, recruitment, training, and related safety services to its federal customers including Departments of Defense and Justice, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and the Social Security Administration (MVM, 2025). MVM's case involves one of their male site managers at the Woodlawn, Maryland Social Security office. Their manager was cited for unwanted physical touch and vulgar sexual comments directed towards a female security guard as well as other female employees. Sexual misconduct included cornering the victim in an elevator, kissing without consent, making inappropriate sexual and crude comments about appearances, touching in an unwelcome manner, and making physical advances; MVM senior management had witnessed the harassment and allowed the misconduct to persist. After complaining, the MVM security guard was fired in retaliation. In January 2021, the EEOC published a press release detailing how MVM was fully aware of the harassment but allowed the situation to persist by ignoring the misconduct. Additionally, firing the harassment victim for complaining exacerbated their culpability (EEOC MVM Press Release, 2021).

MVM, Inc Prevention Principle

EEOC District Director, Jamie Williamson noted regarding MVM:

"When an employer knew or should have known about sexual harassment, it cannot escape liability by simply relying upon the promulgation of an anti-harassment policy. The employer has an affirmative duty to take actions reasonably calculated to prevent and remedy the harassment." (EEOC MVM Press Release, 2021, p. 8)

With senior leaders' knowledge of misconduct, decisive disregard, and purposeful victim retribution, focusing future recommendations on leadership and accountability within MVM is paramount. EEOC respectful workplace initiatives are centered on having committed and engaged leaders who seek to consistently create and sustain company cultures which communicate that harassment will not be tolerated.

MVM, Inc Prevention Strategy

Referencing Table 1, leadership and accountability recommendations includes 11 strategies aimed at creating and maintaining anti-harassment cultures. Leadership and accountability become critical prompts when creating and fostering anti-harassment cultures (Blumell & Mulupi, 2025; Brue, 2021; Mansfield et al., 2017). Businesses who communicate a zero-tolerance policy must enforce it consistently and uniformly despite with whom the claim is against (Lewis, 2018). This means that business leaders are accountable for enforcing policies, living by organizational policies, and monitoring work environments to identify potential risks; ultimately all organizations must treat all

employees equally when handling complaints (Haller, 2018). Ultimately, establishing organizational rules and policies are insufficient to prevent workplace harassment; harassment prevention policies aligned with leadership reinforcement, clear reporting channels, and victim safeguarding produce true anti-harassment cultures (Blumell & Mulupi, 2025).

When reviewing this case, instructors can ask students to apply leadership and accountability recommendations by asking the following questions: (a) What should be MVM's anti-harassment policy, (b) How can senior leaders ensure that their anti-harassment policy is comprehensive and widely understood; (c) What are MVM's harassment risk factors and what steps should they implement to minimize risk, and (d) Outside of the company's anti-harassment policies, what can leaders do to correct current harassment practices and prevent future misconduct? Application recommendations should center on senior leadership's oversight of the MVM's anti-harassment policies, complaint and discipline systems, employee training, and related preventive and corrective initiatives.

CHIPOTLE SERVICES LLC (CHIPOTLE MEXICAN GRILL)

Chipotle Services LLC (Chipotle Mexican Grill) Case Summary

Focused on sustainability, using organic and locally produce, and humanely raised animals, Chipotle is known as a fast, fresh, casual, Mexican food restaurant (Chipotle, 2025). Founded in 1993 by Steve Ellis with 16 restaurants in Colorado, Chipotle's fast growth caught the attention of McDonalds, which became one of their major investors from 1998 through 2006. In August 2021, the EEOC reported a suit against Chipotle when a male crew member at the Tampa, Florida location repeatedly made sexually offensive comments about a female service manager's body; the organization agreed to pay \$70,000 in damages and institute other changes. The EEOC reported that comments escalated and became inappropriate touching, including thrusting genitals toward the service manager's face. The service manager reported the incident to her general manager (GM) and informed the GM of her intent to report the incidents to the company's headquarters. Subsequently the service manager was terminated.

Chipotle Services LLC Prevention Principle

Organizational policies should address and combat normalizing behaviors, victims who passively respond to harassment, and "bystander" and "worshipful silence" viewpoints which allow misconduct to go unchecked (Benavides-Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Haller, 2018). In some harassment cases, victims feel that inappropriate behaviors are so "normal" that when asked if they have been harassed, victims are either reluctant or oblivious that misconduct has occurred (Benavides-Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Fortado, 2018). Fear of retaliation, adverse job repercussions, humiliation, professional discrimination, social retribution, career losses, and being labeled a "trouble maker," may cause many victims and observers to fail to report (Bennett & Hennekam, 2018; Haller, 2018). Therefore, organizational policies

should clearly indicate that employees who witness or become aware of harassment, must report. Regrettably, the bystander effect is a major reason why harassment goes under-reported in many businesses (Keplinger, et al., 2019).

In the Chipotle's case, after the EEOC filed suit in US District Court for the Middle District of Florida, the restaurant agreed to pay damages, develop and conduct Title VII training, expand its reporting processes and procedures, and implement organizational policies aimed at sexual harassment prevention. Based on the EEOC's recommendations, focusing an analysis on creating an effective and accessible harassment complaint system and developing effective training (see Table 1), would help the organization create a more supportive and appropriate working environment. An effective complaint system should (a) welcome questions, concerns, or complaints, (b) encourage employees to report misconduct no matter the situation, (c) treat victims, witnesses, and alleged harasser with respect, (d) promptly, thoroughly and impartially address complaints, and (e) enforce consequences when harassment, misconduct, or retaliation is found (EEOC, 2020). Similarly, anti-harassment training should be regular, interactive, comprehensive, and offered to all employees, from senior leadership to entry-level workers, with a goal to review organizational policies, procedures, expectations, and consequences (EEOC, 2021).

Chipotle Services LLC Prevention Strategy

Effective reporting systems and anti-harassment training recommendations are addressed within Table 1. When reviewing Chipotle's case, instructors can apply reporting systems and training recommendations by asking students to consider the following questions: (a) what are possible retaliation behaviors and what sanctions should be imposed on individuals responsible for retaliation, (b) how should Chipotle ensure that alleged harassers are not prematurely sanctioned, and (c) what knowledge, skills, and abilities should Chipotle employees have if they are responsible for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints. Additionally, students could create a flow-chart of Chipotle's complaint system, considering key stakeholders and processes and develop a complaint documentation record suggesting what details are needed and what questions should be asked.

When considering how to create effective harassment training, students could analyze the benefits and drawbacks of internal versus external anti-harassment training, various training formats, and live versus virtual methodologies. As training has been found to be more effective when tailored to the organization and employees, asking students to suggest what unique characteristics Chipotle should implement within its training based on its industry or employee base provides an additional level of application. Finally, students could also develop training examples of sexual harassment which are specifically tailored toward Chipotle and its workforce.

TEGRA MEDICAL, LLC

Tegra Medical, LLC Case Summary

Headquartered in Massachusetts, Tegra Medical, LLC manufactures medical devices and surgical components (Tegra Medical, n.d.). Tegra was created in 2007 and was acquired by SFS Group in 2016. The EEOC reported that Ivan Pacheco, one of Tegra's manufacturing supervisors, made vulgar comments to several female employees, touching one woman inappropriately. After four female employees complained to the HR office about Pacheco's inappropriate conduct, one of the complainants was retaliated against by denying a medical leave request to care for her son. Additionally, a manager falsely denied prior complaints when another female employee reported misconduct. Rather than addressing the complaints, Tegra retaliated and purposefully transferred the complainant to a position where she was exposed to materials for which she was allergic. In November 2020, Tegra was required to pay \$240,000 to two female victims for harassment and retaliation. The court's decision in this case also required Tegra to create an independent complaint hotline, revise its discrimination investigation complaint process, provide anti-harassment training to all employees, ensure additional EEO training for its HR department, and employ and maintain a Spanish-speaking HR employee. Additionally, the HR Officer was required to obtain and maintain a senior human resource certification in order to remain in her position.

Tegra Medical, LLC Prevention Principle

Acting swiftly to prevent and end sexual harassment in the workplace should be the goal of all organizations. In Tegra's case, the organization not only allowed sexual misconduct to continue, but the company perpetuated the problem by retaliating against those who complained. Creation of a comprehensive and clear harassment policy, which is regularly communicated to employees in all levels of the organization will ground the organization's commitment to maintain a respectful workplace.

Tegra Medical, Prevention Strategy

Table 1 provides multiple strategies recommended by the EEOC when an organization wants to create a comprehensive anti-harassment policy. Tegra's case provides an important reminder that an organization's policy should be clearly written, unambiguously communicated, easy to understand, and translated into all languages commonly used by its employees. Sexual harassment occurs in all industries, but some speculate that industries which employ low wage workers who are unaware of organizational grievance procedures are more likely to experience sexual harassment (O'Hara & O'Donohue, 1998). Students can further consider this case by (a) suggesting organizational strategies which communicate that anti-harassment policies apply to all levels of the organization, including applicants, clients, customers, and other stakeholders, (b) developing Tegra's discipline policy when various types of sexual harassment are confirmed, and (c) pinning an unequivocal statement that retaliation will not be tolerated.

WALMART STORES, EAST, LP

Walmart Stores, East, LP Case Summary

Walmart started with a single discount store in 1962 in Rogers, Arkansas. As of January 2025, Walmart operates more than 4,600 stores and 600 Sam's Clubs within the U.S and 5,560 stores overseas (Walmart, 2025). In June of 2021, the EEOC reported how a male Walmart employee in Geneva, New York regularly made unwelcome inappropriate sexual comments about breasts and buttocks and improper physical advancements, including pressing his crotch against female co-workers' buttocks. The male sales associate would hold up thong underwear and state "I can't wait to see you in these," repeatedly asked female employees to hang out alone, and graphically requested to have sex with female co-workers, despite being denied multiple times. Walmart's management in Geneva were aware for years of the misconduct, having received multiple written complaints, but did not act to eliminate the continued harassment. After management recommended that a female complainant should put her "big girl panties on," one female employee resigned. Ultimately Walmart was required to pay \$410,000 in damages, \$175,000 monetary damages for the female associate who resigned and \$235,000 for a class of victims. Additionally, Walmart was cited for creating a hostile work environment and required to train employees to understand their rights, provide all supervisors individual sexual harassment prevention training, and report to the EEOC any future allegations or complaints of sexual harassment.

Walmart Stores Prevention Principle

Resistance to an anti-harassment culture and opposition to training often stems from victims being viewed as overly sensitive (Hinze, 2004). Training which promotes empathy toward harassment victims also improves trainees' attitudes toward the topic (Roehling & Huang, 2018). Making training procedures and content more meaningful and transparent, providing multiple exposure times and opportunities, and outlining a commitment to maintain a discrimination-free workplace provides trainees with the confirmation that harassment will not be tolerated (Gertner, 2018; Roehling & Huang, 2018). Training content should include discrimination clarities, case examples, reporting procedures, protected class awareness, retaliation prohibitions, and reprisal consequences (Cheung et al., 2018; Lewis, 2018; Perry et al., 2010). Training which is presented in a shallow or frivolous manner simply to avoid liability can perpetuate harassment in the workplace and potentially increase harassment indifferences (Shellenbarger, 2018). Additionally, providing new supervisors with the knowledge of how to effectively investigate a harassment claim provides additional training resources (Greene, 2018; Lewis, 2018).

The Walmart case provides a valuable conversation regarding the destructive effects when an organization allows harassment to be pervasive over time. This case affords students an opportunity to apply effective harassment training, including workplace civility training, respectful workplace training, supervisory harassment prevention training, and bystander intervention training.

Walmart Stores Prevention Strategies

“Commitment and accountability should be made a serious business priority that reaches the entire employee population” (Zugelder et al., 2018, p. 110). When employees perceive the company as ethical, having a zero tolerance for harassment language or conduct, they [the workers] will as well (Brueck, 2017). Given the Walmart case, students could uniquely identify how different levels of employees should receive unique training content. For example, supervisors and managers have additional responsibilities of stopping, investigating, identifying, prohibiting, and correcting misconduct; this level of the organization could benefit from additional training. Students could determine and recommend content for non-managerial employees as well as for management and senior staff members. Additionally, students could develop unique anti-harassment expectations for vendors and customers.

Students also could suggest practical strategies that Walmart senior leaders could use to champion training accountability as well as suggest training dynamics needed when tailoring curriculum for all workplaces and levels of employment. Questions which students could address include (a) how leaders can create a culture which accepts and sustains anti-harassment cultures, (b) what are potential risk factors for misconduct at Walmart and what actions should be taken to reduce or eliminate harassment hazards, and (c) what are some training recommendations for resisting sexual advances and intervening to protect others from misconduct?

MARELLI TENNESSEE USA, LLC

Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC Case Summary

A member of the motor vehicles manufacturing industry, Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC supplies automotive system components, including exterior lighting, instrument clusters, displays, and navigation systems for the international automotive sector. In a September 14, 2020 press release, the EEOC noted that a male assembly supervisor sexually harassed multiple female employees working in the Pulaski, Tennessee plant. Despite the women lodging a complaint to management, Marelli took no action to stop the harassment, protect harassment victims, or prevent misconduct from continuing to happen. This case concluded with Marelli paying \$335,000 in damages to four former employees, revising and training employees on a new harassment complaint policy to include written and verbal complaints submissions, providing all employees with annual sexual harassment training, and conducting exit interviews to ensure employees are offered a harassment-free work environment.

Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC Prevention Principle

The Marelli case reminds students that employers are automatically liable for harassment by management, non-supervisory employees, or non-employees (such as vendors, independent contractors, clients, or customers) who create and perpetuate a hostile work environment, for a lack of action when harassment is reported, or for retaliation actions including termination, failure to promote, loss of wage, or unjustifiable discipline or penalty resulting from reporting misconduct. In the Marelli case, students

could focus on leadership and accountability strategies as well as creating a comprehensive and effective anti-harassment policy. Acknowledging that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was passed more than 50 years ago, employees within today's organizations continue to endure offensive, intimidating, hostile, and abusive workplaces.

Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC Prevention Strategies

Allowing students to begin by compiling a list of offensive conduct will help individuals to distinguish the differences between personality annoyances, minor isolated incidents, or petty insults and unlawful conduct (such as jokes, demeaning comments, name calling, mockery, intimidation, insults, threats, lewd objects/pictures, work performance interferences, or physical assaults). Additionally, within this case students could strategize (a) policies and reporting guidelines when there is a conflict of interest, (b) confidentiality restrictions associated with complaints or disciplinary actions, (c) how to create and sustain a compliance-committed culture and (d) if/how Marelli should monitor workplace communications for prohibited or unacceptable conduct.

JAMES MITSUBISHI HAMBURG, LLC

James Mitsubishi Hamburg, LLC Case Summary

In June 2020, the EEOC filed a lawsuit against James Mitsubishi Hamburg (James Auto Management LLC); James Mitsubishi was an auto dealership in Hamburg, New York. In an EEOC February 8, 2021 press release, the GM at the Hamburg dealership and two additional dealerships owned in Rome and Greece, New York made numerous unwelcome comments and advancements toward two female employees. The GM made repeated comments about their bodies and body parts, asked the female employees to join him in his hotel room, mimicked sexual acts in front of employees, and engaged in inappropriate physical contact, including unwanted massages. James Mitsubishi Hamburg was fined and required to pay \$100,000 in damages to both former female employees and was required to issue a disciplinary warning to the harasser, provide the alleged harasser individualized sexual harassment prevention training, and update its sexual harassment policy to including additional reporting options, including a toll-free 24 hour/7 days a week complaint hotline. All employees of the dealership were also required to receive an updated anti-harassment policy and participate in improved anti-harassment training.

James Mitsubishi Hamburg, LLC Prevention Principle

Organizational policies and reporting mechanisms must adhere to relevant federal and state applicable standards as well as should be well-defined and repeatedly communicated throughout the organization. Policies and mechanisms should provide clarity as to what constitutes harassment language and behaviors as well expressly communicate the employer's intolerance against such language and behaviors (Lewis, 2018; Zugelder et al., 2018). Since victims are more likely to report harassment when observing or experiencing quid pro quo relative to hostile environment harassment (Benavides-Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010), clarity of terms and behaviors should be

emphasized through policy and reporting procedures. A lack of clarity and shared understanding between all levels of employees regarding an organization's definition, evaluation criteria, and reporting procedures can result in policy misinterpretation, under reporting, and the continuance of sexual harassment misconduct (Roehling & Huang, 2018).

Given that many current businesses continue to struggle with protecting employees from unlawful sexual harassment and fail to provide employees with targeted anti-harassment training, having students focus on the development of effective training strategies and reporting processes would be appropriate. While all of the EEOC's principles are critical in creating anti-harassment cultures, organizational training continues to be the primary mechanism of providing guidance to all employees regarding behavioral and communication expectations. Additionally, training curriculum should include employees' duty to report when they see or experience harassment and expressly prohibit retaliation against any individuals who submit a report (Lewis, 2018). Training policies and procedural clarity improve harassment reporting rates and improves the perception of anti-harassment cultures (Golshan, 2017). Harassment policies and reporting procedures offered during training should clearly describe harassment language/behaviors, stress confidentiality of communication, offer flexible and multiple reporting means, remove overt or hidden practices which dissuade an employee from complaining about misconduct, describe investigation procedures, and assure no retaliation for reporting regardless of investigatory outcomes (Gertner, 2018; Zugelder et al., 2018).

James Mitsubishi Hamburg, LLC Prevention Strategies

Management practitioners and business leaders should consider what workplace initiatives will drive sustainable anti-harassment cultures and what workplace factors may perpetuate misconduct and non-reporting behaviors. Organizations who fail to act quickly in response to sexual harassment claims, neglect to provide clear information and training on what harassment is or how to report instances, overtly or subtly promote professional retaliation or career damage to employees who report abuse, or accept the social ostracism and isolation which occurs among peers perpetuate underreporting cultures and the continued practice of sexual harassment in the workplace (Bomkamp, 2017; Windham, 2017; Zugelder et al., 2018). While many organizations routinely provide sexual harassment training to employees, follow-up questions should consider if training is primarily offered to meet a legal standard and if training effectively creates anti-harassment cultures. Previous training initiatives and employer policies have only marginally improved anti-harassment cultures in the workplace (Haller, 2018; Perry et al., 2010) and some researchers purport that most anti-harassment training is symbolic, only serving to shield companies from legal liability (Roehling & Huang, 2018). Simply acknowledging a policy or providing training are insufficient in creating an anti-harassment culture; employee training, management guidance, and employee awareness programs, communicated through a variety of channels, further establishes an organization's commitment to not tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace (Becton et al., 2017).

Students analyzing this case could (a) consider what training changes should be made if an organization wants to meet more than the minimum legal requirement for harassment prevention, (b) suggest substantive examples or scenarios related to the automotive sales industry which could provide employees with the opportunity to better identify misconduct, (c) propose strategies for promoting empathy toward harassment victims, and (d) anticipate potential resistance to training (such as viewing victims as being overly sensitive) and offer strategies for overcoming employee opposition.

Additionally, many organizations view the success of sexual harassment training if knowledge, skills, and attitudes are acquired, emphasizing remembering and understanding basic concepts rather than applying or evaluating levels of learning. Reorganizing a sexual harassment training framework and recognizing factors which influence training success was suggested by researchers Roehling and Huang (2018) and Cheung et al., (2017). Roshling and Huang (2018) identified several dynamics including training objectives, design, delivery, context, and characteristics which influence trainees' initial proximal outcomes (knowledge gain, attitudinal reactions, skill development), intermediate outcomes (reduced occurrences of sexual misconduct in the workplace), and distal outcomes (reduced litigation and turnover as well as increased productivity). Students provided with an opportunity to learn through experiential learning, like these case studies, feel better equipped to manage complex and sensitive issues (Jonathan & Laik, 2024). Given the importance of training, students could also suggest how business should evaluate training success.

INSTRUCTIONAL FOLLOW-UP AND LESSONS LEARNED

The use of both Activities 1 & 2 has led to robust critical thinking discussions in our graduate and undergraduate HR classes. Not surprisingly, graduate students with extensive professional experiences have an easier time grasping the pivotal elements of the cases; however, we have found that our undergraduate students who have been previously exposed to the subject and/or who have a desire for fairness, empathy, ethics, employee rights, cultural competence, and business strategy also appreciate these types of case studies. Initially Activity 1 was designed to approach sexual harassment prevention at the undergraduate level and Activity 2 at the graduate level. The curriculum stacked allowing graduate students an opportunity to strategize further with the topic. Feedback from students revealed a high level of appreciation and one student mentioned "The sexual harassment case projects were very beneficial. I love how you included real-life applications that gave me a broader understanding of the world of HR." Another student provided this feedback, "The harassment cases really opened my eyes to quite a few things. Thanks for making a safe place for us to talk about this complex topic."

With time, we discovered that our undergraduate students could attempt both Activity 1 and Activity 2. We began alternating between Activities 1 and 2 during progressive semesters within our undergraduate classes to ensure instructional newness and assignment variety; however, we recommend upper-division management students attempt Activity 1 and either advanced or graduate management students

tackle Activity 2. As part of the instructional process, we recommend that adopters of this activity (a) acknowledge that people can perceive and interpret policies and cases differently; (b) establish that the discussion is a safe zone where all participants must communicate with care and respect; and (c) ask the class to commit to actively listen and learn from others' discussions. Whether in a graduate or undergraduate class, the use of individual and group analysis is essential. We recommend group sizes should be limited to 2-4 students. In addition to discussing these cases in class, showing students how they can access EEOC (<https://www.eeoc.gov>), SHRM (<https://www.shrm.org/>), Center for Disease Control and Prevention-Violence Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/prevention/index.html>), and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (<https://www.nsvrc.org/>) weblinks will provide them with future prevention resources. Finally, we have observed that exploring multiple perspectives, approaching the topic through a problem-solving lens, prioritizing leadership and management development, and committing to a collaborative process allows for students to fully engage with the topic.

Conclusion

Even though this is a workplace issue, business faculty should begin the process of identifying and describing factors which perpetuate workplace misconduct and train future management practitioners and business leaders to create and drive civil workplaces. Skill development is stressed as highly critical in the workplace to better prepare new graduates for the workforce (Jonathan & Laik, 2024). Emerging professionals who fail to act quickly in response to sexual harassment, neglect to understand what harassment is or how to report instances, normalize professional misconduct, or accept cultures of harassment ultimately allow the practice of sexual harassment to continue within today's workplace (Benavides-Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Bomkamp, 2017; Fortado, 2018; Windham, 2017; Zugelder et al., 2018).

To begin the process of anti-harassment training, we recommend management and leadership faculty review anti-harassment policies within management courses and allow students to apply the EEOC respectful workplace practices within actual business cases. This article provides instructors with two guided classroom discussions which clarify forms of workplace misconduct and recommends appropriate organizational practices. These discussions allow students to develop shared understanding of sexual harassment in the workplace and respectful workplace initiatives, analyze workplace harassment occurrences, and apply organizational strategies to prevent workplace harassment. Defining harassment and examining the EEOC's policies allows college classrooms to share in the efforts to eliminate workplace harassment and promote positive workplace environments.

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Appendix A

Case: Description and Reference	Application Discussion and Questions
<p>MVM, Inc.</p> <p>One of MVM's managers was cited for unwanted physical touch and vulgar sexual comments directed towards a female security guard as well as other female employees. Sexual misconduct included cornering the victim in an elevator, kissing without consent, making inappropriate sexual comments, crude comments about appearances, unwanted touching, and physical advances; MVM senior management had witnessed the harassment and allowed the misconduct to persist. After complaining, the MVM security guard was fired in retaliation. In January 2021, the EEOC published a press release detailing how MVM was fully aware of the harassment but allowed the situation to persist by ignoring the misconduct. Additionally, firing the harassment victim for complaining exacerbated their culpability. https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/mvm-will-pay-200000-settle-eeoc-class-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation-lawsuit</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What should be MVM's anti-harassment policy? 2. How can senior leaders ensure that their anti-harassment policy is comprehensive and widely understood? 3. What are MVM's harassment risk factors and what steps should they implement to minimize risk? 4. Outside of the company's anti-harassment policies, what can leaders do to correct current harassment practices and prevent future misconduct?
<p>Chipotle Services LLC</p> <p>In August 2021, the EEOC reported a suit against Chipotle when a male crew member at the Tampa, Florida location repeatedly made sexually offensive comments about a female service manager's body; the organization agreed to pay \$70,000 in damages and institute other changes. The EEOC reported that comments escalated and became inappropriate touching, including thrusting genitals toward the service manager's face. The service manager reported the incident to her general manager (GM) and informed the GM</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are possible retaliation behaviors and what sanctions should be imposed on individuals responsible for retaliation? 2. How should Chipotle ensure that alleged harassers are not prematurely sanctioned? 3. What knowledge, skills, and abilities should Chipotle employees have if they are responsible for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints?

<p>of her intent to report the incidents to the company's headquarters. Subsequently the service manager was terminated. https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/chipotle-pay-70000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation-case</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How should Chipotle flow-chart their complaint system, considering key stakeholders and processes? 5. Document a complaint documentation record suggesting what details are needed and what questions should be asked. 6. What are the benefits and drawbacks of internal versus external anti-harassment training, various training formats, and live versus virtual methodologies? 7. What unique characteristics Chipotle should implement within its training based on its industry or employee base provides an additional level of application? 8. Develop training examples of sexual harassment which are specifically tailored toward Chipotle and its workforce.
<p>Tegra Medical LLC</p> <p>The EEOC reported that Ivan Pacheco, one of Tegra's manufacturing supervisors, made vulgar comments to several female employees, touching one woman inappropriately. After four female employees complained to the HR office about Pacheco's inappropriate conduct, one of the complainants was retaliated against by denying a medical leave request to care for her son. Additionally, a manager falsely denied prior complaints when another female employee reported misconduct. Rather than addressing the complaints, Tegra retaliated and purposefully transferred the complainant to a position where she was exposed to materials for which she was allergic. In November 2020, Tegra was required to pay \$240,000 to two female</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggest organizational strategies which communicate that anti-harassment policies apply to all levels of the organization, including applicants, clients, customers, and other stakeholders. 2. Develop Tegra's discipline policy when various types of sexual harassment are confirmed. 3. Pin an unequivocal statement that retaliation will not be tolerated.

<p>victims for harassment and retaliation. The court's decision in this case also required Tegra to create an independent complaint hotline, revise its discrimination investigation complaint process, provide anti-harassment training to all employees, ensure additional EEO training for its HR department, and employ and maintain a Spanish-speaking HR employee. Additionally, an HR Officer would be required to obtain and maintain a senior human resource certification in order to remain in her position.</p> <p>https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/tegra-medical-pay-240000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-and-retaliation-suit</p>	
<p>Walmart Stores East, LP</p> <p>In June of 2021, the EEOC reported how a male Walmart employee in Geneva, New York regularly made unwelcome inappropriate sexual comments about breasts and buttocks and improper physical advancements, including pressing his crotch against female co-workers' buttocks. The male sales associate would hold up thong underwear and state "I can't wait to see you in these," repeatedly asked female employees to hang out alone, and graphically requested to have sex with female co-workers, despite being denied multiple times. Walmart's management in Geneva were aware for years of the misconduct, having received multiple written complaints, but did not act to eliminate the continued harassment. After management recommended that a female complainant should put her "big girl panties on," one female employee resigned. Ultimately Walmart was required to pay \$410,000 in damages, \$175,000 monetary damages for the female associate who resigned and \$235,000 for a class of victims. Additionally, Walmart was cited for creating a hostile</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uniquely identify how different levels of employees should receive unique training content. 2. Determine and recommend content for non-managerial employees as well as for management and senior staff members. 3. Develop unique anti-harassment expectations for vendors and customers. 4. Suggest practical strategies Walmart senior leaders could use to champion training accountability 5. Suggest training dynamics needed when tailoring curriculum for all workplaces and levels of employment. 6. How can leaders create a culture which accepts and sustains anti-harassment cultures? 7. What are potential risk factors for misconduct at Walmart and what actions should be taken to reduce or eliminate harassment hazards?

<p>work environment and required to train employees to understand their rights, provide all supervisors individual sexual harassment prevention training, and report to the EEOC any future allegations or complaints of sexual harassment.</p> <p>https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/walmart-pay-410000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-lawsuit</p>	<p>8. What are some training recommendations for resisting sexual advances and intervening to protect others from misconduct?</p>
<p>Marelli Tennessee USA, LLC</p> <p>In a September 14, 2020 press release, the EEOC noted that a male assembly supervisor sexually harassed multiple female employees working in the Pulaski, Tennessee plant. Despite the women lodging a complaint to management, Marelli took no action to stop the harassment, protect harassment victims, or prevent misconduct from continuing to happen. This case concluded with Marelli paying \$335,000 in damages to four former employees, revising and training employees on a new harassment complaint policy to include written and verbal complaints submissions, providing all employees with annual sexual harassment training, and conducting exit interviews to ensure employees are offered a harassment-free work environment.</p> <p>https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/marelli-pays-335000-settle-eeoc-sexual-harassment-lawsuit</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distinguish the differences between personality annoyances, minor isolated incidents, or petty insults and unlawful conduct (such as jokes, demeaning comments, name calling, mockery, intimidation, insults, threats, lewd objects/pictures, work performance interferences, or physical assaults). 2. Strategize policies and reporting guidelines when there is a conflict of interest. 3. Develop confidentiality restrictions associated with complaints or disciplinary actions. 4. Propose how to create and sustain a compliance-committed culture. 5. Should Marelli monitor workplace communications for prohibited or unacceptable conduct? If so, what should be the policy? If not, justify why it should not.
<p>James Cars of Hamburg, LLC</p> <p>In June 2020, the EEOC filed a lawsuit against James Mitsubishi Hamburg (James Auto Management LLC); James Mitsubishi was an auto dealership in Hamburg, New York. In an EEOC February 8, 2021 press release, the GM at the Hamburg dealership and two additional dealerships owned in</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider what training changes should be made if an organization wants to meet more than the minimum legal requirement for harassment prevention. 2. Suggest substantive examples or scenarios related to the automotive sales industry which

<p>Rome and Greece, New York made numerous unwelcome comments and advancements toward two female employees. The GM made repeated comments about their bodies and body parts, asked the female employees to join him in his hotel room, mimicked sexual acts in front of employees, and engaged in inappropriate physical contact, including unwanted massages. James Mitsubishi Hamburg was fined and required to pay \$100,000 in damages to both former female employees and was required to issue a disciplinary warning to the harasser, provide the alleged harasser individualized sexual harassment prevention training, and update its sexual harassment policy to including additional reporting options, including a toll-free 24 hour/ 7 days a week complaint hotline. All employees of the dealership were also required to receive an updated anti-harassment policy and participate in improved anti-harassment training.</p> <p>https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-james-mitsubishi-hamburg-sexual-harassment</p>	<p>could provide employees with the opportunity to better identify misconduct.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Propose strategies for promoting empathy toward harassment victims. 4. Anticipate potential resistance to training (such as viewing victims as being overly sensitive) and offer strategies for overcoming employee opposition. 5. How should businesses evaluate training success?
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