PAAR

Pittsburgh Action Against Rape

Bystander Intervention

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Our Mission

To respond, educate, and advocate to end sexual violence.



24 hour Helpline • 1-866-END-RAPE

www.paar.net

Prevention & Outreach

Victim Response

Counseling

Bystander Intervention



What is a bystander?

- A witness
- A person who sees something taking place that they are not a part of.
- A person standing by.
- A person who speaks up and gets involved



Bystander intervention

Recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome.

- Not always a “confrontation”
- Intervention does not have to be a heroic event or a challenge or conflict
- Safety is key!



Why intervention matters

- Creates a culture where violence is not permitted.
- Helps encourage others to get involved
- Creates a more comfortable environment for people impacted by violence to seek support



Federal Laws

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972 and 1991, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

***June 15, 2020: The Supreme Court included sexual orientation/gender identity as protected under Title VII**



Hostile Environment Harassment & Sex-based Discrimination

Hostile work environment exists when one's behavior within a workplace creates an environment that is difficult or uncomfortable for another person to work in.

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy), national origin, older age (beginning at age 40), disability, or genetic information (including family medical history)



Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment"

Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment

Type of workplace sexual harassment in which an employee's submission to or rejection of a superior's sexual demands affects employment decisions, either positively or negatively.

Policies

Do you and your staff know where to find your workplace policies?

Do you regularly review workplace policies with staff?



Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Verbal Written Physical



Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Verbal **Written** **Physical**

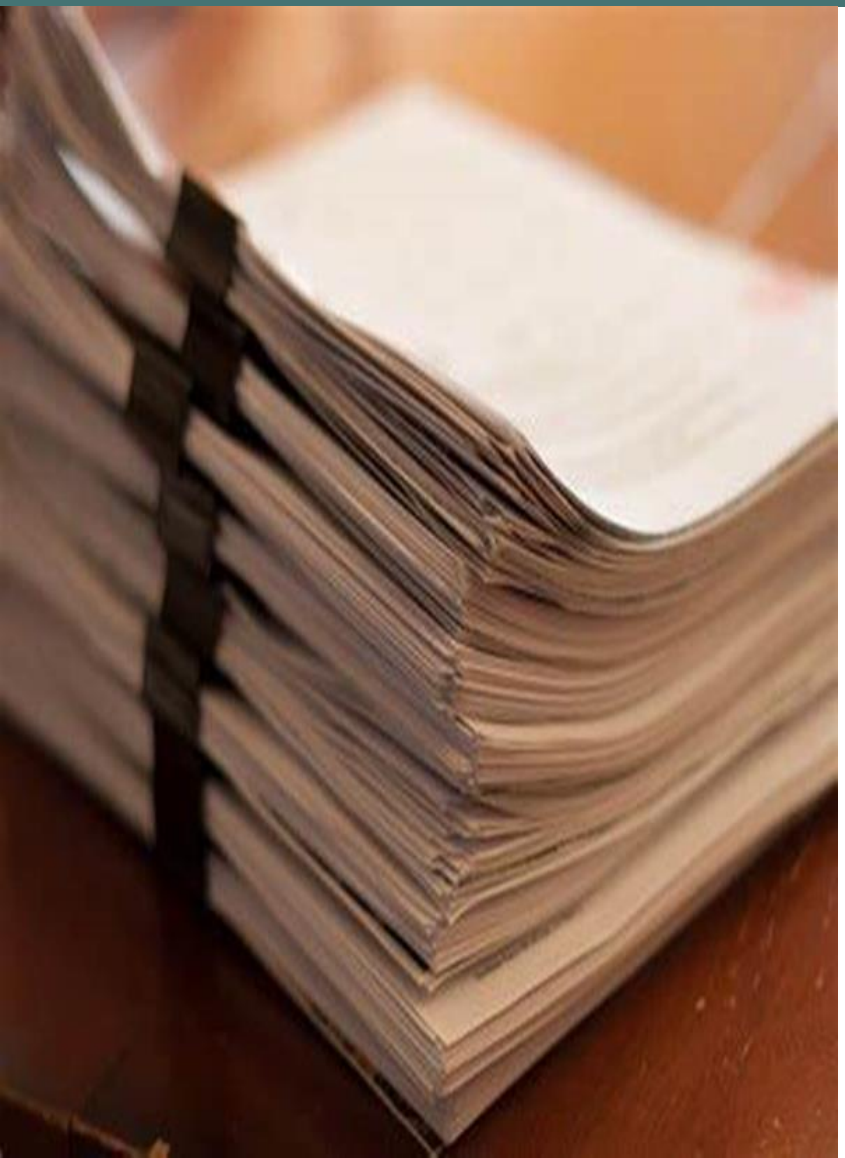


- Asking someone out repeatedly
- Telling inappropriate jokes
- Commenting on sexual activity
- Commenting on clothes
- Using derogatory/discriminatory language
- Connecting advancement or privileges with sex
- Comments about private areas of other's body
- Sexual rumors
- Name calling
- Cat-calling
- Sexual requests

- Inappropriate notes/letters
- Sexual graffiti
- Sexual pictures / videos / "sexting"
- Inappropriate or harassing texts/ email / DM / chat
- Sexual/harassing comments/rumors posted on social media sites

- Touching, grabbing, rubbing, pinching, smacking private parts of the body
- Touch of a sexual nature
- Cornering
- Unwanted hugs/kisses
- Pulling clothes up, down, or off
- Sexual staring/leering
- Sexual gestures using hands, mouth or tongue

Harassment/Sexual Harassment in the Workplace



In 2022, the EEOC received, for PA:

- 8223 charges of harassment

- 432 charges of sexual harassment
  13% of these charges were filed by men = 58

- 717 charges of sex-based discrimination

Reporting to the EEOC is often a final step, after attempting to resolve the issue through the employer.

Effects of Sexual Harassment/Harassment

- Sexual harassment/harassment doesn't just impact the people experiencing it, it impacts everybody

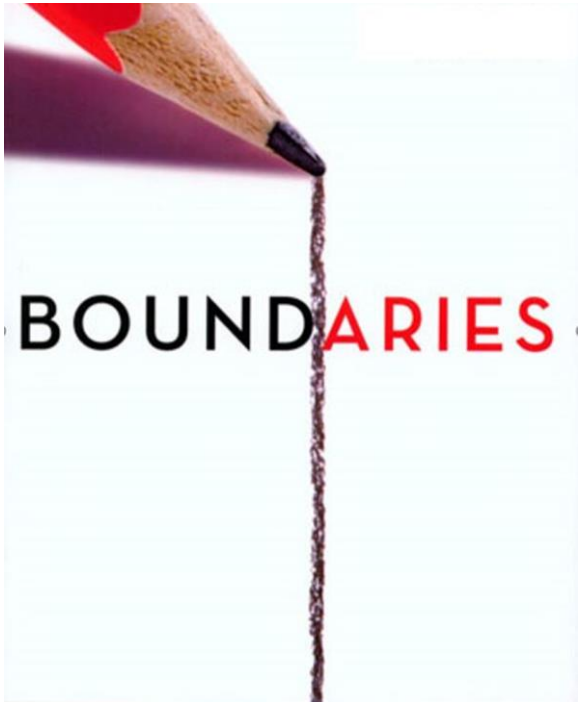
- People who witness sexual harassment/harassment often face negative consequences like:
  - Reduced sense of safety
  - Normalize negative behaviors
  - Negatively influence community culture

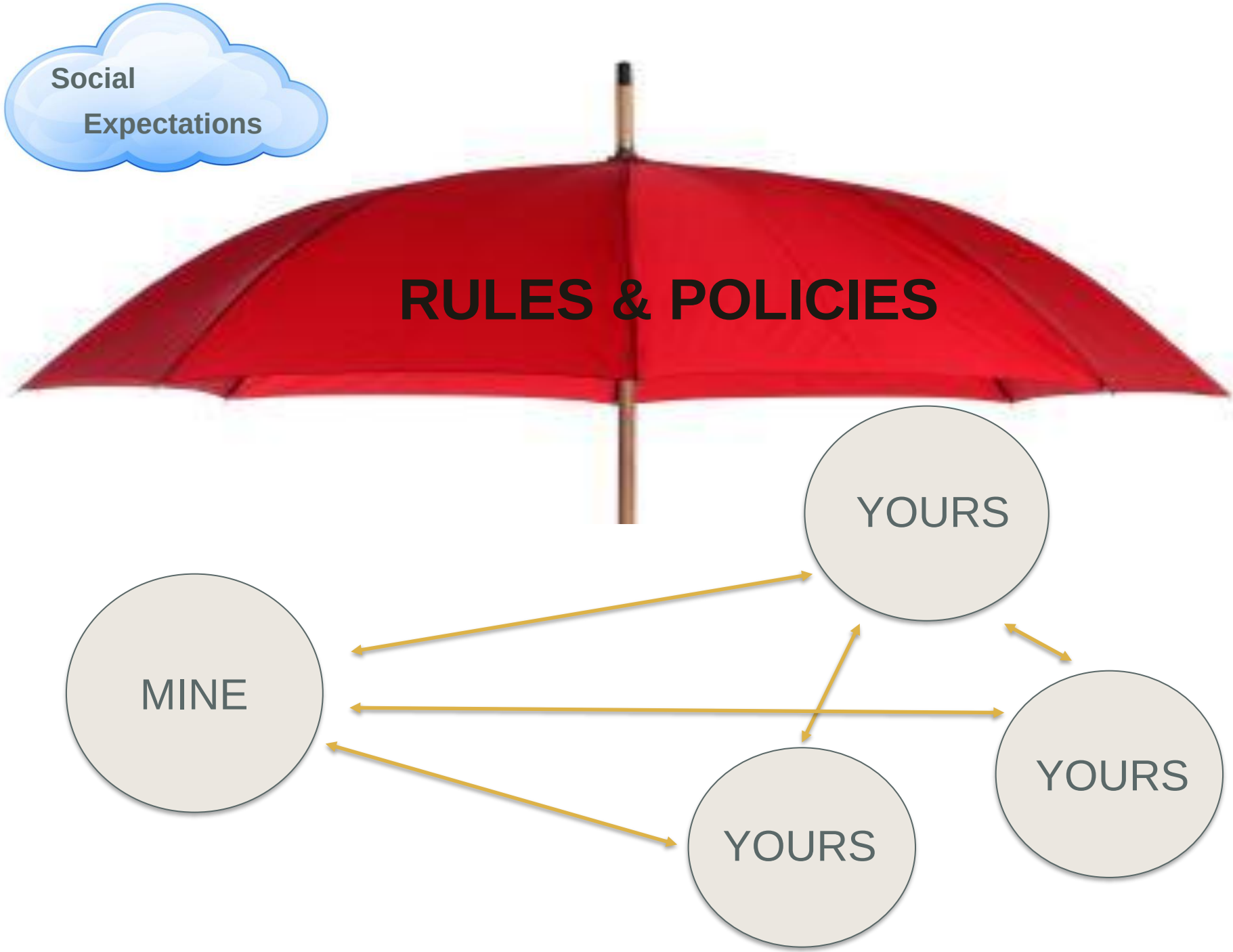


Culture of Dismissal

- Often when pressed on what we say and do, its easy for us to slip into gaslighting or dismissal. We adopt a stance of “I can’t even talk to my co-workers anymore” or “Everyone is so sensitive.”

- Instead of falling into this pattern, it is more helpful to seek to understand the different dynamics of boundaries and how they interact in the spaces you are in and with the people who are in them.




Social
Expectations
RULES & POLICIES
YOURS
MINE
YOURS
YOURS

Assessing Comfort for yourself.. and others

Ok

It Depends

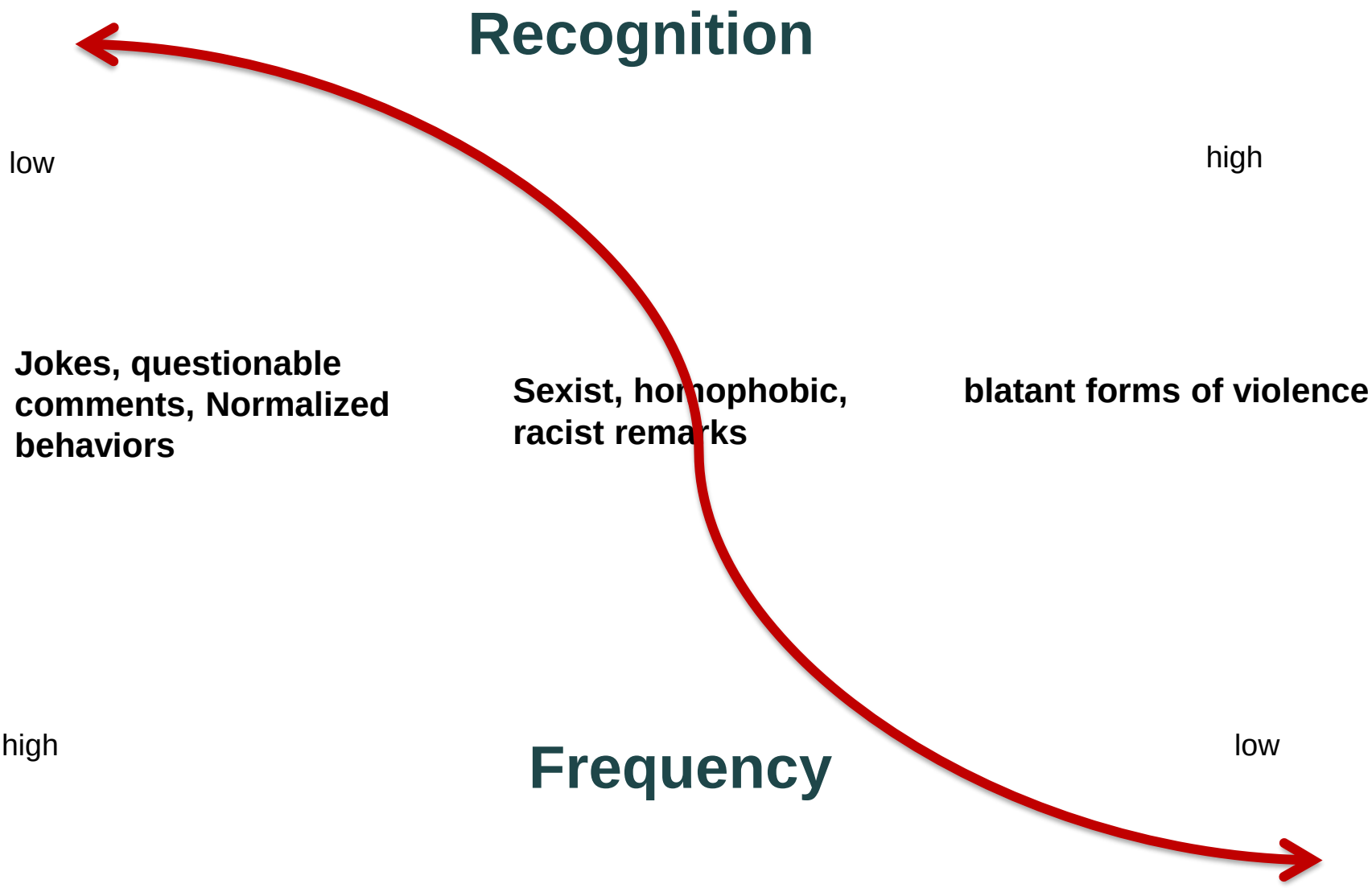
No Way

Remember

- The individual decides when their boundary is crossed
- It is all based on context and personal preference
- What is ok for some is not for others
- Management decides when a policy is crossed **



When should people intervene



Steps to Intervene

1. Notice the behavior
2. Interpret it as a problem
3. Assume the responsibility!
4. Choose how to intervene
5. Attempt to help




WHAT'S IN
YOUR WAY?

“I have tried saying something before and it didn’t go well”

“I don’t want my coworker to get mad at me”

“I would say something if we were somewhere else”

“I’m scared, what if…”





“It’s none of my business”

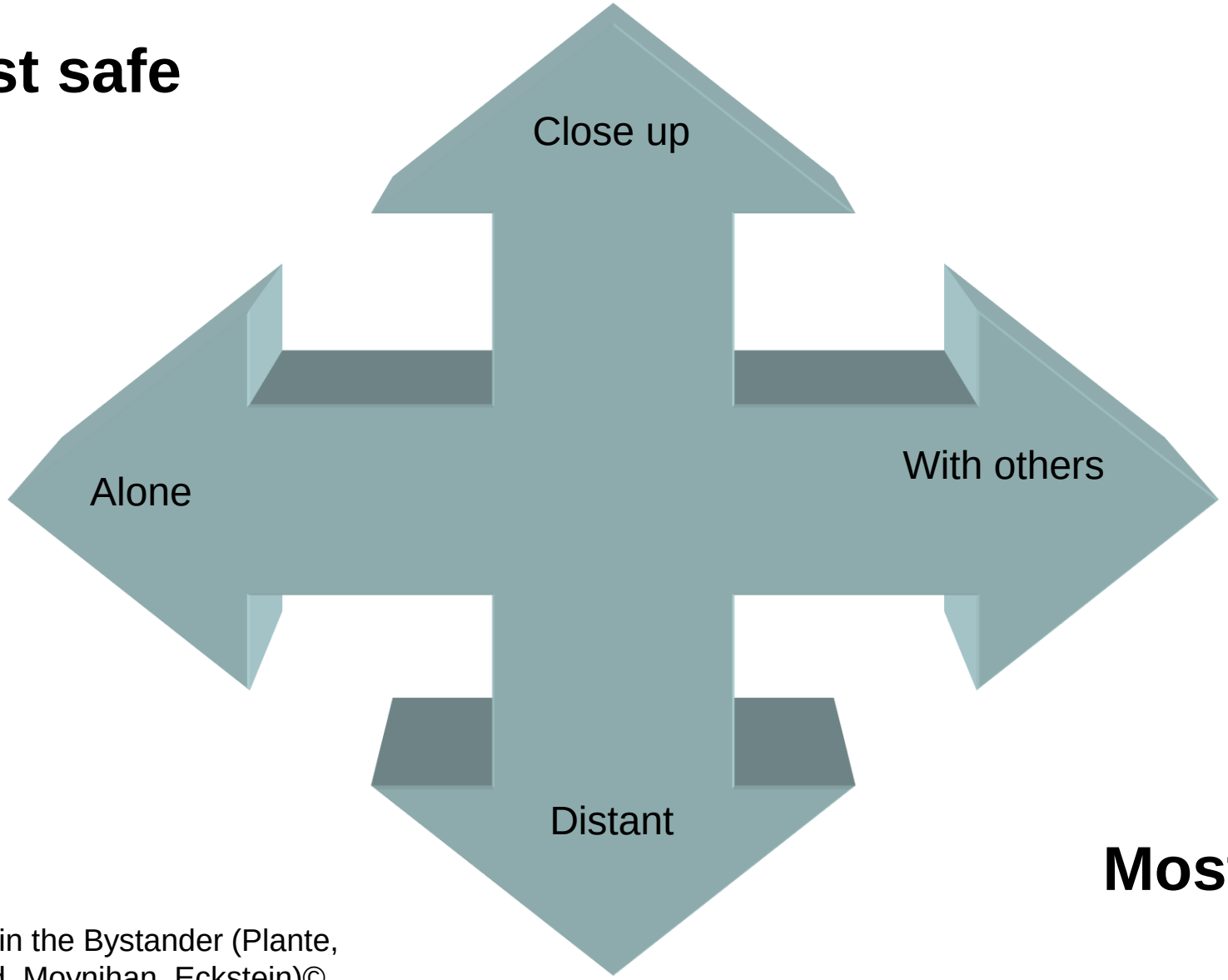
“Do you know who they are?! I am NOT saying something to them.”

“I don’t even know them”

“Not my job to be their babysitter!”

Stay Safe!

Least safe



Most safe

Bringing in the Bystander (Plante, Banyard, Moynihan, Eckstein)©

Assessing Safety

- Physical vs Social safety
  - When we intervene in any situation, we need to assess our physical safety, but often its our social safety concerns that stop us.
    - What if I'm wrong and embarrass myself
    - I like him/her/them, I don’t want them to get angry with me
    - Intervening could cause an adverse career problem

- Victim’s safety
  - It is always important to keep the victim's safety and needs in mind. Sometime running to the rescue of someone can cause more immediate harm. Consider how your actions might affect the whole situation and always consider speaking to the victim.

Power

Understanding levels of power and how it affects boundaries and interaction is important.

Often levels of power are seemingly unseen especially by people who hold power.

How do power dynamics impact our ability to intervene in a situation?

- Your level of power
- The offending person's level of power
- The victim's level of power



The 5 D's

Direct

- You can choose to approach someone directly and confront the situation head-on. The direct approach can be positive when you have enough power in the situation to directly challenge a person at the time.

Distract

- You can do something that takes attention away from a situation. When you do this, you're assisting in de-escalating a situation that could potentially turn worse for someone.

Delegate

- You can get others involved in a situation, such as police or an authority figure if you believe the situation warrants it. You can also pull in some other bystanders to assist a situation in greater numbers.

Delay

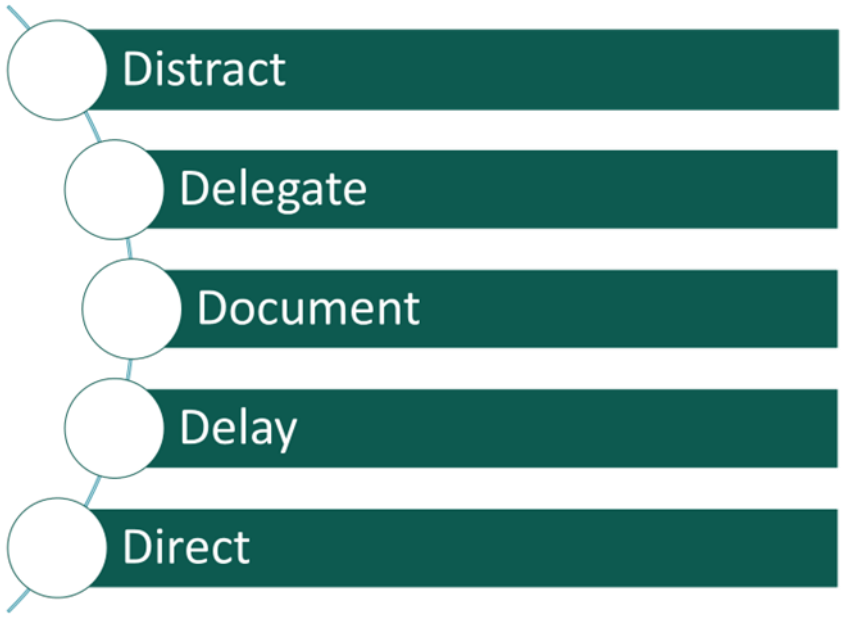
- If there is something that stops you from addressing something, consider ways that you can approach the situation later. Intervention doesn't always have to be immediate to be effective.

Document

- Taking pictures/video, saving written communication and proactively being willing to stand up and speak about what you witnessed.

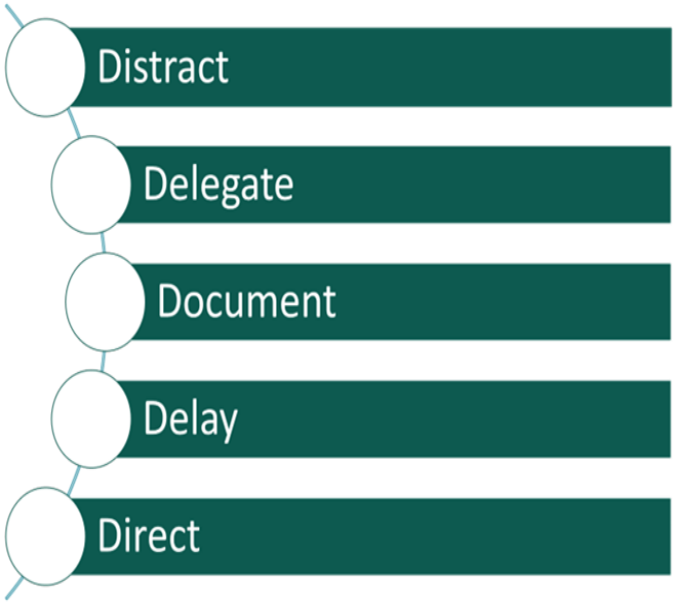
Scenario 1

While you are at work and you notice a coworker keep giving compliments to another, commenting on their clothes and how good they look. They look embarrassed, say thanks and move away from the conversation.



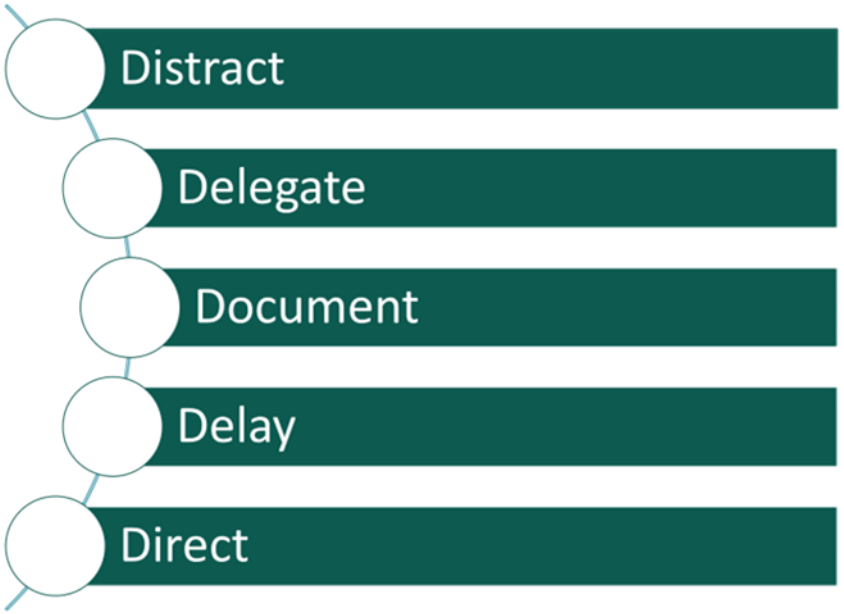
Scenario 2

You are in a work meeting with several coworkers and partners. The meeting goes well, but as you are leaving, you notice a partner put his hand on your coworker's lower back. She smiles and says nothing, but you can tell from the look in her eyes that she is uncomfortable. Walking down the hall, you ask if she is ok. She shakes her head and says, "It's fine, he just does that. Besides, it's what you have to do to get ahead, right?"



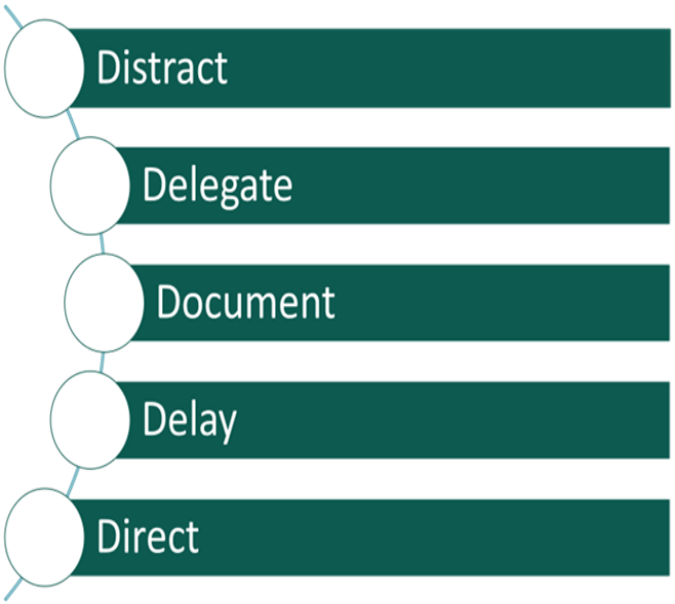
Scenario 3

Two coworkers who have been friends for awhile, are having a conversation in the public space about women they have dated. As the conversation continues, they get more graphic about their interactions.



Scenario 4

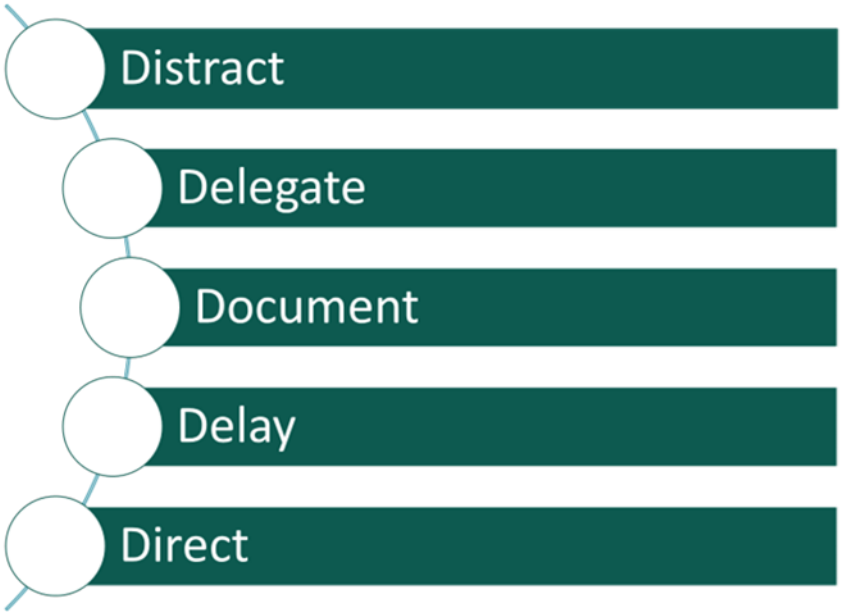
After work, you notice one of the Partners asking a paralegal if they would like to grab a drink. The paralegal says they are not interested, but the Partner keeps asking, saying, “Come on, you’re new here, it will be worth your while to mingle more.”



Scenario 5

One of your coworkers is always touching people when they talk to them – touching their arm, coming up behind and rubbing their shoulders, putting an arm around them.

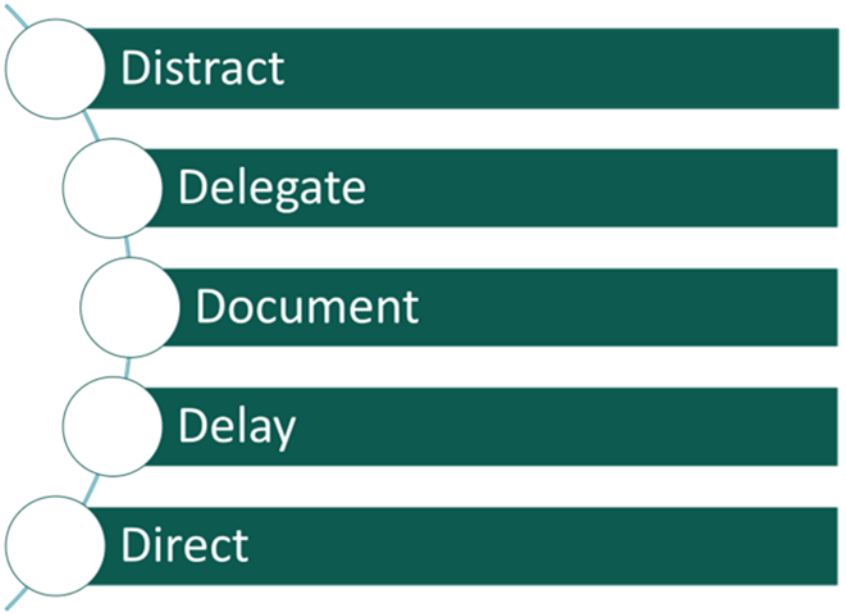
People say that's just who they are and that they are just being friendly. Besides, they have been working here a long time and everyone is ok with it.



Scenario 6

After William repeatedly misuses an employee's pronoun the employee once again reminds him, that they use He/Him/They.

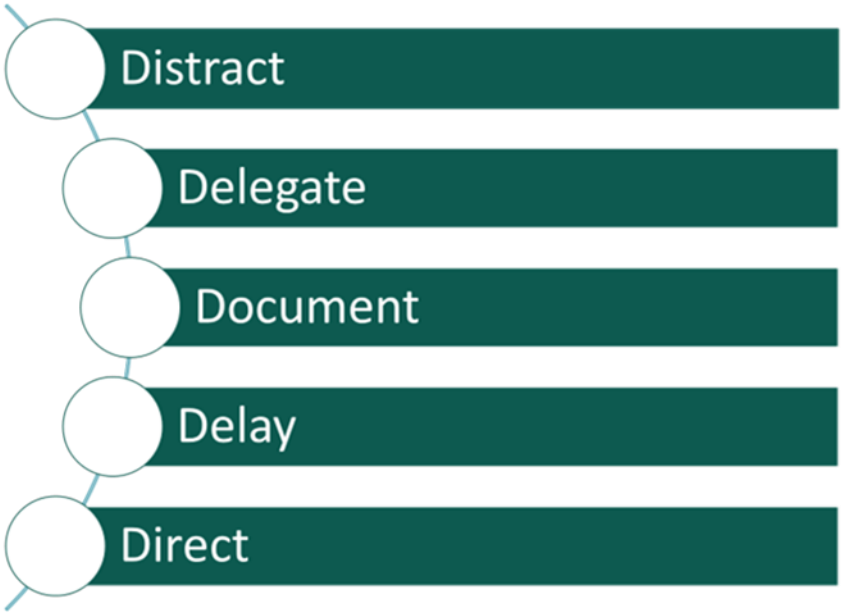
William responds "Come, on. I mean no disrespect, but that just sounds weird and I'm never going to do it…I mean is it really that big of a deal?"



Scenario 7

You are part of a Teams group chat at work. Sometimes people send funny pictures of their pets or memes.

One of your coworkers sends a racist meme in the chat. When someone in the group calls them out on it, the person says, “Oh lighten up, it’s just a joke…geez can’t do anything fun without the woke police showing up!”

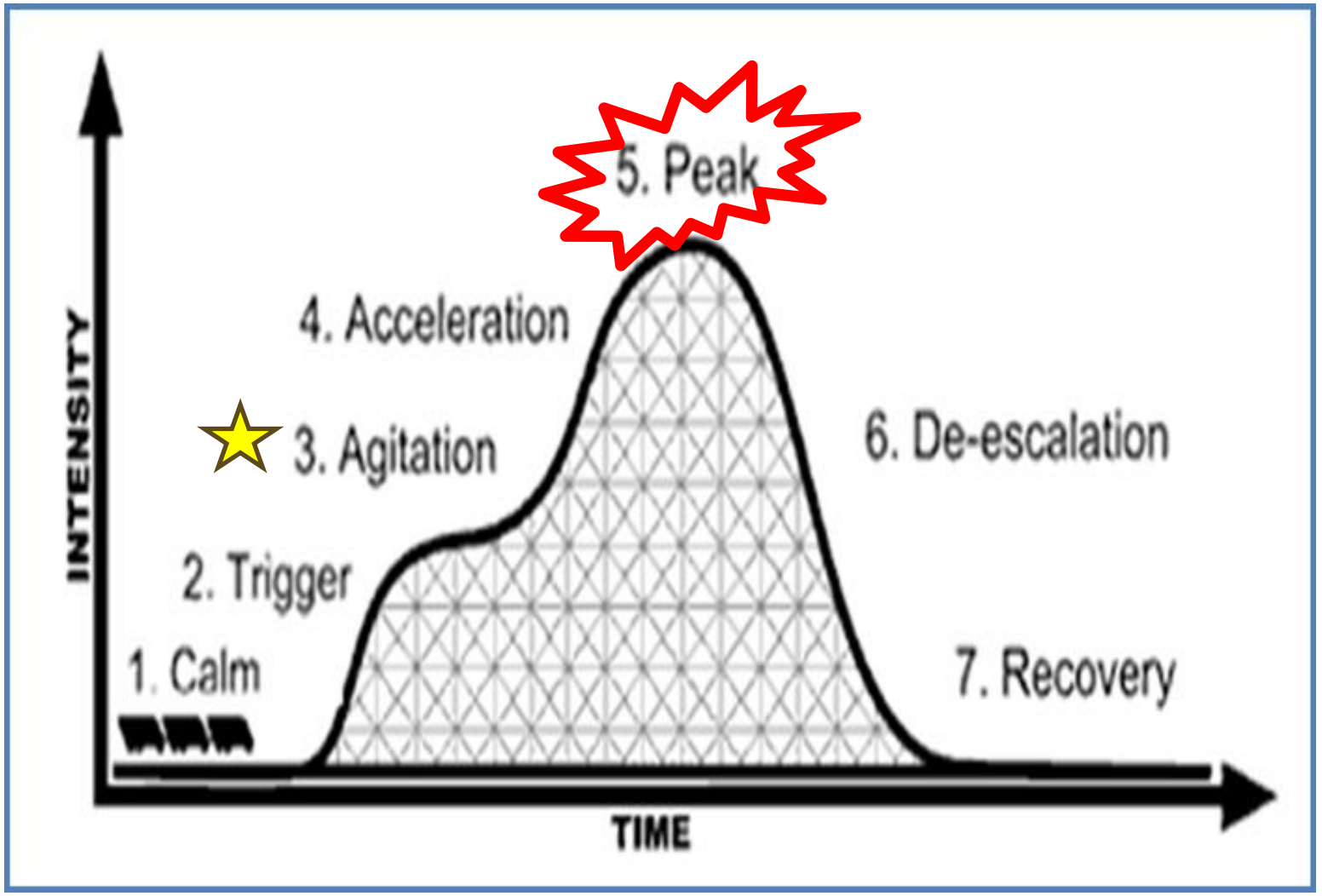


I did the right thing and intervened!

The person is angry and upset and getting defensive…now what?



Stages of Behavioral Escalation



Don’t fall into the Power Struggle Trap!

- Step back and listen to the real message
- Redirect the topic
- Offer choices and options
- Consider a reasonable middle ground
- Focus on solutions

Crisis Prevention Institute – www.crisisprevention.com



De-escalating Defensive Behaviors

- Allow for verbal venting: Sometimes people just need to vent! Do not take what they are saying personally, it is just a release of energy. It's not about you, it's about them.

- Listen with empathy: Anger is a cover for many emotions. Help the person name how they are really feeling.

- Clarify the messages: Ask inviting questions, "Can you tell me more about that?", rather than pointed questions, who/what/where/when/why

- Downplay the challenge: The person will try to take the focus off of themselves; redirect the conversation back to the situation at hand.

De-escalating Defensive Behaviors

- Be aware of your non-verbals: Your voice is a valuable tool, pay attention to tone, volume, sarcasm, joking, etc.
  Pay attention to your stance and arm movements so you do not appear aggressive.
  Maintain open, non-judgmental facial expressions.

- Only use physical intervention as a last resort: If someone is not de-escalating, other intervention may be necessary. Continue to remain calm and supportive until help arrives.



Response matters every time!

- Creates a culture where violence is not permitted.
- Helps encourage others to get involved
- **Creates a more comfortable environment for people impacted by violence to seek support**



Needs at reporting

- To be believed
- To be praised for coming forward and telling
- To be reassured that the harassment/abuse was not their fault
- Be upfront about what information you must report
- Time and space for feelings
- Sense of safety



What do you say?

I'm sorry that happened to you, and I'm really glad you trusted me enough to tell me.

I know it took a lot of courage to speak up

It sounds like this might really be interfering with your work.

I want you to know that it wasn't your fault.

There are people and policies
Who/that can help you through this.



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Please take a moment to ask additional questions if interested.



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Thank You!

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