

## About PSR4: Civility & Respect

### What is Guarding Minds @ Work?

Guarding Minds @ Work (GM@W) is an evidence-based strategy that assists employers in protecting and promoting psychological safety and health in the workplace. GM@W provides a comprehensive set of resources employers can use to effectively address the impact of 12 psychosocial risk (PSR) factors known to have a powerful impact on organizational health, the health of individual employees, and the financial bottom line. The PSRs were identified by researchers from the Consortium for Organizational Mental Healthcare (COMH) in the SFU Faculty of Health Sciences on the basis of extensive research and a comprehensive review of empirical data related to national and international best practices. The determination of the factors also reflects existing and emerging Canadian case law and legislation.

### What is PSR4 – Civility and Respect?

Guarding Minds @ Work defines PSR4, civility and respect, as present in a work environment where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public. Civility and respect are based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging their dignity.

### Why is PSR4 – Civility and Respect important?

A civil and respectful workplace is related to greater job satisfaction, greater perceptions of fairness, a more positive attitude, improved morale, better teamwork, greater interest in personal development, engagement in problem resolution, enhanced supervisor-staff relationships, and reduction in sick leave and turnover. Organizations characterized by civility and respect create a positive atmosphere marked by high spirits and work satisfaction. This allows people to enjoy the environment, whether they are staff, clients or customers.

### What happens when civility and respect are missing from the workplace?

When a workplace lacks civility and respect, this can lead to emotional exhaustion amongst staff. In addition to health problems, an incivil and disrespectful workplace is associated with greater conflict and job withdrawal. A work environment that is incivil and disrespectful also exposes organizations to the threat of more grievances and legal risks.

Probably the most extreme example of disrespectful behaviour is bullying. Exposure to workplace bullying is associated with psychological complaints, depression, burnout, anxiety, aggression, psychosomatic complaints and musculoskeletal health complaints. Bullying not only affects those directly involved, but also affects bystanders, as they too experience higher levels of stress. A number of provinces currently have, or are considering, legislation to address such behaviours.

### How can I improve civility and respect?

Start by having the organization or work team conduct the Guarding Minds @ Work Assessment (Organizational Audit, Initial Scan and/or PSR-12 Employee Survey) and reviewing the resulting reports. If civility and respect is identified as an area of concern, refer to the relevant Action Tools for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggestions that can improve civility and respect. It is also important to discuss the findings with concerned employees within the organization to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input and participation in determining useful corrective actions. Also, consider the information in the readings and resources identified below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how civility and respect can be enhanced.

**Further information about civility and respect can be found a:**

- Crocker, M., & Henderson, C. (2008). A 12-step managerial civility recovery model. People & Strategy. <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=2&hid=13&sid=1d74b240-65ce-48d5-b10b-58b18b1307c4%40sessionmgr110>
- Ramarajan, L., Barsade, S., & Burack, O. (2008). The influence of organizational respect on emotional exhaustion in the human services. The Journal of Positive Psychology, 3(1), 4-18. [http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/625364\\_770885140\\_791791288.pdf](http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/625364_770885140_791791288.pdf)
- Respectful Workplace <http://www.respectfulworkplace.com/articles/article-1.htm>
- Buhler, P. (2003, April). Managing in the new millennium; workplace civility: Has it fallen by the wayside? Supervision Magazine, . <http://www.allbusiness.com/human-resources/workforce-management/513719-1.html>
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2009). PSR4: Civility and respect. In Centre resources by risk factor. <http://www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com/english/slides.asp?l1=3&l2=157&l3=159&d=159>
- Belton, L., & Dyrenforth, S. (2007). Civility in the workplace: Measuring the positive outcomes of a respectful work environment. Healthcare Executive, 22(5), 40. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17892116>
- Vartia, M. (2001). Consequences of workplace bullying with respect to the well-being of its targets and the observers of bullying. Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health, 27(1), 63-69. [http://74.125.155.132/scholar?q=cache:tKv921ks2FoJ:scholar.google.com/+consequences+of+workplace+bullying&hl=en&as\\_sdt=2000](http://74.125.155.132/scholar?q=cache:tKv921ks2FoJ:scholar.google.com/+consequences+of+workplace+bullying&hl=en&as_sdt=2000)

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