

## Take Action Before Hostility Festers

We've all heard of road rage and air rage, but the newest trend seems to be desk rage.

Hostility in the workplace must be dealt with immediately. If it's not, the results can be disastrous.

Hostility can arise when complaints are ignored. Managers stall, thinking a disagreement will blow over. Meanwhile, employees grow resentful of management's perceived neglect. Even when a situation doesn't blow up, the damage to workplace morale and productivity can be harmful. Take these steps to defuse workplace hostility:

- **Interview those who are directly involved in a dispute, as well as any witnesses.** These interviews, which should be done within a day or so of the complaint, are critical in gathering information. It's important to ask open-ended questions, not assuming anything.

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*How are you addressing workplace hostility?*

## Formal Leadership

Part 1 of 5

*This is part one of a five part series on Formal Leadership. Each concept works alone and also complements the other articles.*

### A Concept of Leadership

Throughout the years, volumes have been written which list and elaborate upon the characteristics of leaders. You need only check the literature on the subject to discover that there are as many characteristics, and combinations of characteristics, as

there are leaders. With all their differences however, leaders do have some fundamental similarities.

- ◆ Successful leaders have mastered the art of self-leadership and authenticity. Authenticity implies genuineness, reliability, and trustworthiness.
- ◆ Successful leaders have taken the time to crystallize a personal vision of the future, which will become the foundation or cornerstone for a shared vision. They are able to attract as well as inspire commitment among the people whose collective effort will make this vision a reality.
- ◆ Successful leaders understand how to align and maximize resources to realize the vision. The leader's role is to create alignment between vision, strategy, structure, processes, and people with focus on attracting and maintaining a loyal customer base.

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Often what appears to be black-and-white can have many shades of gray.

- **Keep the focus on the facts.** An employee may use the interview as a chance to harm the reputation of another worker. If an employee starts offering opinions, ask, “Is there an incident that you personally witnessed?”
- **Bring up contradictions.** When stories conflict, ask the people involved what explanations they have for such different stories.
- **Keep detailed records.** Write down the names of the people you interviewed and what each person said, with as much specific information as possible. Ask employees to sign and date a written statement to ensure accuracy.
- **Take action.** If it is clear that misconduct did take place, then discipline the offending employee. You’ll only create cynicism and further hostility if you investigate a complaint and then fail to act on it.

Adapted from *Good Handling of Complaints Lessens Workplace Violence Risk*, Anita Bruzzese, Gannett News Service, [www.gannett.com](http://www.gannett.com).

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## ***The Top 10 Things That Every Customer Wants From You***

***Whether they are fully aware of it, know it or say it.***

1. They want it to cost less money, even if it's already value-priced.
2. They want it to act faster / immediately.
3. They want it to come to them / be delivered.
4. They want it to be replenished / updated / upgraded / replaced automatically and consistently.
5. They want it even before they know it's available or that they even need / want it.
6. They want it pre-customized to fit their unique needs.
7. They want it to come pre-assembled and ready to run; no instructions or thinking needed.
8. They want to be able to return it with no hassle; a solid / flexible guarantee.
9. They want it to work perfectly and beyond all expectations.

10. They want to feel good about using it / being a customer of yours.

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As a leader, you must be many things to many people. First, you must have the capacity to create a compelling vision. If your vision is to excite people, it must take them to new levels of achievement. Then, you must be able to develop and implement the strategies that will guide people toward the vision, analyze the alternatives and possibilities, and set goals that will drive the organization to sustained success. To do this will require that you are able to function successfully in several areas:

- ◆ **A Visionary**
- ◆ **A Coach** (part two)
- ◆ **A Mentor** (part three)
- ◆ **A Director** (part four)
- ◆ **Authority/Power** (part five)

### **The Leader as Visionary**

Leaders who are able to involve people in realizing a compelling vision provide a beacon for the future and a standard of excellence. Vision plays an important role in developing a winning organization. A compelling vision can motivate and empower everyone in an organization to seek higher levels of performance and achievement. People want to do a good job because realizing the vision is important to them. A compelling vision is inspiring. It is energizing. It provides an image of a better future that causes people to drive themselves to higher levels of achievement.

In the final analysis, you can't really force people to be motivated. You can only create an environment in which

people are motivated. A vision will release creative energies to successfully attain the desired results. It provides a reason for change and exploring possibly uncharted waters with enthusiasm. It gives meaning to work. It encourages innovation. Individuals recognize the importance of their personal contribution to the overall whole.



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Vision helps everyone realize that their best interests are served by the success of the entire organization.

The key to realizing a vision is strategizing and planning. Your written strategic plan should be communicated throughout the organization to develop buy-in and ownership. You must clearly define your key business indicators, those few vital goals that you want your organization to achieve. These will provide the focus and direction.

What do you want to accomplish? Are key goals clear to everyone in the organization? Have they been translated into specific action steps that people can (and know how to) accomplish? Does Senior Management “walk the talk?” Are vision, values, goals, and actions consistent? It begins at the top. People must know by your actions, as well as your words, how committed you are to the values, vision, and goals of the organization. You must set the example and the standards, and communicate your vision to others. Walking the talk must be much more than a trite cliché. It must be one of your core values.



Our next issue will discuss the ‘Leader as Coach’ (part two)

The last article in this series will be the concept of Authority and Power of the Leader. If you have any questions about an article, or you have missed any of the articles in this series, contact us today.

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## Web Site Of The Month!



USAID is the U.S. government agency responsible for economic and humanitarian assistance around the world. Because it is a government agency, they do not accept donations. However, they work together with many organizations to provide assistance to the victims of the earthquake/tsunami. You may choose to contribute to any of the relief agencies listed on the web site, all of whom are working with contributions from the general public.

Check it out at: [www.usaid.gov/locations/asia\\_near\\_east/tsunami/ngolist.html](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/tsunami/ngolist.html)

[www.HarryGilligan.com](http://www.HarryGilligan.com)



## ONE MINUTE IDEAS

### *Contribute In Meetings*

Do some of your employees contribute more at staff meetings, while quieter members hold back?

To achieve more balance, inform staffers in advance that you’ll be directing specific questions to them.

Once you’ve given quieter employees fair warning, call on them.

### *Games People Play*

You can crack down on computer game playing in your office and still maintain morale.

Set up “games-only” computers in the lounge or lunchroom for staff members to use on their own time.

Personal empowerment, productivity and profitability issues in your organization are more strategically important than ever. Partnering with Harry Gilligan & Associates will provide you the processes, systems and support you need to achieve superior results and meet desired goals.

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## Get More Done Between Flights

Look for more Wi-Fi Internet access at airports. Nineteen of the top 50 U.S. airports either have it or are installing it and another six are now accepting bids to get it. Airline carriers such as American, Delta, United and US Airways are also offering it free in airport lounges.

For Chuck Blaisdell, a regional minister for the Christian Church of Northern California and Nevada, the proliferation of wireless access points means he can log on between frequent flights and stay on top of his correspondence. That way, "I don't have 100 or 200 e-mails waiting for me when I get back to a regular connection," he says.



Yet be aware of fees, because rates change based on where you log on and how long you use the service.

**For example**, software consultant Jeremy Coyle based in Hoboken, N.J., always logs on free when he is in a Continental Airlines' lounge. However, he refuses to pay a daily fee if he's in an airport not served by Continental. "Seven dollars and ninety-nine cents per session is difficult to justify if you're only going to use it for one hour," he says.

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## Harry Gilligan & Associates

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