

14.4: Why It Matters- Employee Rights and Responsibilities



Why learn about rights and responsibilities of employees and their employers?

In business it is often difficult to determine where one's rights end and another's responsibility begins. However, with increasing transparency, empowered workers, and the ability to organize rapidly online, it's important for businesses to not only identify the line but enforce it. Harassment. Hate speech. Threats of violence. Our workplaces are a microcosm of society. The socio-political divisions and economic pressures that are raising tensions nationally and internationally are also a risk for businesses.

Leadership Mindset columnist for *Inc. Magazine* Marissa Levin reports that a Harvard Business School study proved that “toxic employees destroy your culture and your bottom line.”^[1] The research found that the cost of incivility to be in the millions. Specific human resource impacts cited:

- Employees subjected to incivility in the workplace experience ‘markedly loosened bonds with their work life.’
- Nearly half of employees ‘decreased [their] work effort’ and intentionally spent less time at work.
- 38 percent ‘intentionally decreased’ the quality of their work.
- 25 percent of employees who had been treated with incivility admitted to taking their frustrations out on customers.
- 12 percent left their jobs due to uncivil treatment.”

Human resource managers have a responsibility to both employees and the business. In this section we'll discuss the laws that govern employee information and behavior and what laws and guidelines apply to employers.

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1. Levin, Marissa. "[Harvard Research Proves Toxic Employees Destroy Your Culture and Your Bottom Line.](#)" Inc. Accessed September 12, 2019. ↵

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