



Rudeness at Work- Don't Pass it On



Findings by psychologists at Lund University in Sweden shows that workplace rudeness is one of the primary reasons for dissatisfaction at work and such unpleasant behaviour is likely to spread if it is not controlled.

The findings show that there is a need to take workplace incivility seriously. Rudeness in this particular context refers to behaviour that violates the norm for mutual respect; petty behaviour such as excluding someone from information and cooperation; forgetting to invite someone to a communal event; taking credit for somebody else's work; spreading rumours; sending malicious emails; not praising subordinates and other similar actions.

“It’s really about behaviour that is not covered by legislation, but which can have considerable consequences and develop into outright bullying if it is allowed to continue”, says Eva Torkelson, who is leading the project on rudeness as a social process in organisations. She highlights the fact that workplace bullying may be a well-documented phenomenon but rudeness that could potentially turn into bullying is not.

This analysis showed that the most common cause of acting rudely was imitating your colleagues' behaviour. Approximately 75 percent of the respondents said that they had been subjected to rudeness at least one to two times within the last one year.

Martin Bäckström, Professor of Psychology points out that an important finding from this analysis is the fact that people who behave rudely in the workplace tend to have stronger social support. This makes them less afraid of any negative reactions to their rude behaviour.

It is important to address rudeness in the workplace as it can result in negative consequences for those involved. This could include mental illness, reduced job satisfaction, reduced efficiency, high turnover, reduced loyalty and greater conflicts.

What's the solution? Ms. Torkelson believes training for staff and managers could help reduce unpleasant behaviour in the workplace.

Source: [Lund University](#)

Image Credit: Lund University

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