

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Happy at Work: A Practical Guide to Overcoming Workplace Psychological Harassment



Introduction

Chapter 1: The Path to Transformation

In this introductory chapter, we set the stage for the journey of transformation, explaining the motivations behind this work, and outlining our goals. We provide a brief overview, illustrating how the parts of the book interconnect to offer a comprehensive approach to addressing workplace psychological harassment.

Part One - The departure, encountering the challenge

Chapter 2: Do We Know It When We See It?

This chapter delves into defining workplace harassment, bullying, and mobbing, emphasizing the importance and challenge of achieving collective agreement on these definitions. We explore how harassment occurs and its profound impacts, including stress, isolation, social humiliation, sabotaged belief systems, and betrayal trauma. The wider organizational, social, and economic repercussions are also discussed.

Chapter 3: A Complex Constellation of Relationships

Here, we explore the roles of the perpetrator, the target, and the bystanders in workplace bullying. This chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play and the relationships involved in such scenarios.

Part Two – Initiation, overcoming the challenge

Chapter 4: Cultures of Silence at Work

This chapter examines the organizational factors that foster harassment, such as psychosocial climate, management styles, and working conditions. We discuss how certain industries are more prone to harassment and how management often turns a blind eye. The "house rules" that perpetuate abuse, including denial, avoidance of solutions, and preferring bad managers over whistle-blowers, are critically analysed. We also cover tactics used to thwart recognition and institutional strategies such as DARVO and outrage management.

Chapter 5: The Secret Rules

In this chapter, we provide practical advice for targets of workplace harassment. We guide readers through assessing their situation, understanding internal processes and the role of HR, and navigating resolution mechanisms. We discuss the pros and cons of filing a complaint, tactics that obstruct proper processes, and the culture of complaints within organizations. Additionally, we cover negotiation, mediation, investigation, and the realities of confidentiality.

Chapter 6: The Legal Landscape

This chapter offers a concise overview of global laws and regulations related to workplace harassment. And it offers a more detailed treatment of specific legal protections in Australia, such as Fair Work, anti-discrimination laws, work health and safety regulations, and workers' compensation. The chapter concludes with practical tips for targets considering legal action and prospects for law reform.

Part Three - The return, achieving the courage, wisdom and strength to master ourselves in service to others

Chapter 7: The Target's Chrysalis - Victim to Victor

Focusing on the personal transformation of harassment targets, this chapter emphasizes staying strong and prioritizing well-being. We discuss professional support for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health, including faith-based advice and values-based counselling. Themes of humility, humour, gratitude, forgiveness, maintaining perspective, and making decisions in difficult circumstances are explored. We offer strategies for coping with isolation, fostering healthy competition and collaboration, and moving on from a toxic workplace, including exit strategies and due diligence for future employment.

Chapter 8: Transforming Workplace Psychological Abuse

This chapter adopts a crisis management approach to handling workplace harassment, emphasizing recognition, response, and remediation. We discuss transforming complaints culture and implementing better policies, practices, and procedures. The importance of institutional courage, collective courage, leadership courage, and bystander courage is highlighted.

Epilogue: The Alchemy of Change

The epilogue offers a reflection on the transformative journey outlined in the book, emphasizing the potential for profound change in workplaces. It encourages readers to embrace the alchemy of change and their own potential to contribute in the creation of healthier, more supportive work environments.