

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying between colleagues is not accepted in NIRAS-LTS International. It results in a bad psychological working environment and can hurt the targeted employee in the short and long term. It is unacceptable to bully, and it is unworthy to have knowledge of bullying without intervening.

1 Responsibilities

We expect that all colleagues and Managers pay attention to tendencies towards bullying, and that we all through an open dialogue actively participate in preventing and avoiding bullying.

We all have, colleagues as well as Managers, a responsibility to create an environment and a tone that underline our values to take responsibility for each other and to be open and honest. In this context, this means that we don't tolerate bullying. We have to listen for signals and stop tendencies towards bullying. This includes when we are witness to such situations, but also if we ourselves have said/done something offensive, or if we ourselves are subject to offensive actions by others.

2 Scope

Bullying is when a person repeatedly over a certain period of time is subject to negative, derogatory or hurtful treatment by one or several persons in the workspace. The situation becomes bullying when the person at the same time has difficulties defending him or herself effectively. Whether the actions are an expression of heedlessness or an actual wish to harass or bully is without relevance, as it is the victim's experience of these actions that is the main issue.

Surveys show that everyone can become the victim of bullying: "strong" as well as "weak" colleagues and Managers can be victims. Bullying can for instance include these actions:

- Ridiculing, taunting, condescending comments or gossip
- Offensive phone conversations or mails
- Uncomfortable teasing and a rough tone
- Unfair devaluation of work effort and qualifications
- Exclusion from the social community (for example not included in lunch group, birthday celebration) and/or the professional community (for example not involved in assignments, sparring, network etc.)
- Criticism of privacy

It is not seen as bullying when it is a matter of isolated conflicts or harmless teasing between two approximately equally "strong" persons.

3 Principles

Bullying is a serious matter and employees who feel bullied can suffer from insecurity, anxiety, concentration difficulties, sleeplessness, low self-esteem, headaches, stomach issues, sick days and in the worst cases, stress or depression.

3.1 How we prevent and avoid bullying

Surveys show that there are many reasons for bullying to occur, and that it's often a combination of several circumstances that can be of personal character or stem from stress in the working environment or the organisation of the work. In regard to both personal reasons and work-related reasons, we must prevent bullying by fundamentally respecting each other, our work and our differences.

3.2 How we handle an actual situation

If an employee feels bullied, or if colleagues identify someone who is bullied, it's a matter of confronting the bully and explaining how he or she experiences the situation. If the bullying doesn't come to an end, or if it's too difficult to confront the bully directly, the employee has to talk to his or her Line Manager or a colleague to get support to stop the bullying. The earlier the situation is addressed, the less complicated it usually is to stop. The Management has an especially great responsibility to keep an eye out for this kind of unwanted behaviour, to intervene and to find a solution to the problem.

In regard to the character of the situation, the employee and the Line Manager have to evaluate if the department can end the bullying on its own, or if there is the need for help from a Senior Manager. The degree and type of bullying will be investigated. Depending on the situation, this can include:

- A conversation with the involved leader(s)
- A conversation with the complainant
- A conversation with the bully or bullies
- A conversation with others who have seen or heard something of relevance to the case
- A decision with the leader on a solution and follow-up

The most important thing is to bring the bullying to an end and to find a solution that can help both parties to move on. Depending on the degree of bullying, the bully can face:

1. A demand to immediately stop the bullying
2. A reorganisation of work assignments and roles, relocation or mediation between the two parties
3. An oral or written warning
4. Dismissal

For the bullied employee, the need for follow-up conversations and possibly help from a psychologist may arise.

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5th November 2020