

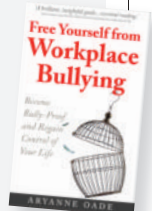


Many workplace bullies will do anything they can to blame the nurse they are targeting

What you will learn about bullying

- How to prevent the bully from being aggressive
- How to reduce the bully's level of aggression
- How to cause the bully to change their minds entirely about using bullying behaviour

● This article contains extracts from *Free Yourself from Workplace Bullying* (Mint Hall Publishing, 2015) available to from Amazon



THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Coaching a team member to avoid ineffective responses

How to respond to bullying behaviour

Sadly, incidents of bullying behaviour are on the increase in hospitals and wards across the UK. As a manager, you are likely to be involved at some point in coaching a team member who is concerned they may be subject to bullying behaviour.

Many nurses become vulnerable to workplace bullying because they don't know how to protect themselves at the time of an attack. So how can you coach a team member to avoid the common pitfalls that inadvertently make it easier for a workplace bully to bully?

There are several pitfalls to avoid during an attack, each of which involves the target nurse using well-intentioned but ineffective strategies. When a nurse uses any of these it is often because he or she feels bewildered or self-doubting about being bullied and tries to mollify the bully. None of these approaches is in their best interest. Examples include:

» **Appealing to the bully's "better nature"**: a strategy that assumes the bully possesses a measure of goodwill and the nurse can somehow induce them to extend it to them.

» **Trying to reason with the bully**: which presupposes that a logical argument will prove influential with a person whose use of angry emotion at work suggests that they are unlikely to be persuaded by rational argument.

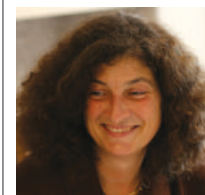
» **Trying to appease them**: this assumes the bully is amenable to being calmed and soothed, and that if the nurse tries hard enough they will work out how to do this effectively

» **Feeling sorry for the bully**: which supposes that the bully is somehow being unfairly treated and deserving of sympathy, when it is actually that person who is choosing to mistreat the nurse.

As a manager, the starting point for coaching any nurse who has fallen into any or all of these ways of thinking is to assert the truth that the nurse did not do anything to provoke the bullying behaviour they were subject to. It is really important that your team member gets this. Even if their performance is not up to

scratch – something that they will need to address – they still did not do anything to warrant the aggression they were subject to. Effective influencing skills and bullying are two entirely different things.

Many workplace bullies will do anything they can to blame the nurse they are targeting, to make that nurse "the problem" they complain about, and to single that nurse out for personalised enmity. These are their decisions and their responsibility alone, and they are not the behaviours used by effective colleagues.



Arianne Oade has worked as a chartered psychologist for more than 20 years. She coaches clients to recover from the sometimes debilitating effects of workplace bullying, www.oadeassociates.com

Next week

Nutrition

How nurses are required to take an active role in ensuring patients receive nutritional care

