

TEST YOUR WORKPLACE HARASSMENT IQ

- _____1. If your intentions are good, your behavior isn't harassment.
- _____2. People who are harassed usually do something to invite it.
- _____3. If everyone else thinks a co-worker's behavior is OK, you should just accept it, even if it bothers you.
- _____4. Using slang "nicknames" that denote co-workers' race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, religion, sex or age is okay, as long as it is done in a joking manner.
OK in the workplace?
OK at a barbeque party?
- _____5. Asking a co-worker for a date is not sexual harassment.
- _____6. People whose clothing, personal articles or hairstyles indicate their cultural heritage or religion should accept the fact that fellow workers may make tasteless or offensive comments about their heritage or religion.
- _____7. Both men and women can be harassed.
- _____8. An employer is not responsible if a person who provides a service (e.g., filling the vending machine, repairing the copier or delivering supplies) harasses its employees because the provider of services is not employed by the company.
- _____9. If no one complains about your behavior, that means you are not offending anyone.
- _____10. If a harassment victim tells a manager or supervisor that s/he has been harassed, but asks the manager/supervisor not to report the harassment, the manager/supervisor should respect the wishes of the victim.
- _____11. One incident of unwelcome conduct cannot support a violation.
- _____12. Frequently teasing an employee because s/he is older is not prohibited conduct.
- _____13. Teasing and crude remarks directed towards a coworker with a disability can constitute unlawful harassment.
- _____14. If a manager hears one employee making remarks about another employee's religious observances, the manager should just wait to see if the victim complains. If s/he does not complain, the manager should assume that s/he does not object to the comments.
- _____15. If an employee complains about workplace harassment, and an investigation does not prove the allegations to be true, an accused supervisor or manager may discipline the employee for filing the complaint.

From the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Training and Technical Assistance Program. Washington D.C.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT ISSUES

Answers:

1. False. Harassment depends on how the conduct was received, not on the intent.
2. False. Conduct that is unwelcome is not invited.
3. False. If an employee finds conduct to be offensive, s/he should report the conduct before it becomes severe or pervasive.
4. False. Harassment depends on how the conduct is received, not on intent. Definitely not OK if done in the workplace. Good friends joking back and forth in a non-workplace setting, may be OK.
5. True. A request for a date does not rise to the level of harassment. However, continued requests or pressure for dates after the party says no may be harassment.
6. False. Actions which offend employees based on race, color, gender, national origin, age or disability, if severe and pervasive, are prohibited activities.
7. True. Men and women can be victims of harassment, and the victims can also be the same sex as the harasser.
8. False. Employers are responsible for ensuring that they provide a work environment free of harassment. Thus, they may be liable for harassment by non-employees.
9. False. Employees may indicate offense by remaining silent, (e.g., when insensitive jokes are being told). In other instances, employees may fail to complain because the harasser is a high ranking official of the employer. A person does have to complain in order to get redress.
10. False. Managers and supervisors are obligated to report unlawful workplace harassment.
11. False. Actions which are egregious or threatening may rise to the level of unlawful harassment. It depends on the degree.
12. False. Employees age 40 and over are protected against harassment based on age. If the teasing is egregious or frequent enough that it creates a hostile work environment, it would be considered unlawful harassment.
13. True. Employees with disabilities are protected against harassment by the Americans With Disabilities Act.
14. False. Managers and supervisors should report, correct and prevent harassment, even if no one complains. The manager/supervisor has direct knowledge.
15. False. Employees who complain about workplace harassment are protected against retaliation.