

# Sexual Harassment

## The Power of X is Respect

### Effects of Sexual Harassment:

If you are being sexually harassed, you may be affected in many different ways. It may not always be noticeable to others. The following is a list of some possible ways you may be affected:

- Feelings of humiliation and shame
- Anger
- Self-blame, confusion
- Fear that others will also blame them
- Feeling hopeless or powerless to stop the situation
- Fear of retaliation such as being fired, rejected for promotion or passed over for salary increase.
- Fear that she/he will not be believed
- Fearful of being labeled troublemakers
- Feel compelled to change jobs, career plans and/or transfer to another unit to avoid the person who is harassing them
- Physical symptoms of stress, such as headaches and stomach problems
- Lowered self-esteem and self-confidence as a result of the harassment
- Lowered ambition
- Disruption in intellectual development

### Stopping Sexual Harassment: Victims can choose to...

**1) Speak with an advocate.** Advocates provide free and confidential support, referrals and information. If you decide to report the harassment, advocates can accompany you throughout the process and inform you of your rights.

**2) Directly confront the harasser** This may strengthen a legal claim, but is not absolutely necessary. Each person must also assess their safety risks in doing so. In *Back Off! How To Confront and Stop Sexual Harassment & Harassers*, Martha Langelan recommends taking these steps:

- Do the unexpected: Name the behavior... whatever he or she has just done, say it, and be specific. Privacy protects harassers, but visibility undermines them.
- Hold the harasser accountable for his or her actions. Don't make excuses for him or her; don't pretend it didn't happen.
- Respond at the appropriate level.
- Use a combined verbal and physical response to physical harassment. Make honest, direct statements. Be serious, straightforward, and blunt. Reinforce your statements with strong body language: eye contact, head up, shoulders back, a strong, serious stance.
- Avoid making threats, insults or obscenities.
- Demand that the harassment stop. Make it clear that you have the right to be free from sexual harassment.
- Don't respond to the harasser's excuses or diversionary tactics. Harassing behavior is the issue.
- Say what you have to say, and repeat it if the harasser persists. End the interaction on your own terms, with a strong closing statement.

**3) Document the harassment.** This can be important for use as evidence in a case or complaint.

- Photograph or keep copies of any offensive material at the workplace.
- Keep a journal with detailed information on instances of sexual harassment. Note the dates, conversation, frequency of offensive encounters, etc.
- Tell other people, including personal friends and co-workers if possible.
- Obtain copies of your work records (including performance evaluations) and keep these copies.

### 4) Report incidents of sexual harassment:

Contact an advocate to obtain more information about reporting any kind of harassment.

Xavier Advocate Program: Information Support and Advocacy

Creating A Campus Free of Violence

Call (513) 745-1000 and request a Xavier advocate