

Confrontation Strategies

1. Know your rights and find out about the organization's policies and procedures as well as the sexual harassment law.
2. Trust your instincts and admit to yourself a problem exists.
3. Do not blame yourself. Get emotional support during this very stressful period and give yourself positive strokes for the strength you have shown.
4. Don't delay—react immediately to the first incident (or a day or two after). If you have waited to act, explain why you have said nothing in the past.
5. Say "no" directly and clearly. Avoid apologetic language or excuses. **"DIS"** the harasser. Let him/her know **Directly, Immediately and Specifically** what behavior creates discomfort and the need for it to end.
6. Use assertive body language that demonstrates you are relaxed and confident: direct eye contact, movement toward the harasser, a strong, clear speaking voice. Do not smile or touch your harasser. Use "I" messages.
7. Describe the harasser's behavior in specific terms, including what you find offensive about the behavior, its impact on you, and what behavior you would prefer. Do not use insults or slurs.
8. Use the "broken record" technique. Stay focused on your point and do not get sidetracked by irrelevant issues or labeling; ignore remarks and calmly repeat your point.
9. Don't keep it to yourself. Make your objection public. Tell trusting friends. Officially, report it to supervisors, union representatives, and other persons in human resources or personnel department. File a police report if the behavior is criminal.
10. Write down what happened (who, what, when, where, how). Keep a journal, a log or specific incidents, dates, times, places, witnesses, and the nature of the harassment. Save any offensive cards, letters, or photos. Do not destroy any notes or put any past personal information in the journal. Keep it in a safe place.
11. Send a letter to the harasser explaining what behavior you object to, why you object to it, and what you want to have happen next (a good follow up to what you said in person). Keep a copy and send it by registered mail.
12. Act appropriately to the situation. Escalate your assertiveness if the behavior continues: Use stronger language and state what action you will take if the behavior doesn't stop.
13. Document your job performance to prepare for possible retaliation regarding your output.
14. If the informal and/or formal company complaint process has not stopped the harassment, file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or your state fair employment agency (if you work in a company with 15 or more employees).
15. Determine if there are others who have received similar offensive treatment from your harasser(s) and confront the harasser(s) or a supervisor as a group. Also, identify any witnesses and enlist their support.