**Name:**
Welcome to the Civility in the Workplace Assignment.

While a training program on workplace manners and courtesy may seem like overkill, the reality is: rudeness is an epidemic costing industry millions a year. What society seems to be gaining in terms of both knowledge and technological advancement, it's losing out on basic social values that directly impact the bottom line. Bosses freely intrude on subordinates' personal space, gossiping co-workers are norm, and quality customer care has been forgotten. The result: an environment not conducive to getting work done, dissatisfied clients aiming for the competition, and in some cases, blatant tolerance for abuse and harassment.

To address the growing problem of incivility in the work setting, this assignment introduces the concept of civility, its importance to a company, as well as its typical causes and effects. Skills needed to effectively practice civil behavior, as well as different ways organizations can systematize civility in the workplace will also be discussed.

By the end of this assignment, you will be able to:
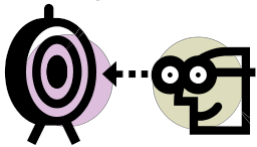
Define civility, understand its causes, and enumerate at least three of its behavioral indicators.

Learn practical ways of practicing workplace etiquette, including the proper use of greetings, respect, involvement, and political correctness.

What is Uncivil Behavior?

Civility represents the social norms and rules that must be followed in order to positively and productively relate with others. When people hear the word "civility," words that come to mind include *respect, courtesy, tolerance, consideration, and a rational approach to conflicts*. Our word *Civilization* comes from a recognition that civil behavior is necessary to avoid chaos in society. Behaviors that threaten positive and productive relations with other people, therefore, are uncivil behaviors.

1. Define Civility in your own words:

2. How does the phrase "Treat others the way you want to be treated" apply to civility?

3. List one way that someone was uncivil to you without them meaning to, how you reacted, and if it was resolved.

4. List one way that someone was uncivil to you intentionally, and your response.

What behaviors can be considered as uncivil? There are many. Below are just a few examples:

Failure to acknowledge another person's presence: Ignoring other people's greetings and well-wishes; going past a co-worker without so much as a nod or a greeting.

Using abusive language: Being verbally abusive or using crude language

Gossiping: It's uncivil behavior to both instigate and spread rumors against another person, regardless of whether the "news" seems accurate or relevant to the accomplishment of the task at hand.

Discounting employee contribution: Discounting means deliberately downplaying or ignoring the importance of another person's statement or work contribution. For instance, some members in a team may tend to cut off a person that they do not like during a brainstorming session. Taking credit – or worse, compensation! – for work that you did not do is also an example of discounting behavior.

Bullying and intimidating co-workers: Threatening violence against co-workers who would report timesheet irregularities to management; leveraging the power of cliques in order to ostracize particular individuals.

Sabotaging individual and company efforts: Intentionally not informing a co-worker who is competition for a promotion of the exact time a client will arrive in the building.

Discriminating against a particular individual or group: Attacking an individual based on intrinsic characteristics such as race, gender, age, mental ability, orientation, and physical appearance.

Practicing insensitivity against co-workers' needs: Inability to pay attention to the feelings and needs of others e.g. not giving a grieving co-worker time off before demanding workplace attendance. Insensitivity may also come in the form of engaging in activities distracting to co-workers, e.g. taking a cell phone calls while in the middle of a meeting, not cleaning up the whiteboard as one leaves the training room, and demanding attention from subordinates outside of the prescribed working hours.

Practicing poor etiquette in dealing with correspondence: Ignoring phone calls and emails, using company email to send private messages, and discussing individuals in group emails as if they are not there.

It's worth noting: civility goes beyond mere good manners.

Civility is about effective self-awareness and effective social awareness. You can't be an effective practitioner of civility until you recognize your place in the general scheme of things, and you develop an appreciation for the unique contribution of all else around. It's a delicate balance between pursuing self-interest and practicing self-control in order for others and the organization to pursue their interests well. For this reason, effective programs on civility must always be prefaced by a training workshop on attentiveness to self and others.

5. As a second year student, you are often given more authority and responsibility in the classroom. List three ways you can set a positive example to your fellow students.

Assignment:

<u>You are the supervisor at a job</u> and there is a lot of workplace drama that is affecting your workers, and even your customers are complaining about poor service. Most of it comes from people gossiping about each other. You fantasize about quitting but you know you can't afford to do so, and you would love to fire everyone but the owner wouldn't let you.

A. What are the first two steps you would take to discover the core issues?

B. Once you know the root causes, how can you begin to restore civility at your job?

C. You may have to fire someone who can't stop creating workplace issues. What are two questions about civil behavior you can ask in an interview, when looking for someone to replace a fired employee? Their answers may help you avoid the problem in the future.