

Three Training Tips to Deliver an Effective Sexual Harassment Prevention Workshop

By Carole Donaldson -August 21, 2018
The Training Associates



Anti-Harassment Training can be a sensitive topic and evoke strong feelings, not to mention its legal and compliance implications. As organizations continue to support existing programs and develop new ones, knowing how to design and deliver an effective training program is essential. What will resonate with employees and create a comfortable environment for learning? What exactly makes a great anti-harassment workshop?

I had the same questions, so I turned to **Judy Kaye**, one of our Diversity and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training experts. With over 25 years of practice experience, Judy facilitates everything from single workshops to multi-session strategic planning retreats.

Judy shared these three tips to create an interactive training session where the audience is engaged, participates, and shares thoughts among their peers – making any Sexual Harassment Prevention training workshop full of communication and learning.

Three Tips for Delivering Workshop Success

Tip 1 – Do Your Homework

First, get to know the organization (or division) so you can customize the training to their culture and daily operations. Whether it is an enterprise, government agency, or startup company, every organization is unique. Take the time to learn about their history and structure, products or services. Review mission statements, policies, and procedures. The goal is to be as familiar as possible with the organization's needs and style, so the training is relevant and resonates with participants. You'll see how the sessions come alive!

Tip 2 – Connect with the People

Judy also recommends you learn about the organization's people prior to designing the training. She does this through individual interviews or focus groups, with a representative sample of senior leaders, managers, and staff. These can be conducted in person, by telephone, or with a video conference.

This research helps build rapport and trust with the audience and enables Judy to use the company's own terminology and examples to illustrate key concepts.

Tip 3 – Make it Interactive

Judy's final tip is to make the training workshop as engaging and active as possible. She arranges the seats in a circular or semi-circular format so everyone can see each other. This also allows her to walk around easily and interact with participants.

She often starts with a casual scenario like having a co-worker say, “you look great today.” Is such a comment welcome or unwelcome behavior? This kind of exercise helps the group warm up and provides a safe way for participants to share different reactions and perspectives.

Another way to get people involved quickly and comfortably is to pose questions and ask for a show of hands. “Does anyone know someone who experienced unwanted sexual conduct at work?” “How many of you have observed someone engage in inappropriate behavior, where you wanted to intervene but didn’t know how?” No one gets put on the spot, and everyone can participate at their own comfort level.

Judy suggests you then introduce more complex scenarios gradually. How does a different tone of voice, setting, or power relationship change the impact of someone’s words? Elicit many responses and use participants’ own insights to convey key learning points.

Every training session is different, so a “one-size-fits-all” approach doesn’t work. A good trainer knows how to respond to the dynamics of the group, keeping them involved and refining the material so they can learn effectively. The knowledge you gain from applying Tips 1 and 2 will help you structure and sustain a productive session.

If a group is particularly reticent, Judy may hand out index cards so people can write down questions anonymously. This often reenergizes the training and tailors the content to participants’ most pressing concerns. For larger groups, Judy often arranges people at small tables and uses a group activity or game to encourage safety and broad participation.

A Final Word

The goal of an effective training workshop is to get people involved, welcome questions, and turn difficult moments into teachable moments. “It’s fun to have the topic come alive and let participants develop the program organically,” said Judy, one of TTA’s Diversity and Sexual Harassment Prevention Experts. “I always have a plan, while staying committed to going with the flow and making on-the-spot modifications as needed to serve the people in the room.”

Whether you are supporting an existing training or developing a new Anti-Harassment program, your training needs to resonate with employees. Some companies have had a Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy in place for years and have made regular training part of the culture. Others are implementing professional development requirements or options for the first time. Understanding the organization, making the training session interactive, and adapting to the dynamics in the room help ensure a quality training that will stick in the minds of the learners.

Thank you to Judy for sharing her tips! She is an effective communicator who demonstrates warmth and enthusiasm, fosters authentic interaction and understanding, and aligns learning initiatives with strategic goals to build a collaborative training workshop. Notably, Judy is also a lawyer who has found her calling in training.

Learn more about [Judy](#) and how she can help you deliver [Anti-Harassment Training and other Compliance Training topics](#).