**Scenarios and Case Studies for Sexual Harassment Prevention Training**

Below are detailed scenarios and case studies designed for the interactive exercises in the training. These examples cover a wide range of potential harassment situations, including verbal, non-verbal, online, and third-party harassment. They also highlight different roles employees may play, from bystanders to managers, to provide comprehensive learning opportunities.

**Scenario 1: Verbal Harassment at a Team Event**

**Context:**  
The team is attending a work-related social event after a successful project completion. During casual conversation, a senior male manager makes a series of sexually suggestive comments towards a younger female colleague. She looks uncomfortable, but doesn't say anything.

**Details for Participants:**

* The senior manager says things like, "You’re looking particularly stunning tonight, I wouldn’t be able to keep my hands off you if I were younger."
* The female colleague tries to laugh it off, but appears uneasy.
* A few other team members overhear the comment but do not intervene.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* How should the bystanders react in this situation?
* What should the female colleague do if she feels uncomfortable?
* If you were her line manager, how would you address this with the senior manager?

**Scenario 2: Online Harassment in a Remote Working Environment**

**Context:**  
Two employees, Sarah and John, frequently collaborate on projects via email and instant messaging. John has started sending Sarah messages that go beyond professional topics, commenting on her appearance during video calls and asking her out for drinks after work hours.

**Details for Participants:**

* John’s comments include phrases like, "You looked really hot during our Zoom call today. We should grab drinks sometime after work.”
* Sarah tries to steer the conversation back to work topics, but the comments continue and make her feel uncomfortable.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What steps should Sarah take to report John’s behaviour?
* How should management respond to this case of online harassment?
* How can the organisation prevent similar situations in remote working environments?

**Scenario 3: Third-Party Harassment by a Client**

**Context:**  
An employee, Tom, works at a client site as part of a service agreement. During his visit, one of the client's senior staff members makes inappropriate remarks and comments about Tom’s appearance. When Tom tries to redirect the conversation to work matters, the client continues to make unwelcome advances.

**Details for Participants:**

* The client makes comments like, "You look great in that suit, you must get a lot of attention. How about we have a private meeting later?”
* Tom is hesitant to speak up, as the client is important to the company's business relationship.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What should Tom do to address the client’s behaviour?
* How should the company handle the situation without jeopardising the client relationship?
* What proactive measures could the company take to prevent similar incidents with clients in the future?

**Scenario 4: Non-Verbal Harassment in the Office**

**Context:**  
Emma, a junior employee, has noticed that one of her male colleagues, David, often stares at her in a way that makes her feel uncomfortable. In meetings, she catches him looking at her body, and his behaviour is making it hard for her to concentrate.

**Details for Participants:**

* David has never said anything inappropriate to Emma, but his non-verbal behaviour (staring) makes her uncomfortable.
* Emma is unsure if she should report the behaviour because it’s subtle and she doesn’t want to create a scene.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* How should Emma handle this situation?
* Should she report this to management, and if so, what should she say?
* How can managers and colleagues be made aware of non-verbal forms of harassment?

**Scenario 5: Bystander Intervention in a Team Meeting**

**Context:**  
During a team meeting, Mark makes a suggestive comment about his colleague, Anna, after she presents an idea. He says, "I’m impressed, I didn’t know you had such brilliant ideas in you, Anna. I always thought you were just here for decoration."

**Details for Participants:**

* Anna looks visibly uncomfortable and doesn't respond to Mark’s comment.
* Several team members hear the comment, but no one addresses it immediately.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* As a bystander, what should you do in this situation?
* If you were the manager in the meeting, how would you address Mark’s comment?
* What are some ways the team can establish a culture where such comments are immediately addressed?

**Scenario 6: Manager Handling a Report of Harassment**

**Context:**  
An employee, James, reports to his manager that one of his colleagues, Rachel, has been making inappropriate comments about his appearance for several weeks. He feels uncomfortable but wasn’t sure if it was serious enough to report until now.

**Details for Participants:**

* James feels Rachel’s comments are unprofessional and persistent.
* The manager must determine the best way to handle this situation while maintaining confidentiality and protecting both employees.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What steps should the manager take to investigate James’ complaint?
* How can the manager ensure that James feels supported and safe in the workplace?
* What actions should the manager take with Rachel, assuming the claims are confirmed?

**Scenario 7: Cultural Insensitivity Leading to Harassment**

**Context:**  
Sophie, who recently joined the company, is from a different cultural background. Some of her colleagues make jokes about her accent and clothing, which she finds offensive. When she brings this up, they claim they are just teasing and she should "lighten up."

**Details for Participants:**

* The jokes are frequent and often occur during breaks or casual conversations.
* Sophie feels that these comments are a form of harassment, but the colleagues do not see it that way.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What should Sophie do to address this situation?
* How should management handle the cultural insensitivity displayed by Sophie’s colleagues?
* How can the company create awareness and prevent culturally insensitive harassment in the future?

**Case Study 1: Failure to Address Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

**Context:**  
In a real-world case, a company failed to investigate multiple reports of sexual harassment by a senior manager. Several employees had reported inappropriate comments and behaviour, but no action was taken because the accused was a high performer. Eventually, the issue escalated, leading to a legal case where the company was found liable for failing to prevent harassment.

**Key Facts:**

* The manager was accused of making inappropriate comments towards female employees over several months.
* HR and senior leadership were aware of the complaints but failed to investigate due to the manager's role.
* The company was sued by the affected employees, and a tribunal found that the lack of action contributed to the hostile work environment.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What were the key failures in this case?
* How could the company have prevented the situation from escalating to legal action?
* What lessons can be learned about reporting mechanisms and accountability, regardless of seniority?

**Case Study 2: Successful Intervention and Policy Implementation**

**Context:**  
A mid-sized company implemented a strong sexual harassment policy that included regular training, anonymous reporting tools, and clear consequences for harassment. After an incident of online harassment was reported by an employee, the company responded quickly, investigating and taking disciplinary action against the offender. The employee felt supported, and the company reinforced its zero-tolerance culture.

**Key Facts:**

* The company had a clear policy that outlined steps for reporting harassment.
* An anonymous reporting system allowed the employee to feel safe reporting the incident.
* A thorough investigation was completed within a week, and action was taken swiftly.
* The company communicated the results of the investigation to the workforce, reinforcing its commitment to a safe working environment.

**Discussion Prompts:**

* What did the company do right in this situation?
* How did the reporting system help create a culture of trust and accountability?
* What other proactive measures could the company take to maintain this environment?

These scenarios and case studies are designed to provide employees and managers with practical, real-world examples of how sexual harassment can occur and how it should be addressed. By actively engaging with these scenarios, participants will learn to recognise harassment, respond appropriately, and create a safer, more respectful workplace.

If you **need more support** or further help in designing your examples, please don’t hesitate to contact our team on **0800 567 7003**.