



What you need to know about sexual harassment in the workplace

BY SANDY GAROSSINO

"I let out a big yawn at a staff meeting and my host told me 'I want to hate f%# you, to wake you up.' ...there were the uninvited back massages at my desk to which it was clear I couldn't say no, during which my host's hands would slide down..."*

He once grabbed my waist from behind – in front of our fellow colleague, at the office – and proceeded to repeatedly thrust... There was emotional abuse, too... Sometimes that hit harder than the physical trespassing.

The union representative and my executive producer at Q, the radio show for which we worked, did nothing."

Such were the explosive claims made last fall by radio producer **Kathryn Borel** concerning the toxic workplace environment at Q, the **CBC's** marquee radio program featuring **Jian Ghomeshi**.

Along with other allegations now forming the basis of criminal charges, this story came as a huge wake-up call to Canadians. And business owners and senior executives are among those who received the greatest jolt.

Until the reportedly toxic working environment in Ghomeshi's studio was disclosed, most employers tended to downplay the incidence and severity of



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workplace harassment. And the temptation to return to complacency is strong. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" has been the operative motto pretty much for recorded history.

Except it *is* broke. And it has to be fixed.

Sexual harassment is virtually endemic for women employees — a recent Angus Reid poll found that 43 per cent of women and 12 per cent of men report experiencing it. Of those, most preferred to handle the problem on their own; almost 80 per cent made no report to their employer, including those who experienced non-consensual sexual touching.

Discouragingly, for those who did report their experience, some 60 per cent encountered employers who took no concrete action, or simply dismissed their complaint, just as the CBC did.

Yet burying our heads in the sand is no longer an option for B.C. businesses. Recent changes to the Workers Compensation Act allow compensation for chronic stress caused by workplace bullying or harassment. The Act further imposes a positive duty on employers with more than

and includes procedures to make workers accountable for acts of harassment.

Employers are required to make a copy of the workplace harassment policy readily available for review by the employer's workers and, at each workplace where workers of the employer

safebc.com/publications. To find the latest guidelines regarding Bullying and Harassment, visit worksafebc.com/bullying.

Unchecked sexual harassment can become a devastating Black Swan event for any corporation. Burying it through non-reporting or management inaction is not only illegal, it entrenches bad behaviour within the organizational culture, thus degrading and limiting the performance of the entire operation.

When it comes to workplace harassment, an ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure. No business can afford to have its brand mired in salacious and controversial publicity exposing a complacent "Hear No Evil" management style that enabled abuse.

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ten employees to implement a workplace harassment policy, as outlined in section 117.1.

According to The Act, an employer with more than 10 workers must establish and implement a workplace harassment policy that includes measures and procedures for workers to report incidents of workplace harassment, includes procedures for investigating incidents and complaints of workplace harassment,

are regularly employed, post and keep posted a notice advising where the copy is available for review.

Employers must also provide their employees with the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure a workplace free of harassment.

WorkSafeBC provides detailed and comprehensive recommendations for employers, which are available to the public at work-



Want to know more about how your business can prevent bullying and harassment in the workplace?

WorkSafeBC has compiled a number of resources for employers, including a tool kit with a training presentation, posters for around your office, fact sheets, frequently asked questions, and a concise guide for small businesses.

To download the toolkit or review the Workers Compensation Act and relevant guidelines, visit worksafebc.com/bullying.

Leaders need to avoid becoming 'bad busy'

BY LISA MARTIN

As a leader, you need to avoid "bad busy" at all costs.

Bad busy is when you wake up dreading the day ahead, wishing for an escape route to a different life.

It happens when you spend a lot of time in reactive mode, catching the latest curveball to fly your way. Or when you spend too much time on tasks that aren't your core strengths.

It's possible you're doing both,

in which case you're a four-alarm blaze headed to fast and total burnout.

Do you expend energy wisely? Here are four questions to ask:

- Do you spend less than 80 per cent of your day doing tasks you love?
- Do you commonly feel frustrated or annoyed at work?
- Is your life less fulfilling than you'd like it to be?
- Are you less optimistic than you used to be?

If you answered "yes" to any

of these questions, you're probably bad busy. Halt everything and reconsider how you spend your time.

Bad busy is no way to live. You'll never optimize your success or happiness in this zone.

If you responded "no" to every question, you know how to be good busy.

Your mission is to stay in this zone. Life may beckon you to become bad busy. Resist the call.

I'll leave you with this personal query to ponder. Leading

Question: What dreaded task do you spend too much time on?

Lisa Martin has made it her mission to help companies keep and cultivate rising leaders. She is a member of The Vancouver Board of Trade Women's Leadership Circle Advisory Council, the creator of the Lead + Live Better™ programs, a leadership coach, speaker, and a bestselling author. If you like this article, you'll love Martin's leadership development program, available at LisaMartinInternational.com/programs.



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