



## Harassment-Free Workplace Series: The Executive View

### Topline Report

*Due to rounding, column totals may exceed 100%*

**With the increased attention to sexual harassment over the past 12 months, to what extent have you changed your behaviors at work to avoid behaviors that could be perceived by others as sexual harassment?**

Instrument Scale	Executives		Reporting Scale
Not at all	45%	<b>66%</b>	Not at all-to-small
To a small extent	21%		
To a moderate extent	17%	<b>32%</b>	Moderate-to-very-great
To a great extent	8%		
To a very great extent	7%		
Not sure	2%	<b>2%</b>	Not sure
N	1034		

**Overall, how satisfied are you with your organization's efforts to keep your workplace free of sexual harassment?**

Instrument scale	Non-Managers	Managers	Executives	Non-Managers	Managers	Executives	All Groups	Reporting Scale
Very dissatisfied	3%	2%	3%	6%	6%	7%	<b>6%</b>	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
Dissatisfied	3%	4%	4%					
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21%	19%	16%	21%	19%	16%	<b>19%</b>	Neutral
Satisfied	27%	38%	26%	67%	73%	75%	<b>72%</b>	Satisfied or very satisfied
Very Satisfied	40%	35%	49%					
Not sure	6%	2%	2%	6%	2%	2%	<b>3%</b>	Not sure
N	1010	1022	1034				<b>3066</b>	

**To what extent do you feel that your workplace is one that fosters the occurrence of behaviors that might be considered sexual harassment?**

<b>Instrument scale</b>	<b>Non-Managers</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Executives</b>	<b>Non-Managers</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Executives</b>	<b>All Groups</b>	<b>Reporting Scale</b>
Not at all	59%	55%	61%	59%	55%	61%	<b>58%</b>	Not at all
To a small extent	16%	26%	21%	33%	42%	37%	<b>37%</b>	Small-to-very-great
To a moderate extent	10%	11%	8%					
To a great extent	4%	3%	4%					
To a very great extent	3%	2%	4%					
Not sure	8%	3%	3%	8%	3%	3%	<b>5%</b>	Not sure
N	1010	1022	1034				<b>3066</b>	

**What has been the impact of sexual harassment on your organization? *Please select all that apply.***  
*(This question was only asked of those responding that their organization fosters sexual harassment to a small, moderate, great or very great extent)*

	<b>Executives</b>
Decreased morale	<b>23%</b>
Decreased engagement	<b>23%</b>
Decreased productivity	<b>18%</b>
Increased hostile work environment	<b>15%</b>
Increased turnover	<b>13%</b>
N	<b>337</b>

A survey of 554 HR professionals (SHRM Members) was also conducted as part of this study. As the group normally tasked with managing issues of sexual harassment, they were the group who was asked about policies and procedures related to the prevention of and responses to sexual harassment in detail. This group was asked:

***Does your organization have the following sexual harassment prevention measures in place? (choose all that apply)***

	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Formal sexual harassment prevention policy</b>	94%
N	438

***Executive survey respondents were asked: Based on your experience, how effective do you think each of the following actions could be in influencing workplace culture/behaviors, thereby fostering a safe environment for all employees?***

	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	No response	Very or Extremely Effective
Enhancing the ability for HR to investigate without potential for retaliation	8%	14%	31%	30%	15%	2%	45%
Independent reviews of all workplace misconduct investigations by HR	8%	14%	33%	29%	15%	2%	44%
Increasing diversity in leadership roles (i.e., gender, race, etc.)	15%	12%	32%	24%	15%	2%	39%
Independent reviews of all workplace misconduct investigations by legal	12%	16%	34%	24%	12%	2%	36%
Employing an ombudsman-style approach to workplace misconduct complaints (e.g., individuals designated to receive sexual harassment reports)	12%	18%	32%	24%	11%	2%	35%
Independent reviews of all workplace misconduct investigations by ombudsmen (e.g., individuals designated to receive sexual harassment reports)	10%	18%	36%	23%	11%	2%	34%
Increasing the number of people in the organization that employees can report concerns about sexual harassment	14%	17%	36%	21%	10%	2%	31%
Using talent acquisition as a way of screening for potential workplace misconduct in the future	13%	19%	37%	20%	9%	2%	29%

Ensuring HR professionals have the authority to make all decisions regarding workplace misconduct	18%	21%	34%	18%	8%	1%	26%
Designing incentive programs aimed at behavioral change	23%	20%	29%	18%	8%	2%	26%
Making HR the sole custodians of employee relations	21%	17%	36%	17%	8%	1%	25%
Eliminating policies that make workplace relationships taboo	25%	18%	32%	16%	7%	2%	23%
Rewarding increased reporting of sexual harassment allegations	34%	16%	27%	13%	9%	2%	22%
Other (please specify)	4%	2%	7%	5%	5%	78%	10%

**SELECTED QUALITATIVE QUESTIONS:**

Executive survey respondents who indicated that they had changed their behaviors to a small, moderate, great or very great extent were asked an open-ended question:

*Please explain what behaviors you have changed at work that could be perceived by others as sexual harassment.*

*Responses were coded by researchers into five categories.*

	<b>Executives</b>
Careful language/mindful	24%
Avoiding specific topics/jokes	16%
Extreme reaction	11%
No touching	9%
Policy change/new training	6%
Refused/skipped	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**EXAMPLES FROM EACH CATEGORY** are provided verbatim from survey responses and may contain errors.

**Careful language/mindful:**

“Casual conversational exchanges are now conducted with heightened regard for interpretations.”

“More guarded and cautious with informal conversations.”

“I have always been cautious in my words and actions. I am even more cautious now,”

**Avoiding specific topics or jokes:**

“I have steered clear of certain topics that we may have discussed years ago.”

“I avoid even the most casually perceived sexual references in conversation.”

“I do not comment on people's looks at all; do not compliment their looks; just their performance.”

**No touching:**

“I no longer put my hand on a co-worker’s shoulder.”

“No touching of employees at all.”

“I'm a big hugger, but I'm more reticent to give hugs.”

**Extreme reactions:**

“Don't talk to women.”

“Scared to say anything.”

“[Avoid] any indirect or direct contact with others, any conversation one-on-one, asking permission to enter into 3 foot personal space and NEVER closer than 3 foot of another.”

**Policy change/new training:**

“Mentoring programs. Senior - Junior work teams of only two individuals - ended. Working after hours in the office is not allowed for groups of less than 3 employees and must include a manager.”

“We are reviewing policies and procedures to make sure we have a safe working environment.”

“We try to educate our team which behaviors are correct, and which are not common and supposed to be avoided in our work place.”

**Executive survey respondents who indicated that their organization provides resources for handling issues related to sexual harassment were asked an open-ended question:**

***Why are you dissatisfied/neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/satisfied with the resources provided by your organization for handling issues related to sexual harassment?***

**Responses were coded by researchers into nine categories.**

	<b>Executives</b>
Training/system works	36%
Harassment has never been an issue	21%
Inadequate system/training	7%
HR takes care of harassment issues	4%
Apathy	3%
Management takes care of harassment issues	3%
System failure/unfair	3%
Legal takes care of harassment issues	1%
Other	1%
Refused/Skipped	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**EXAMPLES FROM EACH CATEGORY are provided verbatim from survey responses and may contain errors.**

***Training/system works***

“Seems to work; strong policy; strong training; strong intervention at most basic levels.”

“There is a culture of equality and zero tolerance. The last occurrence was more than a decade ago, and it's unlikely to happen because all our employees know that they will be fully backed by our company. Nobody messes with our people.”

***Harassment has never been an issue***

“It hasn't ever happened.”

“Everyone is very professional in our organization and handled himself well.”

***Inadequate system/training***

“We have a written policy but nothing further.”

“We have a dated video we make everyone watch and have a policy. There are no written policies or guidelines for managers to follow in the even a report is made.”

***HR takes care of harassment issues***

“No complaints, HR doing a good job of publicizing company policy and of reminding staff that unintended harassment is harassment nonetheless.”

“Trained HR staff are readily available to intercede, take the necessary fact-finding procedures in a timely and confidential manner.”

***Apathy***

“It's not a topic that is often discussed or thought about.”

“Not particularly proactive, but neither have we experienced any evident problems to date.”

***Management takes care of harassment issues***

“The people in charge will help and do the right thing.”

“Management has put in place training and resources to prevent such inappropriate actions.”

***System failure/unfair***

“You would have to report the incident to the person who was in violation of the corporate policy.”

“Policy seems to vary based on how well the individual is liked”

***Legal takes care of harassment issues***

“We have inside and outside counsel that will immediately speak with both parties and apprise them of their rights and defend them if necessary.”

“General counsel's office does great job in training and handling issues as they arise.”

***Other***

“Outside mediation, with no influence.”

“There is an outside person to field complaints. The process is clearly laid out and easy to follow”

Executive survey respondents who indicated that they have become more aware of whether their own behaviors at work could be perceived by others as sexual harassment were asked an open-ended question:

*“Please explain what behaviors you have become more aware of at work that could be perceived by others as sexual harassment.”*

*Responses were coded by researchers into seven categories.*

	<b>Executives</b>
Careful language/mindful	24%
Avoiding specific topics/jokes	21%
No touching	14%
Watching others/awareness from news	5%
Extreme reaction	4%
Deflection/blaming	2%
Policy change/new training	1%
Refused/Skipped	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**EXAMPLES FROM EACH CATEGORY are provided verbatim from survey responses and may contain errors.**

***Careful language/mindful***

“Being mindful of what others say and around whom.”

“Paying more attention to professional conversation and actions.”

***Avoiding specific topics/jokes***

“Off color jokes, innuendos, remarks about appearances, or looks are avoided.”

“Comments on physical appearance are out.”

***No touching***

“Touching of employees even in a friendly way.”

“Physical proximity or displays of affection.”

***Watching others/awareness from news***

“News articles make one think about how behaviors can be perceived.”

“Just can't believe that it is so common.”

***Extreme reaction***

“Any form of communication or contact with employees outside of business hours.”

“Asking an employee to get lunch.”

***Deflection/ blaming***

“Women are claiming anything at all. No due diligence and convicted before trial.”

“People are looking to nail you for sexual harassment because it is a great excuse when they are not performing.”

***Policy change/new training***

“Implement programs to protect employees.”

“More training.”

Executive survey respondents were asked an open-ended question:

***“In your opinion, what are the key elements of an organizational culture that prevents sexual harassment?”***

***Responses were coded by researchers into nine categories.***

	<b>Executives</b>
HR Policy/Education on issues	26%
Respect/fairness/equity	19%
Communication/open doors policies	17%
Management/Leadership/Executive Support	13%
Zero Tolerance	10%
Professionalism/strict rules	5%
Diversity/Inclusion	4%
Religious/moral/familial workplace	3%
Other	3%
N	637

***EXAMPLES FROM EACH CATEGORY are provided verbatim from survey responses and may contain errors.***

***HR Policy/Education on issues***

“I think the company has to implement training and have a strong and well enforced policy regarding sexual harassment.”

“Right policy, right communication, right program to support safe reporting; taking action in a timely manner when it occurs.”

***Respect/fairness/equity***

“Establishing corporate core values of respect, integrity, and dignity.”

“Everyone in the organization deserves the same level of respect. Any sort of conflict is dealt with immediately. Anything that might be construed as inappropriate is discussed immediately.”

***Communication/open-door policies***

“Our open-door policy and the fact that the associates know that we take all this seriously.”

“Openness and the ability for victims of sexual harassment to speak to someone without shame or retaliation.”



***Management/Leadership/Executive Support***

“Top down policy of not allowing for this kind of action to be tolerated.”

“Great leadership from management, policies that foster respect and professionalism.”

***Zero Tolerance***

“Letting it be known at the point of employment that it will not be tolerated.”

“Zero Tolerance/Immediate Dismissal.”

***Professionalism/strict rules***

“Work and goal-oriented dialogue during the work week.”

“Professional setting. Sexual harassment can occur if the environment is too relaxed.”

***Diversity/Inclusion***

“Diversity, respect, professionalism and high ethical expectations.”

“More minorities in leadership roles. Less men in leadership roles.”

***Religious/moral/familial workplace***

“High moral and religious standards.”

“A Christian environment, one where mutual respect is championed.”

***Other***

“Having an approachable person that is the person that claims would be made to, is key.”

“Flexibility and responsiveness.”

## Methodology:

About 18,000 employees, including executives, managers and non-managers provided by Research Now were invited to complete these surveys. Respondents, who represented more than 15 industries and employers of all sizes, were asked to complete screening questions to determine their eligibility to complete the surveys. After screening, response rates were 20% for executives, 14% for managers and 26% for executives. The margin of error was plus or minus 3.1%. The research was completed in 2018.

## Demographics:

### Which of the following best describes your current job title?

	Executives	Managers
President, CEO	43%	---
Chair, partner, or principal	13%	---
Senior vice president	13%	---
Executive vice president	7%	---
Chief financial officer	10%	---
Chief technology officer	3%	---
Chief operating officer	4%	---
Chief marketing officer	1%	---
Chief human resources officer	*	---
Other C-suite/executive (please specify)	4%	---
VP	---	8%
Assistant VP	---	2%
Senior Director	---	4%
Director	---	24%
Senior Manager	---	13%
Manager	---	37%
First-line Supervisor	---	9%
Other (please specify)	---	1%
SKIP/REFUSED	1%	2%
N=	1,034	1,022

### What is your current job function?

	Managers	Non-managers
Accounting/Finance	8%	4%
Administrative/Clerical	25%	11%
Administration/Management	19%	1%
Communications/PR	2%	*
Compliance/Risk Management	1%	*
Creative/Media	1%	1%
Customer service	6%	13%
Design/Engineering	4%	2%
Developer/Programmer	*	1%
Facilities/Maintenance	2%	1%
Human resources	*	3%
Information technology (IT)	7%	4%
Legal	2%	2%
Logistics/Planning	1%	1%
Market research	*	*
Marketing/Advertising	3%	1%
Operations/Production	10%	6%
Purchasing/Procurement	2%	1%
Quality Assurance/Quality Control	2%	1%
Research and development	3%	1%
Sales/Business Development	10%	7%
Security	1%	2%
Training and education	4%	10%
Warehousing/Shipping/Transportation	1%	4%
Other (please specify)	10%	23%
SKIP/REFUSED	1%	*
N=	1,022	1,010

### Which of the following best describes your organization's sector?

	Executives	Managers	Non-managers
Services	55%	44%	46%
Manufacturing	12%	13%	9%
Retail	10%	7%	13%
Wholesale	5%	4%	2%
Not-for-profit	12%	18%	17%
Government	5%	13%	12%
SKIP/REFUSED	1%	2%	1%
N=	1,034	1,022	1,010

**Which of the following best describes your organization's industry?**

	Executives	Managers	Non-managers
Accommodation and food services	3%	2%	5%
Administrative, support, waste management, and remediation services	3%	*	1%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	1%	1%	1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3%	3%	2%
Construction	5%	3%	2%
Educational services	8%	14%	13%
Finance and insurance	10%	10%	6%
Government agencies	3%	8%	7%
Healthcare and social assistance	13%	13%	18%
Information	3%	4%	3%
Manufacturing	7%	9%	6%
Mining	*	*	*
Personal and laundry services	*	*	1%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	13%	8%	5%
Real estate, rental, and leasing	4%	2%	1%
Religious, grant making, civic, professional, and similar organizations	3%	1%	2%
Repair and maintenance	1%	*	1%
Retail trade	4%	5%	7%
Transportation and warehousing	2%	3%	4%
Utilities	*	1%	2%
Wholesale trade	3%	1%	1%
Other (please specify)	9%	10%	14%
SKIP/REFUSED	*	1%	1%
N=	1,034	1,022	1,010

**How many employees work in your company at all locations?**

	Executives
1	5%
2 to 5	16%
6 to 9	9%
10 to 49	20%
50 to 99	9%
100 to 249	9%
250 to 499	5%
500 to 999	7%
1,000 to 2,499	6%
2,500 to 4,999	4%
5,000 to 9,999	3%
10,000 to 24,999	3%
25,000 or more	3%
Not sure	1%
SKIP/REFUSED	*

N= 1,034

**Which of the following best describes the annual revenue of your company for the last fiscal year?**

	Executives
Less than \$50,000	5%
\$50,000 to less than \$250,000	9%
\$250,000 to less than \$500,000	6%
\$500,000 to less than \$750,000	6%
\$750,000 to less than \$1 million	5%
\$1 million to less than \$2 million	10%
\$2 million to less than \$5 million	12%
\$5 million to less than \$10 million	10%
\$10 million to less than \$25 million	9%
\$25 million to less than \$50 million	5%
\$50 million to less than \$100 million	4%
\$100 million to less than \$500 million	5%
\$500 million to less than \$1 billion	3%
\$1 billion to less than \$10 billion	6%
Over \$10 billion	2%
Not sure	4%
SKIP/REFUSED	1%

N= 1,034