

# PART 2: THE PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL SERVICE

## CHAPTER 4: Universal Principles of Professional Ethics

### Introduction to Ethics in Service

**Ethics** are moral principles governing behavior and decision-making. In professional service, ethics provide the foundation for trust, consistency, and dignity in all interactions.

These principles draw from:

- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Labor Organization conventions
- UN Global Compact principles
- Professional codes from leading hospitality/service organizations
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises
- Transparency International standards

### Core Ethical Principles

#### 1. RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

**Principle:** Every person has inherent worth and deserves respect, regardless of circumstances, behavior, or identity.

**In Practice:**

- Treat every customer as valuable individual, not transaction
- Never mock, belittle, or speak disrespectfully
- Recognize difficult behavior often stems from pain/stress
- Maintain courtesy even when not reciprocated

**International Foundation:** UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

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#### 2. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

**Principle:** Be truthful in all communications, maintaining consistency between values and behavior.

**In Practice:**

- Provide accurate information about products/services/policies
- Admit when you don't know rather than guessing
- Keep promises and commitments
- Acknowledge mistakes honestly
- Never mislead to make sales or avoid conflict

**International Foundation:** UN Global Compact, Principle 10: Work against corruption

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### 3. FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY

**Principle:** Treat all people equitably, without discrimination or favoritism.

**In Practice:**

- Provide same quality service to every customer
- Don't judge based on appearance, race, gender, age, disability
- No preferential treatment based on personal likes/dislikes
- Ensure accessibility for different needs

**International Foundation:**

- UN Universal Declaration, Article 7: "All are equal before the law"
  - ILO Convention No. 111 on Discrimination
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### 4. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**Principle:** Take ownership of actions, consequences, and your role in customer experience.

**In Practice:**

- Accept responsibility for mistakes
  - Follow through on commitments
  - Don't blame others for problems
  - Take initiative to resolve issues
  - Recognize how your behavior affects others
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### 5. COMPASSION AND EMPATHY

**Principle:** Actively work to understand and respond to others' feelings and needs with kindness.

**In Practice:**

- Understand situations from customer's perspective
- Respond to emotions, not just words

- Show genuine care when someone struggles
  - Go beyond minimum when someone needs extra help
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## 6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

**Principle:** Protect personal information and dignity of customers.

**In Practice:**

- Don't discuss customer information with unauthorized people
- Don't gossip about customers
- Handle personal data securely
- Respect privacy even in public spaces

**International Foundation:**

- UN Universal Declaration, Article 12: Right to privacy
  - GDPR and international data protection standards
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## 7. PROFESSIONALISM

**Principle:** Maintain appropriate boundaries, competence, and conduct upholding your role and organization's reputation.

**In Practice:**

- Dress and present according to workplace standards
- Use appropriate language
- Maintain professional/personal boundaries
- Continually develop skills and knowledge
- Arrive on time and fulfill responsibilities

### The Ethical Decision-Making Framework

When facing ethical dilemmas:

**STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE ETHICAL ISSUE**

└─ What principles or values conflict?

**STEP 2: CONSIDER STAKEHOLDERS**

└─ Who is affected? (Customer, colleagues, company, yourself)

**STEP 3: EVALUATE OPTIONS**

└─ What are possible courses of action?

└─ What are consequences of each?

#### STEP 4: APPLY ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

└ Which option best aligns with core principles?

#### STEP 5: DECIDE AND ACT

└ Choose most ethical course and implement

#### STEP 6: REFLECT

└ What did you learn? Would you do anything differently?

### When Principles Conflict

Sometimes ethical principles seem to conflict:

- **Honesty vs. Compassion:** Tell harsh truth or protect feelings?
- **Fairness vs. Individual Need:** Bend rules for special circumstances?
- **Loyalty to Customer vs. Company:** What when these seem opposed?

#### Resolution Strategy:

1. **Seek highest good:** What serves wellbeing of all involved?
2. **Consult others:** Seek guidance from supervisors/colleagues
3. **Consider long-term impact:** What precedent does this set?
4. **Prioritize human dignity:** When in doubt, choose option that best honors human worth

**Remember:** You're not expected to navigate complex dilemmas alone. Organizations should have channels for guidance.

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## CHAPTER 5: Respect, Dignity, and Human Rights in Service

### The Foundation: Universal Human Rights

The **UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948) establishes fundamental rights applying to every human being, everywhere, always. As a service professional, you're on the front lines of honoring these rights daily.

#### Key articles relevant to service:

**Article 1:** "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." → Every customer and colleague deserves equal treatment and respect.

**Article 2:** Rights without distinction of "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." → Your service must be free from discrimination.

**Article 5:** "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment."  
→ All treatment must maintain human dignity—no humiliation, mockery, cruelty.

**Article 7:** "All are equal before the law and entitled without discrimination to equal protection." → Everyone deserves fair, equitable treatment.

**Article 12:** "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor attacks upon honour and reputation." → Respect privacy and don't gossip.

## Respect in Action: Daily Practices

### 1. GREETING WITH DIGNITY

How you greet someone communicates whether you see them as a person or inconvenience.

**Practices honoring dignity:** ✓ Make eye contact (culturally appropriate) ✓ Use genuine smile ✓ Acknowledge presence within 3 seconds ✓ Use respectful greetings ✓ Stand/position to face them

**Practices undermining dignity:** ✗ Ignoring someone's presence ✗ Continuing colleague conversation while "serving" ✗ Looking at phone or elsewhere ✗ Sighing or showing irritation ✗ Treating them as interruption

### 2. LISTENING WITH PRESENCE

Truly listening is one of the deepest forms of respect.

**Active listening honors dignity:**

- ✓ Give full attention
- ✓ Make appropriate eye contact
- ✓ Show you're listening (nod, "I understand")
- ✓ Don't interrupt
- ✓ Clarify to ensure understanding
- ✓ Respond to what was actually said

**Poor listening undermines dignity:**

- ✗ Multitasking while someone speaks
- ✗ Finishing their sentences
- ✗ Interrupting with solutions before understanding
- ✗ Dismissing concerns
- ✗ Making assumptions

### 3. LANGUAGE THAT RESPECTS

Words carry enormous power to honor or harm dignity.

**Respectful language:**

- ✓ "Sir," "Ma'am," "they" (as appropriate)
- ✓ "How may I help you?"
- ✓ "I understand"
- ✓ "Thank you for your patience"
- ✓ Avoiding assumptions about gender, relationships

**Language harming dignity:**

- ✗ Nicknames without permission ("hun," "sweetie," "boss")
- ✗ Diminutives that condescend
- ✗ Assumptions about identity/circumstance
- ✗ Sarcasm or mockery
- ✗ Talking about customers as if not present

**4. PHYSICAL RESPECT**

**Personal space:** Maintain appropriate distance (generally 120-200cm)

**Physical contact:**

- Generally avoid unless initiated by customer or clearly appropriate
- Handshake when culturally appropriate and welcomed
- Never touch without consent
- Be especially mindful with different genders

**Accessibility:**

- Ensure physical environment is accessible
- Offer assistance without assuming inability
- Be patient with customers who move more slowly
- Adapt service to different physical abilities

**Recognizing and Preventing Discrimination**

**Discrimination** is treating people differently based on characteristics unrelated to actual needs or situation. It violates human dignity and international law.

**Protected Characteristics:**

Never discriminate based on:

- Race or ethnicity
- Color
- National origin
- Religion or belief
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation
- Age

- Disability (physical or mental)
- Pregnancy or family status
- Socioeconomic status
- Appearance
- Language or accent

### **Forms of Discrimination:**

#### **Direct discrimination:**

- Refusing service because of protected characteristic
- Providing lower quality service based on these factors
- Charging different prices

#### **Indirect discrimination:**

- Policies disproportionately affecting certain groups
- Unnecessary requirements excluding some people
- Service designs not considering diversity

#### **Harassment:**

- Unwanted comments about someone's identity
- "Jokes" based on stereotypes
- Creating hostile environment

#### **Victimization:**

- Treating someone poorly because they complained about discrimination
- Retaliation against those supporting others' complaints

### **Recognizing Your Own Biases**

Everyone has unconscious biases—mental shortcuts leading to unfair judgments. Awareness is the first step.

#### **Common biases:**

- **Affinity bias:** Favoring those similar to you
- **Halo effect:** Assuming positive qualities based on one trait
- **Horns effect:** Assuming negative qualities based on one trait
- **Confirmation bias:** Interpreting behavior to confirm stereotypes
- **Attribution bias:** Attributing behavior to character rather than circumstances

#### **Counteracting bias:**

1. **Acknowledge** you have biases (everyone does)
2. **Educate yourself** about different cultures/identities

3. **Slow down:** Quick judgments are more biased
4. **Focus on behavior,** not identity
5. **Get feedback:** Ask trusted others to call out observed bias by our NFC Instant Cards
6. **Use systems:** Standardized procedures reduce bias opportunities

## Cultural Respect and Sensitivity

You'll serve people from many cultural backgrounds. Cultural respect requires:

### 1. Awareness:

- Recognize your culture isn't universal
- Understand practices vary across cultures
- Learn about common cultural differences

### 2. Respect:

- Don't judge practices as "weird" or "wrong" because different
- Respect religious practices (dietary restrictions, prayer, dress)
- Be flexible in communication styles
- Avoid assumptions

### 3. Adaptation:

- Offer options accommodating different needs
- Learn key phrases in common languages
- Adjust approach based on comfort levels

### Common cultural variations:

- **Eye contact:** Direct in some cultures, disrespectful in others
- **Personal space:** Varies significantly
- **Directness:** Some value direct communication; others find it rude
- **Time orientation:** Punctuality emphasis varies
- **Decision-making:** Individual vs. collective/family
- **Gender dynamics:** Preferences about service provider may vary

### Avoid:

- Stereotyping (assuming all from culture are identical)
- Cultural appropriation (treating practices as entertainment)
- Microaggressions (subtle insults based on culture/identity)
- Fetishization (treating someone as exotic rather than individual)

### When unsure:

- Ask respectfully: "What would make you most comfortable?"
- Follow customer's lead

## Dignity in Difficult Moments

### When Customer is Upset:

Their dignity requires:

- Being heard without judgment
- Having feelings acknowledged
- Being treated as reasonable even if complaint isn't
- Not being humiliated (never publicly correct/shame)
- Receiving sincere response

**What dignity looks like:** "I can see this has been frustrating. Let me understand what happened and see what I can do to make this right."

**What violates dignity:** "You're overreacting. That's just our policy. There's nothing I can do."

### When Customer Makes a Mistake:

Their dignity requires:

- Not being made to feel stupid
- Being allowed to save face
- Gentle correction if needed
- Privacy (correcting quietly, not publicly)

**What dignity looks like:** "Let me help clarify that—it's a bit confusing. What you're looking for is actually over here."

**What violates dignity:** "No, you got it wrong. That's not how it works. You need to go over there."

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## CHAPTER 6: Integrity, Honesty, and Transparency

### Why Honesty Matters

Trust is the foundation of all relationships, including service relationships. **Honesty** builds trust; **dishonesty** destroys it.

International business ethics standards (UN Global Compact, OECD Guidelines, professional codes) identify honesty and integrity as non-negotiable.

### The Scope of Honesty in Service

#### 1. Accurate Information

- Truthful descriptions of products/services
- Honest about pricing, fees, policies
- Accurate about availability and timing
- Correct information about ingredients, origins, specifications

## 2. Admitting When You Don't Know

- Better to admit ignorance than guess
- Offering to find out shows respect

### Example:

✗ Making something up to sound knowledgeable ✓ "That's a great question. Let me check to make sure I give you accurate information."

## 3. Acknowledging Mistakes

- Admit errors promptly
- Take responsibility without excuses
- Focus on resolution

Example: ✗ Hoping they don't notice or blaming the system ✓ "I apologize—I made an error. Let me correct that right away."

## 4. Keeping Promises

- Only commit to what you can deliver
- Follow through on commitments
- If you can't keep a promise, communicate proactively

Example: ✗ "I'll have this ready in 5 minutes" (knowing it takes 15) ✓ "This will take about 10-12 minutes. I'll make sure it's prepared properly."

## 5. Transparency About Limitations

- Be honest about what you can and cannot do
- Explain policies clearly
- Don't overpromise to avoid disappointment

Example: ✗ "Sure, no problem" (then failing to deliver) ✓ "I understand why you'd want that. Unfortunately, I can't do that because [reason]. What I can do instead is [alternative]. Would that work?"

## Forms of Dishonesty to Avoid

### 1. Lies of Commission (Direct Falsehoods)

Explicitly false statements.

#### Why harmful:

- Destroys trust immediately when discovered
- Creates disappointed expectations
- Violates professional ethics

## 2. Lies of Omission (Withholding Truth)

Not volunteering relevant information.

### Examples:

- Not mentioning product recall
- Failing to inform about better options that cost less
- Not disclosing limitations you're aware of

### Why harmful:

- Customers feel manipulated when they discover what wasn't shared
- Violates principle of informed consent

## 3. Misleading Through Ambiguity

Technically true statements creating false impressions.

### Why harmful:

- Feels like deception even if technically defensible
- Undermines customer agency
- Damages reputation

## 4. False Flattery or Manipulation

Insincere compliments or emotional manipulation to influence behavior.

### Why harmful:

- People sense insincerity
- Treats customers as objects to manipulate rather than people to serve
- Violates authenticity

## Gray Areas: When Honesty is Complex

### Situation 1: Honesty vs. Tact

*Customer asks:* "Does this look good?" about choice you find unappealing.

**Wrong:** Brutal honesty that hurts **Right:** Honest but tactful

- Focus on their preferences: "What matters is how *you* like it."
- Offer information: "Some people prefer [alternative] because [reason]."
- Support autonomy: "If you're happy with it, that's what matters."

**Principle:** Honesty doesn't require volunteering hurtful opinions. Focus on facts and customer empowerment.

### **Situation 2: Proprietary Information**

*Customer asks about company secrets or internal policies.*

**Right approach:** Honest boundaries

- "I'm not able to share internal company information, but I'm happy to help with questions about our products/services."

**Principle:** Honesty includes respecting appropriate confidentiality.

### **Situation 3: Colleague Mistakes\*\***

*Customer complains about poor service from your colleague.*

**Wrong approaches:**

- Throwing colleague under the bus: "Yeah, she's terrible"
- Lying to protect: "That never happened"

**Right approach:** Honest but professional

- "I'm sorry you had that experience. Let me help make it right now."
- Focus on solution, not blame
- If appropriate: "I'll make sure that feedback reaches the right person so we can improve."

**Principle:** Loyalty to customers and colleagues doesn't require dishonesty. Focus on resolution and appropriate feedback channels.

## **Building a Reputation for Trustworthiness**

Trust is built through consistent honesty over time. One lie can destroy months of trust-building.

**How to build trust:**

1. **Consistency:** Be reliably honest in all interactions
2. **Promptness:** Address issues immediately rather than hiding them
3. **Transparency:** When appropriate, explain the "why" behind decisions
4. **Reliability:** Follow through on commitments
5. **Accountability:** Take responsibility for mistakes
6. **Humility:** Admit when you don't know or were wrong

**The compound effect:** When customers know they can trust you:

- They're more forgiving of honest mistakes

- They rely on your recommendations
- They return repeatedly
- They recommend you to others

## When Dishonesty is Pressured

Sometimes you may feel pressure to be dishonest:

- Management encouraging exaggeration to make sales
- Colleagues covering up mistakes
- Customers pressuring you to "bend rules"
- Financial incentives tied to misleading practices

How to maintain integrity:

1. Know your values: Be clear on ethical boundaries before pressure arrives
2. Use script: "I'm not comfortable doing that. Let me find another solution."
3. Seek support: Talk to management or ethics channels
4. Document: Keep records of pressure to be dishonest
5. Escalate if needed: Report systemic dishonesty through appropriate channels

Remember: Your integrity is not for sale. Organizations that pressure dishonesty violate international ethical standards (UN Global Compact) and are not worthy of your compromise.

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## CHAPTER 7: Anti-Discrimination and Equality

### International Legal Foundations

Discrimination in service violates international law and conventions to which most countries are signatories.

Key International Instruments:

**ILO Convention No. 111: Prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin.**

**UN International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD): Requires states to "prohibit and bring to an end racial discrimination by any persons, group or organization."**

**Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): Requires elimination of discrimination against women in all areas, including access to services.**

**Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD): Requires reasonable accommodation and accessibility.**



## Understanding Discrimination

### Types of Discrimination:

**1. Direct Discrimination** Treating someone less favorably explicitly because of protected characteristic.

#### *Examples:*

- Refusing service because of race
- Charging different prices based on gender
- Providing inferior service because of disability
- Making disparaging comments about religion

**2. Indirect Discrimination** Policies/practices appearing neutral but disproportionately disadvantaging certain groups.

#### *Examples:*

- "No head coverings" policy excluding religious practice
- Language-only service excluding non-native speakers
- Height requirements discriminating by gender

**3. Harassment** Unwelcome conduct related to protected characteristic violating dignity or creating hostile environment.

#### *Examples:*

- Racist jokes or comments
- Sexual harassment or unwanted advances
- Mockery of religious practices
- Bullying related to disability

**4. Victimization** Treating someone poorly because they complained about discrimination or supported someone else's complaint.

## Protected Characteristics

While laws vary by country, international standards protect against discrimination based on:

**Characteristic**

**Service Application**



<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Equal service regardless of race; no racial jokes or stereotypes; cultural sensitivity</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Equal service; no assumptions about roles or capabilities; respectful language</b>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Equal service; respect for partners/spouses; no judgment</b>
<b>Religion/Belief</b>	<b>Respect for dietary needs, dress, prayer times; no mockery or proselytizing</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Equal quality service; no patronizing; accessibility for different ages</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Accessibility; reasonable accommodation; respectful assistance</b>
<b>Pregnancy/Family Status</b>	<b>Accommodation; no assumptions; respectful service</b>
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>	<b>Equal treatment regardless of appearance or spending amount</b>
<b>Language</b>	<b>Patience; assistance; no mockery of accent or language ability</b>
<b>Appearance</b>	<b>Equal service regardless of attractiveness, weight, style, or grooming</b>

## **Recognizing Discrimination in Your Practice**

### **Self-Assessment Questions:**

- **Do I provide same quality greeting to all customers?**
- **Do I make eye contact and smile equally with everyone?**
- **Am I equally patient regardless of how they speak or look?**
- **Do I make assumptions about what people can afford based on appearance?**
- **Do I give some customers more attention or better recommendations?**
- **Have I ever made a joke or comment about someone's identity, even privately?**
- **Do I feel more comfortable serving people similar to me?**

If you answered "no" or "maybe" to any, there's opportunity to improve.

### Common Forms of Discrimination in Service:

**✗ Profiling: Watching certain customers more closely assuming theft risk** **✗ Assumption: Assuming someone can't afford something based on appearance** **✗ Differential effort: Providing minimal service to some, exceptional to others** **✗ Language: Using slurs, stereotypes, or microaggressions** **✗ Dismissiveness: Not taking certain customers' complaints seriously** **✗ Exclusion: Ignoring or avoiding serving certain customers** **✗ Mockery: Laughing about accents, disabilities, or characteristics** **✗ Unwanted commentary: Commenting on bodies, attractiveness, or identity**

### Equality in Practice: Concrete Actions

#### 1. Standardize Your Service Approach

Create consistent baseline:

- Same greeting for every customer
- Same attention and eye contact
- Same patience and care
- Same quality of service

This doesn't mean treating everyone identically—it means ensuring same quality and respect while adapting to individual needs.

#### 2. Check Your Assumptions

Before making assumptions, ask:

- Am I assuming based on appearance rather than actual information?
- Have I asked what the person actually needs?
- Am I projecting stereotypes?

Example: **✗ Showing expensive items to well-dressed customers, budget items to others** **☑ "What are you looking for today?" and responding to their actual stated needs**

#### 3. Use Inclusive Language

Gender:

- Use "they/them" when gender unknown
- Don't assume relationships ("your partner" rather than assuming "husband/wife")

Family:

- Don't assume family structures
- "The adults in your life" rather than "your parents"

**Ability:**

- "Person with disability" not "disabled person"
- Don't use disability as metaphor ("that's lame," "blind to")

**Age:**

- Don't use diminutives for elderly ("young lady," "dear")
- Don't speak louder unless they've indicated hearing difficulty

#### 4. Offer Accommodations Respectfully

For customers with disabilities:  "How can I help make this easier for you?"   
Offer assistance; don't insist  Address the person, not their companion/aide   
Don't assume inability  Don't pet service animals  Don't speak about person as if they're not there

For language barriers:  Speak clearly at normal pace  Use simple words; avoid idioms  Be patient; allow time to process  Use visual aids if available  Don't shout (volume doesn't aid comprehension)  Don't mock accent or language ability

For religious needs:  Provide accurate information about ingredients  Respect prayer times and practices  Accommodate dietary restrictions when possible   
Don't question or judge religious practices

#### Responding to Discrimination

**If You Witness Discrimination:**

**By a colleague:**

1. Intervene if safe: "Let me help with this customer"
2. Report through appropriate channels especially through our upcoming RMS
3. Support the affected person
4. Document what occurred

**By a customer toward a colleague:**

1. Support your colleague
2. Firmly but professionally address: "We treat all our staff with respect"
3. Involve management if needed
4. Document incident

**If You Are Accused of Discrimination:**

Even with best intentions, you may make mistakes or be misunderstood.

If someone says you've discriminated:

1. Listen without being defensive
  - "Thank you for telling me. I want to understand."
2. Apologize sincerely if you erred
  - "I apologize. That wasn't my intention, but I understand how it came across."
3. Don't make excuses
  - Avoid "but I didn't mean..." or "I have [identity] friends"
4. Commit to change
  - "I appreciate you helping me see that. I'll be more mindful."
5. Follow up appropriately
  - Report to management if significant
  - Reflect on the feedback
  - Adjust your practice

Remember: Impact matters more than intent. Even if you didn't intend harm, if someone experienced your action as discriminatory, their experience is valid.

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## CHAPTER 8: Preventing Harassment and Creating Safe Spaces

### Defining Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that:

- Violates a person's dignity, OR
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment

Harassment can be:

- Verbal: Comments, jokes, questions, remarks
- Non-verbal: Gestures, staring, images, written notes
- Physical: Unwanted touching, blocking movement, invasion of space
- Digital: Messages, images, social media contact

**Key Point:** It's harassment if the recipient finds it unwelcome, regardless of intent.

## Types of Harassment

### 1. Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome conduct of sexual nature, including:

- Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, or innuendo
- Questions about sexual life or preferences
- Unwanted romantic/sexual advances
- Comments about body or appearance
- Sexual gestures or images
- Unwanted touching
- Quid pro quo (benefits for sexual favors)
- Creating sexualized environment

International Standards:

- ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment
- CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women)

### 2. Discriminatory Harassment

Harassment based on protected characteristics:

- Racial slurs, jokes, or stereotypes
- Religious mockery or insults
- Comments about age, disability, or appearance
- Questions about identity invading privacy
- Exclusion or hostile treatment

### 3. General Harassment (Bullying)

Repeated mistreatment creating hostile environment:

- Verbal abuse
- Public humiliation
- Sabotage of work
- Threats or intimidation
- Isolation or exclusion

## What Harassment Looks Like in Service

Customer harassing employee:

- Persistent romantic advances despite refusal
- Sexual comments about employee's body
- Racial slurs or insults
- Demanding service from employees of specific gender/race
- Following, stalking, or showing up outside work
- Threats or intimidation

### Employee harassing customer:

- Unwanted flirtation or requests for contact information
- Comments on appearance beyond professional compliments
- Discriminatory remarks
- Making someone uncomfortable through staring

### Employee harassing employee:

- Persistent mockery or bullying
- Sexual advances or comments
- Discriminatory treatment
- Creating hostile work environment

## Prevention: Creating Harassment-Free Environment

### 1. Clear Boundaries

#### Professional distance:

- Friendly, not friends
- Warm, not intimate
- Helpful, not personal

#### What's appropriate:

- Professional compliments: "You seem to really know what you're looking for"
- Friendly conversation: Weather, local events, general topics
- Helpful: "Can I help you reach that?"

#### What's inappropriate:

- Personal compliments: "You're really attractive"
- Invasive questions: "Are you single?" "Where do you live?"
- Physical contact beyond professional norms

### 2. Reading and Respecting Discomfort

#### Signs someone is uncomfortable:

- Stepping back or creating distance
- Brief, closed answers
- Avoiding eye contact
- Changing subject
- Crossed arms or defensive posture
- Verbal cues: "I should go," "I'm in a hurry"

#### Your response:

- Immediately give space
- Return to professional distance

- Don't ask "what's wrong?"
- Respect their boundary

### 3. The "Reasonable Person" Test

Before saying or doing something, ask:

- "Would a reasonable person find this unwelcome?"
- "Would I want someone to say/do this to my family member?"
- "Am I focusing on work, or crossing into personal?"

If there's any doubt, err on side of professionalism.

## Responding to Harassment

If You Are Being Harassed:

By a customer:

1. Set boundary firmly but professionally
  - "I'm not comfortable with that."
  - "Please don't speak to me that way."
2. Remove yourself if possible
3. Report to management
4. Remember: You are not obligated to endure harassment for customer satisfaction

By a colleague:

1. Name it clearly: "That's not okay." "Stop."
2. Document everything: Dates, times, witnesses
3. Report through appropriate channels
4. Know your rights: You cannot be retaliated against for reporting

If You Witness Harassment:

The 5 D's of Bystander Intervention:

1. Direct: Intervene directly if safe - "Hey, that's not cool."
2. Distract: Interrupt the situation - "Excuse me, can I ask you something?"
3. Delegate: Get help from management, security, colleagues
4. Delay: Check in after - "Are you okay?"
5. Document: Record what happened to support the target

## A Note on "Compliments"

The difference:

Compliment:

- About something person chose (style, skills)
- Professional context
- One-time
- No expectation of response
- Respects boundaries

**Harassment:**

- About physical body
- Personal/sexual
- Repeated or persistent
- Demands response
- Ignores discomfort

Examples:  Appropriate: "That's a nice jacket" (once, then drop it)  Harassment: "You look hot in that" or repeated comments after discomfort shown

**Rule of thumb: Focus on the work, not the person's body.**

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