

Do you Know the Role of HR in Workplace Civility?

written by Alisa Fairweather | October 2, 2024



In the politically charged climate of today, maintaining civility in the workplace is more important—and more challenging—than ever. For small and medium-sized manufacturing companies, where close-knit teams are critical to daily operations, promoting respect and collaboration is essential. Human resource (HR) specialists play a pivotal role in fostering a positive workplace culture. Here are five key strategies to help promote civility in your manufacturing environment.

1. Lead by Example

In smaller manufacturing companies, where teams work closely together, the behavior of HR professionals and company leaders sets the tone for the entire organization. By consistently demonstrating respectful communication, fairness, and professionalism, HR can establish a benchmark for employees to follow. When leaders model civility, it encourages a culture where mutual respect becomes the norm, reducing the likelihood of conflicts.

2. Create and Communicate Clear Policies

Clear, well-communicated policies are essential in any workplace, but especially in manufacturing settings where team collaboration is crucial. With support or buy-in from top workplace leaders, HR should ensure that policies explicitly define respectful conduct and outline the consequences of incivility. Emphasize the importance of maintaining respect, particularly in high-pressure situations common

in manufacturing environments. Regularly remind employees of these policies through meetings, trainings, and accessible documentation.

3. Empower Supervisors as Role Models

Supervisors in manufacturing often have a significant influence on their teams. HR should train these leaders to model civility and handle conflicts effectively. Equip supervisors with the tools to foster a culture of collaboration and respect, as their behavior directly impacts team dynamics. When supervisors lead with empathy and fairness, it can create a positive ripple effect throughout the organization.

4. Implement Accessible Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Conflicts in a manufacturing environment can escalate quickly if not addressed. HR should establish accessible and straightforward conflict resolution mechanisms that allow employees to address issues constructively. Consider implementing an open-door policy or creating a peer support program to resolve disputes before they escalate. Ensuring that employees feel heard and supported can help maintain a harmonious workplace. Remember that not all conflict is bad, it is natural and properly navigated it can be constructive.

5. Foster a Culture of Recognition and Well-being

In manufacturing, where teamwork is essential, recognizing and celebrating positive behaviors can significantly impact morale and civility. HR can lead initiatives that highlight and reward examples of teamwork and respect. Additionally, promoting employee well-being through access to resources such as counseling services or wellness programs can reduce stress and foster a more positive and productive work environment.

Conclusion

Promoting civility in a manufacturing workplace is not just about managing conflicts; it's about creating a culture of respect, empathy, and collaboration that enhances both employee satisfaction and company success. HR specialists in small and medium-sized manufacturing companies play a critical role in this process. By leading with intention, developing clear policies, empowering supervisors,

implementing conflict resolution mechanisms, and fostering a culture of recognition, HR can help create a workplace where civility thrives.

To learn how IMC can support your HR needs, contact Alisa Fairweather at alisaf@imcpa.com.