

How to Respond to Offensive or Harassing Behavior

1. Verbal Response:

Verbal communication that occurs between the person who feels offended or harassed and the person they believed to have committed the perceived offensive or harassing behavior (s)

- Explain what has happened, give only true facts, do not embellish or make things up
- Explain what how the behavior made you feel (unwelcome, uncomfortable, interfered with work or school)
- Make a clear and concise request for how you want the person to behave in the future during similar situations (do not threaten, make demands, or give ultimatums)
- Explain anything else you might want to happen to help resolve the situation (apology, opportunity to repeat an assignment, or transfer)

2. Written Response

Written communication that occurs between the person who feels offended or harassed and the person they believed to have committed the perceived offensive or harassing behavior (s)

- I a hand written or typed document:
 - Explain what has happened, give only true facts, do not embellish or make things up
 - Explain what how the behavior made you feel (unwelcome, uncomfortable, interfered with work or school)
 - Make a clear and concise request for how you want the person to behave in the future during similar situations (do not threaten, make demands, or give ultimatums)
 - Explain anything else you might want to happen to help resolve the situation (apology, opportunity to repeat an assignment, or transfer)

Some possible disadvantages to sending hand written or typed letter include; not being able to get immediate follow-up or resolution in situations that may be simple misunderstandings, the person may become defensive, may escalate or make a counter-claim.

Some possible advantages to sending a hand written or typed letter include; being able to provide a statement that has been carefully written and revised as needed (you should never send your first draft), the letter can be read privately, the individual would not have to respond immediately and may provide an opportunity for them to think about the consequences of the allegations and their response to you.