

Positive Leadership Toolkit

An overview of Chapter 2: Civility and Respect

Pillar 2 – Civility and Respect

Incivility is defined by Drs. Christine Pearson and Christine Portah as the “exchange of seemingly inconsequential inconsiderate words and deeds that violate norms of workplace conduct.”

Examples of disrespectful behaviour in the hybrid workplace may include:

- Talking behind someone’s back or gossiping
- Making demeaning remarks, being sarcastic, or using a condescending tone
- Ignoring an expressed opinion in an email or in a live meeting
- Taking credit for someone else’s work or ideas
- Blaming others rather than accepting responsibility
- Multitasking during a meeting (e.g., checking email or texting messages)
- Not expressing appreciation for work (e.g., not saying “please” or “thank you”)
- Interrupting or taking over someone else
- Engaging in passive-aggressive behaviours
- Always having cameras off in meetings
- Using email or text to discuss sensitive information or provide feedback
- Not opening or closing electronic communication with a greeting

“The why”: Evidence of the importance of civility and respect

The costs of disrespectful behaviour include:

- Decreased levels of performance
- Lower innovation (i.e., the decreased creativity and quality of ideas)
- Less cooperation and collaboration
- Poorer physical health

“The how”: Practical strategies to enhance civility and respect

- **Be the change** you wish to see in the workplace
- **Take time to foster human connection** in a hybrid world
 - Be mindful of remote and online attendees
 - Make time for “small talk” in virtual settings, too – a crucial driver of engagement and collaboration
 - Ensure cameras are on during meetings
- **Create or update a Team Charter** – a set of workplace rules of engagement
 - **Be mindful of the medium when communicating** – leverage face-to-face or video meetings for more complex communication (e.g., delivering feedback, project planning, or navigating conflict) to allow participants to access meaningful cues such as tone of voice and body language
- **Take immediate corrective action, when warranted**, to ensure that disrespectful behaviour is not construed as tolerable or acceptable
 - Ensure that exchanges to address disrespectful behaviour take place in an emotionally supportive environment

To learn more about the benefits of civility and respect, and the practical strategies to apply it, read **Chapter 2: Respect**, written by Dr. Craig Dowden, in full in [APEX's Positive Leadership Toolkit](#).