#MeToo & Organizational Responses

Let’s (Not) Talk About Sex

- Is it even possible to discuss #MeToo without discussing sex, politics and gender bias?
- From the Harvard Business Review 8-part series called “Managing #MeToo”

“If your business is serious about eliminating the risk of sexual harassment — and it should be — you need to approach the problem comprehensively. This means recognizing that sexual harassment is part of a continuum of interconnected behaviors that range from gender bias to incivility to legally actionable assault. All these kinds of misconduct should be addressed collectively because sexual harassment is far more likely in organizations that experience offenses on the “less severe” end of the spectrum than in those that don’t.”


First Responses
Some Recent Responses

In September 2018, CBS announced that it would be donating $20 million of former Chairman Les Moonves’ severance to #MeToo. Moonves was forced to step down after numerous sexual misconduct accusations.

From a recent Business Wire press release: [The Company] announced today that the Board of Directors has terminated the employment of its Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately, for reasons relating to his engaging in and failing to report a consensual relationship with a subordinate employee.

Recent Press Accounts of #MeToo Responses

- “As many as 48 people have been fired from Google over sexual harassment allegations over the past two years, Pichai said, 13 of whom were senior managers and above. “None of these individuals received an exit package,” he wrote in the memo.
- “Mr. Rubin was one of three executives that Google protected over the past decade after they were accused of sexual misconduct. In the case of Rubin, a former senior executive, Google paid him $90 million to leave the company, but did not disclose the reason for the payment. In another case, Google paid a severance package to an executive who was accused of sexual misconduct, but the executive remained at the company. In a third, the executive remained in a highly compensated post at the company. The New York Times October 24, 2018, How Google Protected Andy Rubin, the “Father of Android,” by Daisuke Wakabayashi and Katie Benner.

Plus Ça Change…

- What’s the Same and What’s Different?
- Generational Coping & Responses
- Social Media’s Impact – the time crunch
- What Does Your Company Stand to Gain or Lose?
- What is Your Role?
“We’ve never seen something like this before,” said Joan Williams, a law professor who studies gender at the University of California, Hastings. “Women have always been seen as risky, because they might do something like have a baby. But men are now being seen as more risky hires.”

Tarana Burke, Founder of the #MeToo movement: “Where’s the self-reflection and accountability?” she said. “Perhaps if we saw some evidence of that, then we can have a more robust conversation about the road to redemption.”


Rule No. 1: Know Your Culture

Is Your Workforce Unique?

What Does Your Code of Conduct Say? Does Anyone Actually Read It?

Do You Already Have Issues Exacerbated by MeToo?

Any Collective Bargaining Impacts?

Have You Done Your Training? Of Course You Have

Did You Experience an Uptick in Complaints?
If It’s Time to Revisit Your Policies

How Has Your Workforce Changed?

Should Generational Differences in Your Workplace Influence the Content of Your Policies?

The 5 Generations
- Traditionalists
- Baby Boomers
- Generation X
- Millennials
- Generation Z

Traditionalists
- 2% of the Workforce
- Lived through the Great Depression & World War II
- Work is a Privilege
- Pave Loyalty in their Employers
- Just get me to retirement
Baby Boomers

- Grew up in the Cold War
- Attended school during the Affirmative Action movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, the Moon Landing, the Kennedy assassination
- Work hard and expect to receive recognition
- Their academic mentors tend to be autocratic and not collaborative

Generation X

- Grew up during the fall of the Berlin Wall, Iran
  Contra, Operation Desert Storm, the OJ trial, Rodney King riots and higher divorce rates
- Latchkey Kids
- Embraced technology, the Internet, video games & mobile phones
- Leadership style involves coaching and feedback

Millennials

- By 2025 will constitute 75% of the workforce (34% now)
- Childless until mid-30s
- Childhood shaped by TV, kids in refugee camps
- Helicopter parenting & hyper-connected
- Risk-averse attitude
- Expect clear performance metrics & minimal ambiguity
- Value relationships, feedback, social consciousness
- Latchkey Kids
- Helicopter Parents & Participation Ribbons
- Rise of Social Media
Generation Z

- Grew up in global financial crisis
- More likely to stay in a job if given opportunities to partner
- Innovative and versatile use of technology & data
- More competitive in life (high school and college)
- More growth than millennials
- Insecurity brought about by foreclosure, job loss and student debt

You Have the Tools

Open the Toolbox

- Are you consistent in application of your policies and codes of conduct?
  "Google's sexual harassment policy states that violations may be terminated, but it was flexible in how it enforced the rules."

- Do you have a code of conduct for contractors and vendors?

- Who are your partners?
Embrace the Opportunity

- Rewrite Your Code of Conduct & Policies in Plain Language
- Find New Ways to Communicate & Socialize
- Reward Positive Behavior Aligned with Company Values

Employee Engagement & Communication

- How many of you have Employee Engagement as a corporate goal?
- How are companies supposed to appeal to the 3 Generations with a uniform message?
- What are the risks of getting it wrong – disengagement, turnover and litigation?

Other Means of Communication

- Have you asked your employees how they feel? Is that a good idea?
- Surveys may be appropriate depending on the culture
- Does your company have a Culture of Communication? Can you create one?
- Impact of Social Media on Decision-Making
What's Your Role?