Respectful Workplace

Preventing Harassment,
Understanding Unconscious Bias,
And Upholding Workplace Values

Creating a respectful workplace

MAKANA RISSER CHAI
HR Consultant
Trainer & Attorney
Makana@MakanaChai.com
808-282-2743
WWW.MAKANACHAI.COM

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Makana Risser Chai
About Makana Risser Chai

Makana is a trainer and HR consultant with more than 20 years of experience specializing in sexual harassment.

She wrote and presented more than 1,000 trainings in 38 states on *Managing within the Law* and *Respectful Workplace*, for companies like Xerox, Blue Cross, and Hawaii Gas.

She authored a book for Prentice Hall, *Stay Out of Court! The Manager’s Guide to Preventing Employee Lawsuits*, which includes a chapter on sexual harassment. Her articles on HR law have appeared in national publications, the *Honolulu Advertiser*, *Star-Advertiser*, and *Civil Beat*.

As an attorney in Silicon Valley, she represented women harassed by men, and men harassed by women. She represented men who were accused of harassment, both the innocent and the guilty.

She consults with companies handling harassment claims, has investigated complaints, and has mediated between employees in harassment situations.

Personally, she has been sexually harassed. As a manager, she had to resolve a claim of harassment between her subordinates. She was once unfairly accused of harassment. And one time, decades ago, she harassed a young man who worked for her.

Makana is also a certified Stress and Wellness Consultant, Forgiveness Facilitator by the Stanford Forgiveness Project, and teacher of yoga, meditation, and Pilates. She is the author of the book, *Mindful Multitasking: Timeless Techniques for a Vibrant Mind, Strong Body, Happy Heart & Light Spirit*.

Makana’s work is founded on the knowledge that organizations prevent lawsuits not by scaring people into compliance, but by empowering them to create respectful workplaces.
research conducted with predominantly mainland white men

- consider that local men may have different responses

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POLICY - Employer Checklist

☐ Senior leaders, through their words and actions, should encourage respect and discourage harassment

☐ Check your harassment policy. It should:
  - cover ALL protected classifications, not just sex.
  - prohibit retaliation.
  - set out multiple people to whom reports can be made.
  - provide a method for anonymous reports.
  - address how to report harassment by the owner, top execs, and HR.

☐ Compare your policy to the law:

"Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment."

☐ Consider adding a policy requiring respect at work.

Next steps:

- For all of the above, get advice and assistance from an HR lawyer who specializes in employment law.
- Distribute your (revised) harassment and respect policies to employees for signature.
Resources

Books


How to Win Friends and Influence People, by Dale Carnegie (1936)

Implicit Bias Test

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

Makana Risser Chai latest harassment articles

http://makanachai.com/blog/

Creating a respectful workplace defines what respect is.
Evaluation Feedback

☐ List one or two things you learned or are going to do.

☐ What were the strengths or weaknesses of this presentation?

☐ Would you recommend this presentation to others?

If you would like Makana to contact you for a free consultation, or you would like for her to speak for a professional group, please provide your contact information.