



INNOVEST SME
Accelerating Small Business

Dealing *with* Violence *in the* Workplace

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*I'm not concerned
with you liking me or
disliking me. All I ask is
that you respect me as a
human being.*

JACKIE ROBINSON

PREFACE

Workplace harassment is illegal and destructive to any organization. It is important to treat everyone in the workplace with respect and dignity. Workplace harassment must be identified, discouraged, and prevented in order to keep a hostile work environment from developing. Left unchecked, harassment can escalate into violence. Workplace harassment training is essential to the welfare of all businesses and their employees.

Allowing workplace harassment to continue will cause legal problems while destroying company morale. Many people are uncertain about what constitutes harassment, and they are confused when their actions are pointed out as demeaning. Legally, harassment is any word, gesture, or action that offends people or makes them feel uncomfortable or intimidated. You never know how sensitive people are, so never say or do anything if you are not sure how it will be received.

*Being brilliant is no great
feat if you respect nothing.*

GOETHE



WHAT IS WORKPLACE HARASSMENT?

Allowing workplace harassment to continue will cause legal problems while destroying company morale. Many people are uncertain about what constitutes harassment, and they are confused when their actions are pointed out as demeaning. Legally, harassment is any word, gesture, or action that offends people or makes them feel uncomfortable or intimidated. You never know how sensitive people are, so never say or do anything if you are not sure how it will be received.

HOW TO IDENTIFY

There are many ways to harass co-workers or employees. The rights of all citizens are legally protected, regardless of sex, age, health, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, or beliefs. Harassment occurs when someone from a one group feels discriminated against by another. Be careful, and remember that you never know what people are feeling or thinking. It is possible to accidentally offend those who work with you.

- **Physical Harassment:** This includes gestures, actions, and contact that can be sexual or threatening. Even well-meant gestures like a hug constitute harassment if they make a person

uncomfortable. Do not touch people at work or invade their personal space.

- **Emotional Harassment:** Threats, comments, degrading tones, and jokes are all workplace harassment. Avoid volatile subjects, and consider the ramifications of different jokes.

COSTS TO YOUR BUSINESS

Harassment costs businesses millions every year. Many laws allow people to sue their companies for workplace harassment. Failing to protect employees can result in a high price to pay. Not only are there litigation fees, but psychological ramifications cost businesses as well. The cost to your business is not always monetary, it can cost reputation. A company losing its reputation can have an effect on many aspects of business. The company may lose customers, valuable employees, and not attract prospective new hires.

LEGAL

Legal fees are a costly factor for businesses that face harassment charges. Companies are responsible for protecting their employees from managers, co-workers, vendors, and clients. Sexual harassment is the responsibility of the company when it is *quid pro quo*, which means that the sexual favors are exchanged for jobs, promotions, or raises. Businesses are also responsible if they are known to promote a hostile work environment. A hostile work environment occurs when management does nothing to

prevent harassment. In a legal battle, employers must prove that they used “reasonable care” to prevent and address harassment issues.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Harassment and bullying take a psychological toll on everyone in the workplace. A survey from the Psychological Association revealed that 74 percent of Americans believe that work causes most of their stress. The stress from harassment can lead to physical symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, and sleeplessness. Harassment, particularly sexual harassment, is linked to post traumatic stress disorder. Companies lose money in sick days, poor commitment, low productivity, and turnover when workplace harassment is not prevented and addressed immediately.

*Men are respectable
only as they respect.*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



IDENTIFYING THE BULLY

Bullying is not limited to the playground, and ignoring bullies will not make them leave you alone. Bullies are a growing problem in the workplace. Those who bully others do so with malicious intent. Unlike other harassment issues, bullies know that they are being cruel. Only 20 percent of bullying is considered illegal harassment because 80 percent of bullies do not harass people in other groups. In fact, 71 percent of bullies are women who target other women.

ABUSIVE WORKPLACE BEHAVIORS

Bullies often target high performing employees and attempt to destroy them out of fear or jealousy. They manipulate using fear, and will often turn other employees against their target. Bullying has the same results as other harassment practices. Managers are often guilty of bullying their employees.

Bullying Behavior:

- Continually changing job parameters
- Spreading gossip and rumors
- Creating impossible standards or deadlines
- Isolating an individual

- Threats of job loss
- Spying on or stalking a target
- Yelling at a target who is not permitted to yell back
- Belittling or disregarding opinions and feelings
- Preventing promotions and transfers
- Intruding in a person's workspace or belongings
- Misinforming the target.

BULLYING AND PERSONALITY DISORDERS

Many bullies have personality disorders such as antisocial personality disorder and narcissism. Having a personality disorder is not an excuse to behave badly. Some bullies with personality disorders are not aware of their actions, but others choose to manipulate the people around them. Serial bullies were often bullies in school, and they usually have fake personas to hide their cruelty from the people they want to manipulate.

ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

Those diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder are over 18 and have shown conduct disorders before they were 15.

Indicators:

- Not conforming to social customs or laws
- Consistently being deceitful (may use more than one identity)

- Impulsive and irresponsible (will usually have credit problems)
- Irritable and unable to empathize.
- Disregards personal safety and the safety of others

NARCISSISM

Many bullies show the characteristics of narcissistic personality disorder. This is more common than other personality disorders. They overcompensate for their lack of confidence with a grandiose, self-important view. Narcissists think highly of themselves, need attention, and lack empathy. There are nine indicators of narcissism. A diagnosis requires five of the nine criteria.

- Arrogance
- Fantasies that revolve around power, success, beauty, or love
- Are sure that only a few elite can understand them
- Need to be appreciated and admired
- Feels entitled and demands that people comply with their whims
- Exploit people around them
- Cannot empathize with others
- Are jealous of others and believe others are jealous of them
- Have a self-important attitude

*In violence we
forget who we are.*

MARY MCCARTHY



HOW TO HANDLE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Violence accounts for roughly one quarter of work related deaths. In order to prevent workplace violence, it is essential that managers and employees are able to identify individuals who could become violent and understand how to diffuse dangerous situations. Violent behavior does not appear out of nowhere. There are different behaviors that indicate possible violence over time.

TYPES OF BEHAVIOR

There are several different behaviors that can lead to violence if left to escalate. It is the responsibility of every manager to know employees and how they behave in order to identify possible problems. Customers and vendors can also be the cause of workplace violence.

Behavior Problems:

- **Acting Out:** Employees express anger in inappropriate ways such as yelling, slamming, etc.
- **Irresponsible Behavior:** Employees do not take responsibility for their actions.

- **Selfish Behavior:** Employees do not care how their actions affect those around them.
- **Mixed Behavior:** Employees verbally agree to follow rules, but do not.
- **Rigid Behavior:** Employees are unwilling to try new things and take direction.
- **Avoidance:** Employees lie, drink, or take drugs.
- **Extreme Behavior:** Employees completely alter the way they act.
- **Odd Behavior:** Employees have poor social skill or obsess about ideas or people.

TARGET THE BEHAVIOR, NOT THE PERSON

When an employee exhibits questionable behavior, it is essential that the behavior is addressed before it escalates. Employers need to document behavior and discuss it with the employee. Talk to the employee about how the negative behavior affects work. It is important not to attack the employee on a personal level. Remember not to assume everyone who has a bad day is going to become violent.

If you are aware of any problems that your employee is facing, help by offering training, counseling, or both. Monitor behavior. If things do not improve, it may be necessary for a problem employee to leave. Security needs to be aware of any troubled employees who leave an organization.

Employees who are paranoid, antisocial, or preoccupied with weapons, should be watched carefully.

IMPLEMENT AN ACTION PLAN

Employers need to implement workplace violence action plans. It is important to train employees how to recognize and prevent violence. An action plan should reflect certain elements.

Action Plan

- **Screening:** Use background checks and reference checks to hire stable individuals.
- **Security:** Implement a security protocol.
- **Mediation:** Help employees find ways to resolve disputes.
- **Balance:** Create programs that will promote work and life balance.
- **Assess:** Hire a threat assessment team to watch for potential violence.
- **Responsibilities:** Outline employer and employee responsibilities.
- **Situation Management:** Have a plan in place for the worst-case scenario.
- **Post Situation Management:** Have a plan ready to support employees after a crisis.

*A danger foreseen
is half avoided.*

PROVERB



RISK ASSESSMENT (I)

Risk assessments are important to improving the safety of an organization. Risk assessments identify hazards and potential for injury. Companies need to conduct risk assessments for different dangers. This chapter focuses on the risk of harassment and workplace violence.

UNDERSTANDING ANGER AND AGGRESSION

Anger is natural; everyone becomes angry from time to time. When anger is left unchecked, however, it can escalate into aggression. People are more likely to become aggressive when they feel that they are rejected or left out. It is important that employers and managers understand how to curb anger and aggression that they see in employees.

- Ask questions that lead to “I” answers that connect employees to their emotions.
- Show employees they are valued.
- Ask angry employees about their goals and aspirations.
- Admit when you are wrong.

DEFUSING & DE-ESCALATING STRATEGIES

When an employee's anger escalates and they become aggressive, it is important to try different de-escalation strategies. Knowing how to respond to an angry or aggressive person can prevent injuries and save lives.

Strategies:

- **Listen:** Try to understand what the individual wants or is angry about.
- **Monitor Body Language:** Try to control your physical reaction so that you do not appear to be a threat.
- **Speak carefully:** Be respectful. Do not react to the aggression.

Be aware of your surroundings in case the altercation escalates. If you are not able to defuse the situation, call the police.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills are important in preventing anger and aggression in the workplace. Learning to communicate with coworkers and employees correctly should be a priority for everyone in management. Each situation will have its own communication needs, but there are basic communication skills.

- **Listen Actively:** Ask for clarification if you do not understand what someone is saying.

- Be Respectful: Do not dismiss the individual's feelings.
- Speak Clearly: Do not be ambiguous in your dialogue.
- Compromise: Dialogue means that you are willing to make concessions.

TACTICAL OPTIONS

Occasionally, it is not possible to defuse a dangerous situation. This requires employees to use different tactical options in order to stay safe. They should be trained to recognize when a person is unstable and possibly dangerous. Employees should disengage from the situation before it escalates. Employers can improve safety by installing security and training employees.

Tactical Options

- Appease the individual.
- Call the police.
- Plan an escape.

*Prevention is better
than cure.*

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS



RISK ASSESSMENT (II)

There are risks with every job, but employers have an obligation to identify potential safety hazards and address them. Hazards are unique to each profession, but there are common hazards that are directly related to violence at work. Risk assessments and evaluations should be done periodically to ensure the safety of everyone in the workplace.

IDENTIFYING THE HAZARD

It is important to identify hazards that can contribute to workplace violence. Identify hazards so that risks can be assessed and plans implemented that will control the risk and protect employees. There are some common hazards that all companies need to be aware of.

- History of workplace violence
- Job description
- Working with valuable merchandise
- Number of people working
- Lack of security cameras and visibility

ASSESSING THE RISK

Once you identify the potential hazards, use them to assess the risk of violence in your organization. For example, employees should not work alone. If employees do work alone, there should be a strict safety and security protocol. Employees are also at risk if they handle expensive merchandise. Do you have plans in place that prevent the hazards from becoming actual risks?

CONTROLLING THE RISK

Assessing risks is done so that the risks can be controlled. While there is no such thing as perfect safety, there are steps to add in policies and procedures that will help prevent workplace violence. For example, always open or close with at least two people in the building, and do not let customers in after hours. The needs of each organization will be different, but using the assessment as a guide will help maintain a safe work environment.

EVALUATING & REVIEW

A safe work environment requires employers to evaluate and review their risk assessments regularly. Plans need to change to suit the needs of the individuals. It is essential that the data used to implement plans be accurate. Evaluations and reviews allow managers to make informed decisions about the constantly changing work environment.

*This above all, to refuse
to be a victim.*

MARGARET ATWOOD



BEING THE VICTIM

According to a recent survey, over one-third of Americans have been bullied at work. Bullying affects people on every level. It can lead to depression, illness, and poor work performance. Hopefully, you will never be the victim of bullying. Should you ever find yourself the target of a bully, however, you need to know what steps to take to protect yourself.

WHAT IS NOT CONSIDERED BULLYING

Not every personal conflict is the result of bullying. For example, an employee who is reprimanded for breaking a rule is not necessarily being bullied. It is bullying, however, if the manager, yells, humiliates, or threatens the employee. The problem with bullying is that it does not appear to be bullying. This is why many bullying acts are considered legal.

Not Bullying:

- Coaching an employee
- Reprimanding employees who break rules
- Refusing to promote a low-performing employee
- Legitimately complaining about a coworker
- Not being personal friends with a coworker

STEPS TO TAKE

If you are the victim of bullying, there are certain steps that you need to take to protect yourself. Bullying is harder to prove than classic harassment. The targets of bullies usually leave their organizations out of self-preservation, but it is in an employer's best interest to eliminate bullying behavior. While most bullying is not illegal, per se, it does cost companies money.

Steps:

- **Recognize the problem:** Do not accept the bully's definition of you. The bully is the problem.
- **Keep a paper trail:** Record bullying incidents, and keep documents that counter a bully's claims about your work.
- **Have a witness:** Have a witness around during meetings with the bully.
- **Inform your supervisors:** Make the appropriate supervisor aware of your situation.

You may or may not want to confront a bully. If you fear retaliation, it might be best to avoid a direct confrontation before going to a supervisor.

*Rules are not necessarily
sacred, principles are.*

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT



CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYERS

Employers need to take every measure to prevent harassment, bullying, and violence in the workplace. The company culture should be monitored carefully, and changes should be made when risks are discovered. Employers can change company culture by creating a relevant Code of Ethics and implementing new policies and procedures.

4 STEP PROCESS

There are four steps that employers must take when they are evaluating the risks to their business.

1. List the risks of taking (or not taking) an action.
2. Determine the severity of the risk, the likelihood that it will happen, and the likelihood of early detection. (Use a scale from 1 to 10.)
3. Prioritize the risks.
4. Develop action and assign responsibilities.

Example:

Risks: No anti-bullying policy	Severity: 9
Likelihood that it will happen: 8	Likelihood of early detection: 5
Priority: 7	
Action: Develop Anti-bullying Policy	Responsible: HR

ADDRESSING ALL EMPLOYEES

It is important to address all employees when trying to implement new policies regarding harassment and bullying behavior. The changes should not target specific groups or individuals. This may be seen as a type of harassment. All employees should abide by the same rules, this way people cannot claim that they do not know how to behave. Managers should also make sure that any and all questions are addressed and everyone understands the consequences of not following the new policies or procedures.

CODE OF ETHICS

A company Code of Ethics is becoming commonplace in modern business. The code is meant to encourage everyone to behave ethically. They can also prevent lawsuits. There are several elements that need to be considered when developing a Code of Ethics.

What to Include in a Code of Ethics:

- **Laws and regulations:** All legal requirements need to be considered.
- **Company needs:** Consider the needs of your employees and the business when creating a code.
- **Ethical values:** Use the ethics and values you feel should guide the organization. Include two examples for each value
- **Wording:** Make sure that the message is clear and everyone knows that they have to abide by the Code of Ethics.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy and procedures are created to enforce the company Code of Ethics and prevent problems in the future. Every organization should have an anti-harassment policy and procedures established. Policies not only issue rules; they establish who is responsible for enforcing those rules. They make the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior clear. There are several basic steps to creating policies and procedures.

DRAFTING POLICIES:

- Identify risks
- Create policies
- Approve policies
- Evaluate policies

*...you cannot fool all of the
people all of the time.*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview process is designed to help employers find the best employees for open positions. Employers need to always apply the interview process carefully, and never hire an employee out of desperation. Identifying potential bullies in an interview will save you the trouble of dealing with their problems later.

IDENTIFY A BULLY IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Bullies may be able to hide their destructive behavior, but hiring managers should pay attention to the clues that indicate a candidate may be a bully. If you believe a candidate to be a bully, do not hire him or her. Impressive qualifications will not help your company if you allow a bully to destroy morale and run off your best employees.

Interview Hints:

- Overusing “I”: Candidates should discuss their achievements, but they need have experience working as part of a team.
- Behavior in Office: Observe how the candidate treats subordinates in the office.
- Check References: Pay attention to how references describe the candidate.

WARNING SIGNS

When interviewing a candidate, it is important to determine whether or not the individual is capable of empathy. Ask the candidate to describe a particularly frustrating time. Listen to the tone carefully. Is it disparaging? Is the body language tense and angry? Ask the candidate to describe how he or she would handle a problem with an employee. If the individual shows signs of anger or frustration again, you are probably interviewing a bully.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

Workplace bullying can lead to violent outbursts from bullies and from those they bully. The victims of bullying can lose control and take out their frustrations at work or at home. For example, part of the TSA training of full body scanners was to have all screeners walk through the scanners. One employee at the Miami International Airport suffered bullying after the exercise. His supervisor and coworkers taunted him about his body. After a year of insults, the bullied employee physically assaulted a coworker. He was arrested and claimed that a year of taunting drove him to his actions.

*Action expresses
priorities.*

GANDHI



INVESTIGATION PROCESS

Employers have an obligation to investigate any claims of harassment. Maintaining a safe work environment means taking every claim of harassment seriously. Create guidelines that explain what type of behavior is not tolerated and how employees should lodge complaints. Do not ignore complaints. Whether the complaint is formal or informal, investigate the incident carefully.

ADVISING YOUR SUPERVISOR

Supervisors are responsible for handling initial harassment complaints. At the early stages, supervisors should attempt to resolve the problems quickly while maintaining confidentiality. In order for supervisors to solve the issues, employees must make them aware of the situation. Employees need to communicate problems as specifically as possible. Incidents of harassment often escalate because no one reports the issues at the beginning.

While supervisors should not discuss specific harassment complaints with the entire staff, they need to inform employees that investigating incidents will make it difficult to keep the matter completely confidential. Investigators and witnesses will have to be informed of the matter. If an

employee is not willing to name his or her abuser, the investigation will be nearly impossible to conduct. Supervisors should alleviate any tension by informing employees that there will not be any retaliation because of issuing a complaint.

LODGING THE COMPLAINT

The company anti-harassment policy should clearly state how employees can lodge complaints. Typically, they go to their immediate supervisors. If their immediate supervisors are the problem, however, another employee should be designated, such as an HR representative. Employee complaints need to have detailed information that investigators explore.

What to Include in a Complaint:

- Names of individuals
- Explanation of what happened and why it violated policy
- Dates and times of incidents
- Names of witnesses
- Proof or documentation of events

INITIAL RESPONSE

Employers need to respond to harassment complaints immediately. Employees who make claims should be thanked for helping the company

identify harassment. When an employee lodges a complaint the supervisor should explain the following:

- An investigation will begin as soon as possible.
- The company needs to collect information before it takes action.
- The company will investigate the claim as quietly as possible, but full confidentiality may not be possible.

THE INVESTIGATION

There should be clear procedures in place for investigating a harassment complaint. Each company's procedures will be unique, but there are certain elements that are basic to every investigation.

- Conduct the interviews in private.
- Document everything.
- Find a neutral witness to sit in on interviews, if you feel it is necessary.
- Keep an open mind, and do not jump to conclusions.
- Gather as much information as possible.
- Interview the claimant, witnesses, and the accused separately.

THE FINDINGS

After the investigation is complete, companies must take action. The findings of the investigation will determine what type of action to take.

- Finding in favor of the claimant means that the harasser will have to face disciplinary measures. For example, he or she could be suspended, transferred, demoted, terminated, sent to counseling, or reprimanded. The action depends on the severity of the harassment.
- Inconclusive findings are difficult. Companies should address these situations by reminding the accused that harassment is not tolerated. Document this discussion in the employee's records.

The claimant should be informed when the investigation is over and disciplinary action is taken, but the exact action should remain confidential.

REVIEW & CLOSURE

After a harassment investigation, the policies and procedures should be reviewed carefully. There are several questions that investigators need to answer.

- Did the anti-harassment policy address the issue?
- Were employees aware of the policy?
- Was the complaint addressed quickly?
- Were any other problems discovered in the investigation?

*Animosity is
not a policy.*

HENRY CABOT LODGE



DEVELOPING A WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY

We have already established that every business needs a workplace harassment policy. Earlier chapters addressed specific aspects of harassment policies. Now it is time to put together all of the lessons and identify everything that belongs in a workplace harassment policy.

SCOPE AND PHILOSOPHY

A successful anti-harassment policy should have a broad scope. It needs to address all of the legal definitions of harassment, both on a federal and local level. The policy can be stricter than the minimum legal requirements to help avoid lawsuits in the future. The scope of anti-harassment policy should also identify who the policy affects. The policy needs to make it clear that the rules apply to current employees, former employees, contractors, and vendors.

All policies need to uphold the philosophy of the organization. The mission statement and vision statement of the organization should be reflected in the policy. A workplace that operates without harassment and discrimination needs to be at the heart of a company. Addressing

harassment in the business' philosophy and in a policy makes anti-harassment part of the company's culture.

PRINCIPLES

The scope and philosophy of an anti-harassment policy will help you craft the principles that will guide the policy. These principles outline the purpose of the policy and all those involved.

Examples:

- Managers are responsible to prevent harassment.
- The company will take action in cases of harassment.
- The company will encourage a safe and respectful environment.
- All people will be treated with respect and dignity.

INTENT

The workplace harassment policy should acknowledge that not everyone has the intent to harass when incidents occur. The impact of certain behaviors, however, qualifies as harassment. In order to differentiate between intent and impact, the anti-harassment policy should define harassment and provide examples of harassing behavior.

OPTIONS

Employees need to understand their options regarding how to handle workplace harassment. The policy governing harassment should explain

the different options that employees have. There are both formal and informal options available to employees, and the severity of the complaint will help people determine the course of action to take. Dangerous or repetitive behavior will probably require a formal complaint.

INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

Employees are allowed to choose the complaint process that they want to handle the harassment with. There are several basic informal complaints processes.

- **Direct Process:** Also called, self-help, this occurs when the individual confronts the harasser and asks him or her to stop. This will also work if the offended party sends an anonymous note.
- **Indirect Process:** A manager can reiterate the harassment policy in a group with the offensive individual.
- **Employee Assistance:** Many companies choose employee counseling services that advise employees in HR matters. The calls are kept confidential.
- **Third Party:** An ombudsman works with the harassed employee to find a suitable solution.

FORMAL INVESTIGATION PROCESS

A formal complaint will result in an investigation, which we already covered. The complaint process should be clearly outlined in the harassment policy. Employees should know how to file a complaint and who will conduct the

investigation. There should also be a timetable for the complaint process. For example, it is common for companies to appoint an investigator within three days of the complaint. The harassment policy also needs to address the issue of confidentiality and explain how complaints will be resolved.

*Respect a man and he will
do all the more.*

JOHN WOODEN

CLOSING THOUGHTS

- **Anonymous:** Treat others as you would want them to treat you because what comes around goes around.
- **Rene G. Torres:** He who does not have the courage to speak up for his rights cannot earn the respect of others.
- **Ayn Rand:** If one doesn't respect oneself one can have neither love nor respect for others.



Rick Chisholm made history when he single-handedly changed the professional Audio Visual industry by breaking all the rules and capitalised over 50% market share in Australia with very little capital, no partners, mergers or lenders and set up the first franchise operation of its kind in the world in the late 1990's and early 2000's.

As a 7x founder of companies and 30x businesses such as Innovest, AI Machine, Lightsounds, LSW, Light Emotion with revenue in excess of \$300 million and having employed more than 1,000 staff over the last 35 years. Rick is known as the Start-Up and SME Guru and is Author of a number of books including Business Success for Life. Unlike many mentors, he actually walks the talk and has a number of businesses under management in such areas as Automation, Events management, Importing, Distribution, Retailing and E-commerce.

His BIG passion is Business Education empowering Businesses Owners through knowledge and skills. Whilst Rick has experienced great success, he has also endured many failures. Rick has faced and overcome the exact same challenges you are facing now.



Tala Chisholm is an SME specialist who has owned and managed several small to medium sized businesses in the last 20 years, several of which were eventually sold. She has extensive experience in the fields of retail, franchising, licensing, dealerships, education, importing, distribution and consulting.

Her expertise lies in building and implementing customised cross-platform database and software solutions for businesses, automation, IT, web marketing, advertising, graphic design, business administration, process refinement and implementation. Her business experience ranges from bricks-and-mortar Giftware retailing to highly technical fields such as Security, CCTV, Entertainment Lighting and Audio sales, hire and installations as well as e-commerce.

Throughout her career she also trained and mentored Franchise business owners as well as internal division managers. Some areas of training included retail operations, management practices, business strategy, accounting, cash-flow, marketing, customer service and IT. She has also headed up the drafting of Operating Compliance Manuals for Franchise operations and implementation of all the elements involved.



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