

Sample of behaviours

This document highlights a range of different unprofessional behaviours that may be exhibited by individuals or teams.

Have you observed any of these behaviours in your workplace?

Use the checklist provided to take a holistic approach to managing the behaviour, exploring the different reasons why it may be present and setting clear standards and objectives to address and monitor behaviour going forward.

1. Intimidating / Offensive behaviours

Examples of behaviours exhibited may include:

- constantly interrupting colleagues and/or patients
- talking over colleagues and/or patients to ensure that their point of view is the most important
- puts down colleagues' contributions in relation to tasks and/or management of patient care
- acts bored/uninterested during key meetings
- persistent attempts to belittle and undermine work
- persistent and unjustified criticism and monitoring of work
- persistent attempts to humiliate individual in front of colleagues
- intimidating use of discipline or competence procedures
- undermining individual's personal integrity.

Problem: If one member of staff within the team dominates the conversation, it means their colleagues are not able to participate and make contributions.

Possible management approach: As a manager you need to build a vision of professionalism and set standards with individuals/team to ensure that you build commitment and share responsibility.

In this example, it is important that you invite and encourage all members of the team to be involved and reach decisions by consensus.

Additional reading

Read	In this case study, see how Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust gave staff the tools and language to empower them to challenge poor behaviour and to tackle low level concerns.
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2. Bystander behaviours

Examples of behaviours exhibited may include:

- saying little and seeming bored
- watching what is going on but not raise concerns
- little non-verbal participation
- rarely volunteers
- making others feel uncomfortable by lack of participation
- concentrating on non-work tasks, such as reading the newspaper or using their mobile phone/laptop.

Problem: These behaviours can dampen the cultural climate which may infect others and is unfair on the team.

Possible management approach: As a manager you need to provide clarity and help the individual/team to understand the bigger picture for example, what they need to do, how they need to do it and most importantly, why it matters.

Helping team members understand their role in a shared and wider vision can help with motivation.

3. Abuse of power behaviours

Examples of behaviours exhibited may include:

- making themselves appear intelligent/superior to their colleagues
- providing an academic answer to everything
- restricting information from others within the team which is required to undertake the role effectively
- removal of areas of responsibility from rest of team without consultation
- freezing out, ignoring or excluding members of the team
- use of acronyms unknown to anyone else within the team
- talking to the air, rather than to an colleagues and/or patient, often as a speech
- confirming, or more often disputing, whatever is being said
- agreeing to undertake tasks but off loads these onto other members of the team.

Problem: These behaviours may create tension in the group by belittling the views or confusing colleagues. This can have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of colleagues and the management of patient care.

Possible management approach: As a manager you need to provide clarity to the individuals/team about performance and standards and highlight how behaviours have impact on the wider team.

4. Humiliating / Injuring behaviours

Examples of behaviours exhibited may include:

- bringing humour in at every opportunity - sometimes appropriately
- the continuous use of unwanted nicknames
- making inappropriate jokes about individuals

- persistent teasing
- deflecting real emotional content that might be surfacing
- can produce an anecdote or joke for every occasion
- interrupts with rationalisations if any emotions are being discussed
- refers to emotions as touchy feely
- makes a joke or run a private conversation that excludes the rest of the team.

Problem: Making jokes may result in discussions being kept at a superficial level. Whilst some humour can enhance the cultural climate, too much can hamper it. This type of behaviour could also be perceived as harassment by colleagues and/or patients depending upon the sensitivity of the joke.

Possible management approach: As a manager you should promote a warm and friendly environment for staff within the team to enable them to fulfil their potential. Taking time to set the right environment can be effective in getting diverse, conflicting individuals/teams to work together harmoniously, and will help you recognise the different levels of emotional help and support required by members of staff/teams.

Additional resources

Use	Our health and wellbeing webpages to support the health and wellbeing of staff in your organisation.
Find out more	Schwartz rounds can help reduce the feelings of stress and isolation which can make it more difficult for staff to provide compassionate care to patients. They can also foster a great sense of collaboration between colleagues because the stories that are shared during rounds remind staff of their shared motivation to help their patients.
Watch	In this film , the Point of Care Foundation explains what happens at a Schwartz Round at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust.

5. Protesting behaviours

Examples of behaviours exhibited may include:

- being unable to stay quiet
- using every possible chance to bring up negative subjects, this may be a dispute at work, the trouble with patients, and so on
- rejecting solutions from other members of the team
- persistent attempts to demoralise members of the team

- not participating in team conversations but disrupts the team by making comments under their breath or speaking to a neighbour.

Problem: This behaviour can limit discussions in the team and directs team members away from what they can do to make things better.

Possible management approach: As a manager you may wish to understand the strengths and weaknesses of individuals/team, by taking time to learn about their aspirations which could help you to formulate a plan for the long-term capability of individuals/team.

Checklist

Use the below checklist to help formulate an action plan to tackle any of the behaviours listed above.

- **Challenge:** provide a safe space to discuss behaviour in a 121 setting and the potential reasons for any unprofessional behaviour. The behaviour may be a result of many things and it is best to explore before making any judgement or actions.
- **Set clear standards:** be clear and precise on the behaviours required and what you expect in line with those in the NHS Constitution and the consequences of any deviation/lack of improvement.
- **Formulate a plan:** formulate and communicate a strategy of how you plan to achieve your vision and give individual SMART objectives. Remember to make it clear how these relate to your expectations and objectives for the whole team.
- **Encourage participation:** ensure that you encourage participative meetings where you manage the agenda, time and encourage contributions from individuals/team in terms of opinions and ideas and listen carefully and with patience. Invite individuals/team to be involved in decisions which may affect them, this may help avoid instances of unprofessionalism.
- **Invest time:** find out more about the members of your team including what they enjoy at work and what matters to them. Take time to think about your vision for the team and which individuals could you work with to increase the standards of behaviours and overall culture of your team. Be clear and precise on the “whys” associated with your decisions or actions and try to link these in with the values and behaviours required of the organisation.
- **Support:** determine the level and type of support you can offer individuals, the role you will play as they carry out their development plans and remember to include time to undertake reviews to provide feedback.
- **Monitor:** ensure that you provide individuals within the team with balanced feedback on a regular, ongoing basis, focusing on progress towards the in terms of meeting the vision. This may help to enhance motivation.