

A background image of a man and a woman in a modern office setting, leaning over a desk and looking at a laptop. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

The Respect-Ready Workplace: A 90-Day Plan for HR Teams

*How to Build a Culture Where Respect, Inclusion,
and Accountability Thrive*

Why Respect Matters More Than Ever



45%

of UK employees say they've witnessed or experienced workplace bullying or harassment in the past year.

Source: CIPD Good Work Index, 2023



Today's workplaces face a growing challenge: maintaining trust, dignity, and inclusion in an environment of increasing legal and social expectations.

With the Equality Act now placing a legal duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment, HR teams need a **clear, actionable roadmap** - not just policies and procedures.

This 90-day plan is built to help you move from compliance to culture change.

Implication: Harassment isn't rare - it's just often unreported.

Action Plan Steps – Foundation & Awareness



Days 1 - 30



Days 31–60



Days 61–90

Phase 1: Foundation & Awareness

Goal: Strengthen management capability and embed behavioural expectations.

Key Actions:

- ☐ Review & refresh policies (sexual harassment, inclusion, dignity at work)
- ☐ Communicate expectations clearly from leadership downward
- ☐ Launch a listening initiative (anonymous feedback or quick culture pulse)
- ☐ Schedule or plan awareness training for all staff - emphasising bystander empowerment, what respect looks like, and what's not okay

TIPS

Here are some practical ways to bring this phase to life and ensure your messaging around respect feels meaningful, not mechanical:

1. Position respect as a shared value, not a rulebook. Use real-world examples relevant to your people and teams.
2. Use multiple formats to communicate expectations - don't rely solely on email or policy documents.
3. Include respect and inclusion messaging in your onboarding process - not just annual training. First impressions set expectations.
4. When gathering anonymous feedback, ask a bold open-ended question: "What's one thing we could do to make this a more respectful place to work?" This invites real insight and signals psychological safety.
5. Frame the awareness training as culture-enhancing, not compliance-driven, so employees know it's not about box ticking.
6. Make leadership visible & accountable. Have them share a personal commitment to respectful leadership in a meeting/internal post.

Action Plan Steps – Equip & Engage



Days 1 - 30



Days 31–60



Days 61–90

Phase 2: Equip & Engage

Goal: Strengthen management capability and embed behavioural expectations.

Key Actions:

- ☐ Run line manager sessions on handling inappropriate behaviour, responding to disclosures, and leading by example
- ☐ Set up “Respect Check-ins” as part of 1:1s or team meetings (encouraging open dialogue and course correction)
- ☐ Share realistic scenarios (without naming names) that encourage peer learning
- ☐ Spotlight stories of positive workplace behaviours and values in action

TIPS

These tips are designed to help managers and teams engage with the topic of respect in a relatable, action-oriented way:

1. Make manager sessions highly practical - use scenario-based discussion, not just slides. Focus on “what would you do if...” situations.
2. Encourage managers to lead short team check-ins on respect and inclusion. A 10-minute chat can signal safety and set tone far more than a memo.
3. Introduce a “respect moment” in team meetings - a quick weekly reflection on behaviour, wins, or concerns related to how the team interacts.
4. Encourage peer-led examples. Ask employees to share stories (anonymously if preferred) of what respectful behaviour looks like in action.
5. Create space for managers to ask for help. Offer optional drop-in sessions or a “Manager Toolkit” resource hub with FAQs on handling sensitive issues.

Action Plan Steps – Sustain & Signal



Days 1 - 30



Days 31–60



Days 61–90

Phase 3: Sustain & Signal

Goal: Reinforce, recognise, and systematise respectful behaviours.

Key Actions:

- ☐ Launch a Respect Champion scheme or peer-nominated recognition
- ☐ Embed respect-related questions in onboarding, surveys, and exit interviews
- ☐ Share progress with employees (e.g. “85% feel confident to report issues”)
- ☐ Celebrate team or departmental efforts that contributed to cultural improvement

TIPS

Use these ideas to reinforce respectful behaviours and embed them into the everyday rhythm of your workplace.

1. Recognise behaviour publicly, not just outcomes. Praise individuals or teams who role-model inclusive or respectful actions - this reinforces what's valued.
2. Integrate respect into performance reviews - not as a tick box, but as part of leadership behaviour and team contribution criteria.
3. Use data to drive conversations. Share insights from feedback or reporting trends in a way that shows progress and accountability without blame.
4. Make “Respect and Inclusion” a standing topic on leadership team or management meeting agendas.
5. Review onboarding and exit data - these transitional moments often reveal cultural blind spots. Adjust accordingly.

Respect Audit Checklist

Use this quick self-assessment to evaluate how well your organisation is positioned to foster a culture of respect.

Area	Question	Yes / No / Partially
Policy	Do we have clear, up-to-date policies covering sexual harassment, dignity at work, and respectful conduct?	
Visibility	Are these policies accessible, easy to understand, and regularly promoted across the organisation?	
Training	Have all employees received training on respectful behaviours and harassment prevention in the past 12 months?	
Leadership	Do our leaders model respectful behaviour and reinforce values consistently?	
Reporting	Do we have multiple, safe, and confidential channels for reporting inappropriate behaviour?	
Follow-up	Do we investigate reports promptly and communicate outcomes while protecting confidentiality?	
Culture	Do employees feel comfortable speaking up when they witness or experience disrespectful behaviour?	

Score yourself:

- Mostly “Yes”: You’re on a solid foundation - now look to sustain and deepen.
- Mostly “Partially”: Progress is underway, but gaps could weaken your culture.
- Mostly “No”: Now’s the time to act. Start with visibility, leadership, and training.

Sample Respect & Inclusion Survey Questions

You could use these in your pulse surveys or annual engagement assessments to understand how people feel - not just what's written in your policies:

	Y/N	COMMENTS
I feel comfortable raising concerns about disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour at work.		
My line manager sets a positive example in how they treat others.		
I believe my organisation takes reports of inappropriate behaviour seriously.		
I feel safe being myself at work, regardless of my background or identity.		
I have witnessed or experienced disrespectful behaviour in the past 6 months.		
If I reported something, I believe I would be supported - not penalised.		
Respect and inclusion are part of how we do things here - not just a policy.		

Tip: Always give an optional open comment box - qualitative feedback can reveal hidden issues.

“Spot the Signal” Guide for Managers

How to recognise early signs of a disrespectful or unsafe environment.

Managers should watch for:

- ❖ Subtle disengagement (e.g. team members suddenly quiet in meetings or avoiding collaboration)
- ❖ Jokes or “banter” that make some people uncomfortable
- ❖ Recurring exclusions from social/team events
- ❖ Eye-rolling, dismissive language, or talking over others
- ❖ Sudden requests for role changes or meeting avoidance
- ❖ Clusters of anonymous feedback pointing to the same behaviour or person

What to do:

- ❖ Don’t ignore it. Check in privately and listen without judgment.
- ❖ Document what you observe.
- ❖ Seek advice from HR if unsure.
- ❖ Be proactive, not reactive - respect issues rarely fix themselves.

Reporting Pathways Poster Template

Make it easy for employees to speak up with a clear, visual pathway:

How to Report Disrespectful or Inappropriate Behaviour

1. Speak to Your Line Manager

- ❖ When safe and appropriate, start by raising your concern with your manager.

2. Contact HR Directly

- ❖ You can report issues confidentially to [Insert HR contact name/email/phone].

3. Use Our Anonymous Reporting Tool

- ❖ Visit [Insert internal form or system name] to submit a report confidentially.

4. Follow-Up Support

- ❖ Support is available through our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or HR.

Every report is taken seriously. You are protected from retaliation under the Equality Act 2010.

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Connect With Us

If you're looking to complement this guide with simple, certified training for your teams, we've made our CPD-certified course on Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace available for a limited time at £15 per learner.

It's quick to deploy, easy to bulk enrol, and provides a CPD certificate.

Just get in touch to find out more.

Let's work together to build a Respect-Ready Workplace.

Get in touch today:

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