



Timely Information for Personal Success

## Do Playground Bullies Become Workplace Bullies?

By Mike Jacquart

Could some of the bullies who stole our lunch money be the same bullies who belittle and antagonize us in the workplace? Could be, say some experts. “When a person has low EQ, or Emotional Quotient, and they do little to improve their EQ, it is very likely that they could become, or perceived as, a bully,” says Paula Marshall, CEO of the Bama Companies.

Another similarity between school place and workplace bullying is the fact it does not have to be face to face to be effective. “In fact, it is common for such patterns to escalate from being delivered face to face to other types of communications,” states NoBullying.com. “Emails, text and phone messages, social media posts, and other written and verbal messages can be just as devastating as those delivered to your face.”

### Bullied as a Child...

Indeed – bullying of the physical variety was tough enough in school – I cannot imagine how much more difficult it would have been if my tormentor could have lashed out at me via electronic media. In my day, “all” I had to do was run home as fast as I could to get away from John, get in my house, slam the door, and boom.... Problem solved – at least for the time being.

Actually, I was kidding myself to a large extent. Regardless of where one is (home, school or work), or at what age (child, teen or adult), the effects of

bullying are often similar: anxiety, insomnia, and difficulty concentrating, for starters.

If it goes on long enough, a lack of confidence and self-esteem may also result. I think this is where my childhood tormentor “had me” more than I probably realized at the time. I needed to confront John, or at least receive help to do so, but my antagonist was able to frighten me into not seeking help. “You’d BETTER not say anything!”

Scared, and lacking the confidence to deal with his behavior, these antagonistic incidents went on much longer than they needed to, if I had the wherewithal to have done something about it.

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## Healthy Recipe: Black Bean Quesadillas

### INGREDIENTS:

- One 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed
- ½ cup shredded Pepper Jack cheese
- ½ cup prepared fresh salsa, divided
- Four 8-inch whole-wheat tortillas
- 2 teaspoons canola oil, divided
- 1 ripe avocado, diced

### NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

- Calories per serving: 377
- Carbohydrates: 46 g.
- Protein: 13 g.
- Sodium: 679 mg.
- Fat: 13 g.
- Saturated fat: 5 g.

### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Combine beans, cheese and ¼ cup salsa in medium bowl. Place tortillas on a work surface. Spread ½ cup filling on half of each tortilla. Fold tortillas in half, pressing gently to flatten.
- 2 Heat 1 teaspoon oil in large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add 2 quesadillas and cook, turning once, until golden on both sides, 2 to 4 minutes total.
- 3 Transfer to a cutting board and tent with foil to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining 1 teaspoon oil and quesadillas.
- 4 Serve quesadillas with avocado and the remaining salsa. ■

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 PO Box 322, Waupaca, WI 54981  
 Phone: 715-258-2448  
 Fax: 715-258-9048  
 Website: [www.impact-publications.com](http://www.impact-publications.com)  
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*Publisher:* Scott Kolpien  
*Managing Editor:* Mike Jacquart

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## Questions and Answers

### Layoff Concerns are Tricky

**Q:** *The bank where I work at was just sold. The majority of the changes aren't supposed to take place until fall. Should I start looking for a new job before then?*

**A:** You haven't given me much to go on – were you led to believe that most people will lose their jobs? No matter, I would say the best thing to do would be to be extremely aware of what is going on around you and definitely sharpen up your resume if you witness either, or both, of the following trends:

1) **People are no longer valued.** Be on the lookout for situations in which staff are there one day, gone the next, and with very little, if any, explanation or context provided. While reductions in force (RIF) are part of virtually every merger, dignity and respect need to be a part of every RIF. If they are not, consider looking elsewhere even if you are not laid off.

2) **More work, less reward.** The employees who still have jobs usually get the added workload of personnel who have been laid off, but without a commensurate increase in salary, title or influence. Once you're forced into that role, the outcome tends to be physical and emotional burnout. To avoid that, it's important to quickly recognize how unsustainable that arrangement is and consider other potential options.

Good luck. ■

*Source: Tor Constantino, PR specialist and former journalist.*

## Playground Bullies...

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### ...Bullied as an Adult

Put another way, if you – or someone you know – is being bullied in the workplace, I would not assume this person knows how, or is able to, address the situation. The employee might well need HELP.

Unfortunately, these types of problems are much more common than many people may realize. A study from the Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI) revealed that more than one-third (37%) of Americans reported being victims of bullying. According to the WBI, bullying can take numerous different forms, including the following:

- Being assigned the impossible task of doing a good job without the proper time or training.
- Undermining your efforts to get your job done by deleting paper or electronic files, or not informing you about important work-related calls and emails.
- Receiving snide comments about your appearance, background or lifestyle.
- Accusing you of things you didn't do.
- Trying to discredit you or turn others against you.
- Constantly interrupting you so you can't get any work done.

The next step – such as *seeking the help of an EA professional* – will vary, but one thing is for sure: Don't underestimate the value of your mental, physical, and emotional health in times of extreme stress. ■

*Mike Jacquart is a frequent blogger and editor of "Employee Assistance Report." He will also be co-leading a webinar on workplace bullying with Catherine Mattice on July 20. For more info and to register visit <https://civilitypartners.lpages.co/eap-webinar-registration-page/>*