

**Year 3 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

Soteria Solutions

Workplace Solutions – NOAA Fisheries

Relevant Rubric Area(s):

Bystander Intervention Programs; Civility or Respect Promotion Programs

Purpose and Goals:

In the fall of 2021, Soteria Solutions partnered with Northeast Fisheries Science Center to create and present a three-part training series to teach knowledge and skills for building effective workplace communication strategies. The series included two, one-hour presentations during NE Fisheries All-Hands meetings that included Federal employees and contractors and a 90-minute interactive session that was implemented five times with NE Fisheries Federal employees.

Learning objectives for the three-part curriculum include:

1. Increasing participants' understanding of a public health approach to prevention.
2. Recognizing the community impact of incivility, harassment, bias, and discrimination.
3. Learning dynamic and individualized skills that build and support protective factors that prevent incivility, harassment, bias, and discrimination.
4. Identifying positive bystander intervention and effective communication methods to build safe, respectful, and resilient workplaces.
5. Choosing at least one positive bystander intervention and/or effective communication strategy that they feel comfortable and confident in using in a realistic hypothetical workplace scenario.

Stakeholder Input and Curriculum Overview:

Soteria Solutions created a highly customized curriculum specific to NE Fisheries based on listening session data, focus group sessions conducted by Soteria Solutions and ongoing stakeholder conversations with NE Fisheries. This custom curriculum focuses on how connecting our identities with our values and behaviors is fundamental to addressing the root causes of why and how harm and bias are caused, perpetuated, and experienced. To confront harmful attitudes that are normalized into subtle or overt actions at the individual, relationship, and organizational levels, a deep understanding of people's identities is required. This three-part curriculum works across the social-ecological model to uncover the ways in which each person's unique identities, values, and group affiliations present opportunities and challenges intervention. This identity work also helps illuminate the individual and collective agency to effect meaningful change.

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During the introductory All-Hands meeting, Soteria Solutions introduced the concept of linking identities with values and behaviors, respectful workplaces, and effective communication strategies. After the first All-Hands meeting, Soteria Solutions facilitated five, 90-minute interactive sessions with Federal employees. The interactive sessions included discussion of customized, hypothetical scenarios informed by conversations with key NE Fisheries stakeholders and data from listening sessions that NE Fisheries facilitated in the fall of 2020. During the second All-Hands meeting, Soteria Solutions reviewed and built upon the key concepts, resources, and skills that were included in the interactive sessions in order to reinforce how to link identities with values and behaviors to respectful workplaces and effective communication. Two Soteria Solutions lead trainers delivered the All-Hands and interactive sessions.

Overview of the Core Messages in the Three Trainings:

In order to create and sustain a respectful workplace culture in which each person not only has the tools and network to survive, but thrive, a keen, thorough, and honest understanding of the following is required: a) the landscape of the norms and policies within which they work; b) exploration of how one's identities directly contribute to and shape workplace culture and interpersonal communication; and c) learning and building skills that help them acknowledge and confront harm in the workplace and contribute to more equitable environments. Our findings and recommendations are anchored by the social-ecological model - individual, relational, institutional/community, and society. We detail some of the challenges and opportunities expressed and experienced by Fisheries employees at the individual, relational, and organizational level, and then present recommendations to address each through additional training, prevention, and policy work.

Part 1: Who We Are, What We Do, & Why

Identities and values shape our attitudes, language, and actions in the workplace. However, not all feel comfortable, supported, and safe bringing all their identities to the workplace.

Part 2: Identities, Values & Power - Creating & Sustaining Healthy Ecosystems

Content focuses on recognition of problematic and inappropriate language and behaviors using scenarios that are adapted from experiences of NE Fisheries employees. An exploration of how our identities, values, and power create both opportunities and challenges to intervening is introduced through scenarios, as well as the ability to confront workplace harassment and build skill sets for positive communication, support, and intervention using realistic scenarios.

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Part 3: Change Across the Social Ecology - What You Can Do

Employees explore the multifaceted intervention responses offered by their colleagues and supervisors through scenarios. These scenarios reinforce the ways in which each person's unique combination of identities, values, and professional positioning impact: 1) their perceptions of harm as well as their ability to intervene; 2) their individualized strengths and skills surrounding respectful communication and offering support; and 3) their self-efficacy to transform workplace environments into spaces that promote equitable treatment, access, and opportunity for all.

Current Status and Evaluation:

Soteria Solutions completed their curriculum creation and presentations in fall of 2021. We then disseminated two unique program evaluation surveys after the two All-Hands meetings and one unique program evaluation survey after each of the five interactive sessions. Overall response rates to all surveys were low. Thus, it is difficult to quantify participants' evaluation of the sessions. However, participants did offer insightful comments about the sessions and curriculum.

Overall findings:

- Of those who responded, there is a clear divide between a few who didn't appreciate the training to those that appreciate and enjoyed the training.
- Participants were more comfortable knowing that verbal sharing/participation was not required.
- Clear divisions are being felt between Federal and Contract employees.
- Most participants would recommend the training to colleagues.
- Many participants articulated the desire to continue discussions about the training and how to integrate lessons learned to the everyday workplace relationships
- Overall, participants had excellent takeaways and began understanding the connection between personal values, identities, and workplace communication.

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