

# CHAPTER 1

## Time for Change

### Evidence That Incivility Is Rampant

One need only turn on the evening news to see that, as humankind, we are in crisis. All around the globe, this crisis is evident in increasing violence, racism, disregard for resources, workplace harassment, corruption, and inconceivable incivility in public discourse. In addition, and more alarming to me, we are also experiencing increasing incidences in widespread apathy, a lack of collective conscience, a deliberate turning away from our responsibilities to each other as human beings, and a troubling inability to engage effectively and civilly.

Related to this, and as an extreme example of incivility, my heart hurts knowing that an estimated 35,000 people die every day due to *genocides* in places like Myanmar and South Sudan. Of course, most of us are insulated from this type of extreme incivility, but incivility occurs on a continuum, and although not as extreme as war, we do feel its impacts closer to home too.

Looking at workplaces, which is the focus of this book, the civility crisis is evident, in that a whopping 80 percent of people are dissatisfied with their jobs<sup>1</sup>. Notably, the number one reason for this dissatisfaction is employees' perceived lack of respect and fair treatment. Because the research suggests most of us spend one-third of our lives at work (an average of 90,000 hours over a lifetime<sup>2</sup>), I would suggest that workplace incivility is a gateway to incivility in the community, to the public square,

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<sup>1</sup> Premack, R. 2018. "17 Seriously Disturbing Facts about Your Job." *Business Insider*. *Business Insider*. August 2, 2018. <http://businessinsider.com/disturbing-facts-about-your-job-2011-2?op=1#ixzz3XCZH6nbq>

<sup>2</sup> "One Third of Your Life Is Spent at Work." n.d. Gettysburg College. [https://gettysburg.edu/news/stories?id=79db7b34-630c-4f49-ad32-4ab9ea48e72b&pageTitle=1percent2F3 of your life is spent at work](https://gettysburg.edu/news/stories?id=79db7b34-630c-4f49-ad32-4ab9ea48e72b&pageTitle=1percent2F3%20of%20your%20life%20is%20spent%20at%20work)

to our schools, and so on. I would also suggest that this is true of workplaces all around the world.

We carry the impacts of incivility with us wherever we go, and so, the toxicity created by incivility manifests as road rage, stress-related illness, social aggression, social isolation, inappropriate behavior in public places and on social media, bullying, harassment, racism... and the list goes on. We are also seeing the impacts of incivility in our daily interactions, and as you would guess, the research shows incivility is a contributing factor to everything from school shootings to measurable declines in community social capital, and to leadership trust indicators. Quite a gloomy picture overall.

Christine Porath, leading researcher in human performance and author of *Workplace Civility*<sup>3</sup>, states,

. . . more than two-thirds of people will cut back work effort, 80 percent of people lose time worrying about what happened, and 12 percent of people will report that they've left their job because of an uncivil incident... not only does incivility decrease performance, but people aren't nearly as innovative, even if they just witness incivility. In team settings, it causes people to shut down, such that they don't share information or speak up as much. They don't discuss errors or inform each other of potential problems.

And then, the other issue is that even witnesses, as well as people who experience it, are far less helpful. They are actually three times less likely to help someone else, and their willingness to share drops by more than 50 percent. So, incivility pulls people off track, even for those people who are trying to push forward.

Research by Weber Shandwick and Powell Tate, in partnership with KRC Research, detailed in the 2019 Civility in America report<sup>4</sup>, found that:

- The majority of Americans perceive incivility to be a problem in our society.

<sup>3</sup> "The Future of Work Is Human." 2019. *Workhuman*. September 3, 2019. <https://workhuman.com/resources/research-reports/the-future-of-work-is-human>

<sup>4</sup> "Civility in America 2019: Solutions for Tomorrow." 2019. *Weber Shandwick*. <https://webershandwick.com/news/civility-in-america-2019-solutions-for-tomorrow/>

- The frequency of uncivil encounters per week rose sharply in 2018 and remains at this level, with 10.2 average weekly encounters. Notably, the location of uncivil interactions has shifted over the years. Uncivil online interactions have increased from an average of 4.4 weekly interactions in 2013 to a high of 5.5 in 2019.
- More than one half of the Americans (54 percent) expect civility to get worse<sup>5</sup>.
- Listed next were the top 10 consequences of incivility—according to respondents:
  - Online bullying/cyberbullying
  - Harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual)
  - Violent behavior
  - Hate crimes
  - Intimidation and threats
  - Intolerance
  - People feeling less safe in public places
  - Discrimination and unfair treatment of certain groups of people
  - Less community engagement
  - Feelings of isolation and loneliness

The preceding research cited is American based, but we see similar statistics around the world. For example:

Incivility results from [kindcanada.org](http://kindcanada.org) showed:

- Two-third employees report a decline in performance as a result of unkind workplaces.
- 48 percent of the employees who were exposed to an unkind co-worker were significantly more likely to decrease their work efforts.
- 38 percent of the employees noted that they intentionally decreased the quality of their work.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

A study of British workers found that 40 percent had experienced incivility or disrespect over a two-year period, with such behavior particularly common in the public sector<sup>6</sup>.

In a study of Australian workers, researchers from Edith Cowan University found that 70 percent had experienced rudeness or mistreatment by their coworkers<sup>7</sup>.

A Canadian study by Bar-David Consulting and *Canadian HR Reporter* shows incivility affects key business indicators as reported by human resource professionals:

90 percent say it hurts collaboration.

78 percent say it affects talent retention.

52 percent say it affects brand reputation.

92 percent agree incivility has negative effects on productivity.

80 percent report an impact on absenteeism<sup>8</sup>.

Data collected from employees from various organizations in Singapore shows that incivility is not a rare phenomenon in Asian cultures<sup>9</sup>.

The results of study of Korean workplaces offered evidence of a positive relationship between the experience of workplace incivility and the intention to leave the organization. More specifically, it was found that if one experiences workplace incivility, then he or she is more likely to leave the organization<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> “The High Cost of Workplace Rudeness.” 2014. BBC Worklife. BBC. April 1, 2014. <http://bbc.com/capital/story/20140401-how-rude-why-polite-pays>

<sup>7</sup> <http://sciencewa.net.au/topics/social-science/item/2174-reactions-to-workplace-incivility-explored/2174-reactions-to-workplace-incivility-explored>

<sup>8</sup> Bar-David, S. 2011. “Benefits Column: Abrasive Employees Hurt Productivity.” *Benefits Canada Benefits Column Abrasive Employees Hurt Productivity Comments*. <http://benefitscanada.com/benefits/health-wellness/benefits-column-the-impact-of-workplace-incivility-62273>

<sup>9</sup> Lim, S., and A. Lee. 2011. “Work and Nonwork Outcomes of Workplace Incivility: Does Family Support Help?” *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. U.S. National Library of Medicine. January 2011. <http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21280947>

<sup>10</sup> Shim, J., and H.J. Chang. n.d. “The Relationship Between Workplace Incivility and the Intention to Leave; Implication to HRD.” ICERI2011 Proceedings. IATED. <http://library.iated.org/view/SHIM2011REL>

If the statistics outlined in this chapter are any indication, WORK seems to be at the root of the problem. The majority of us are physically exhausted, stressed, and overextended. And, many of us are miserable in our jobs. We are worn down and less resilient than we once were. We are burnt out. Our health is at stake, our home lives are suffering. We do not have the time or energy to take care of ourselves, and so, the idea that we would extend courtesies or consideration to take care of others seems a cost many of us simply cannot bear.

To meet the demands of our fast-paced, demanding, and every-changing work lives, we have resorted to bad habits. I describe these habits as the “coping selfies”; self-preservation, self-righteousness, self-promotion, self-centeredness, self-pity, self-denial, self-destruction, and so on. These selfies represent many of the “social survival” behaviors desperate people engage in. These habits result in individuals addressing their self-interests at the expense of others. Overall, we are exercising significantly less respect, less restraint, and less responsibility. These are the three tenants that underpin civility—this according to Dr. Pier Forni, Professor at Johns Hopkins, and author of *Choose Civility*. Over the past 20 years’ training, researching, and speaking on civility in the workplace, I am convinced that the conditions and cultures of our workplaces are causing much of the desperation the mass of men and women are experiencing these days.

Notably, 80 percent of the people are dissatisfied with their jobs<sup>11</sup>.

About 25 percent of the employees say work is their main source of stress, and 40 percent say their job is *very or extremely stressful*<sup>12</sup>. This stress impacts our health; for example, in the United Kingdom, over

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<sup>11</sup> Premack, R. 2018. “17 Seriously Disturbing Facts about Your Job.” *Business Insider*. Business Insider. August 2, 2018. <http://www.businessinsider.com/disturbing-facts-about-your-job-2011-2?op=1#ixzz3XCZH6nbq>

<sup>12</sup> “Quality of Working Life.” 2014. *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, 5320–20. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_103371](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_103371)

13 million working days are lost every year because of stress. Stress is believed to trigger 70 percent of the visits to doctors and 85 percent of serious illnesses<sup>13</sup>.

Alarminglly:

- 40 percent of employees say their job is *very or extremely stressful*<sup>14</sup>.
- Workplace stress is believed to trigger 70 percent of the visits to doctors and 85 percent of serious illnesses<sup>15</sup>.
- The Center for Disease Control states that adult depression, largely attributed to stress at work—which in turn is largely attributed to incivility—will rank second only to ischemic heart disease as the leading cause of workplace disability in 2020. If this statistic in and of itself does not present a strong business case for civility at work, I do not know what does.

### Is Rudeness Really an Issue? Assessment

Rude behavior can come in all shapes and sizes. While some people are fully aware that their behaviors offend, others are unaware that people consider their actions rude. How many of the following behaviors have you experienced in the past two weeks? Place a checkmark next to each behavior you have witnessed. If you have witnessed any more than once, write the number of the instances in the blank. Answer honestly—even if you have committed some of the rude behaviors.

What other behaviors have you experienced while at work?

In addition to the health impacts, incivility also contributes to low engagement in the workplace.

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<sup>13</sup> “Work-Related Stress, Anxiety or Depression Statistics in ...” 2019. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> “Quality of Working Life.” 2014. *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, 5320–20. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_103371](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_103371)

<sup>15</sup> “Work-Related Stress, Anxiety or Depression Statistics in ...” 2019. <https://hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress.pdf>

**Table 1.1** *Is Rudeness Really an Issue*

✓	Rude Behavior	Occurrences
	Tardiness	
	Swearing	
	Inappropriate dress	
	Bad attitude	
	Lack of preparation	
	Interrupting someone as he or she speaks	
	Barging into someone's workspace	
	Someone ignoring someone else	
	Someone not listening	
	Disrespect for or destruction of the organization's property	
	Rude tone of voice	
	Gossip or talking about someone when he or she is not present	
	Yelling or other emotional outbursts	
	Someone wasting someone else's time	
	Lack of information sharing	
	Sharing of inappropriate personal stories (e.g., drug-related or sexual in nature)	
	Placing blame on someone else	
	Messes left in common areas	
	Failing to hear someone out; quickly shooting down others' ideas	

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There are many indicators of low engagement. Sometimes, it is true that attendance and number of sick days or stress-leave requests seem like obvious signs that people are not engaged. But, these are not always accurate; for example, there may be legitimate physical or psychological reasons a person is not coming to work. Because we understand engagement to mean employees are actively choosing to contribute in a positive way beyond their basic job requirements, we (Civility Experts Inc. field team)

find a stronger indicator of engagement is the overall level of trust. This is because high levels of trust typically correlate with employees stating that:

- They feel valued as individuals.
- They feel their contribution has value.
- They feel empowered.
- They feel that they are treated fairly.
- They feel they are compensated fairly.
- They feel empowered to self-direct and make decisions.
- They have a sense of shared purpose.
- They feel they can overcome workplace challenges.
- They feel supported.
- They are happy at work.

But, there is light. I believe, and I hope you will too, in the power of one. I believe that each of us has the power to be better, and to do better—for ourselves and for each other, and I—as I hope is also true for you, believe that most of us would do better if we knew better.

*Company culture* includes a variety of elements, including:

- Work environment
- Company mission
- Values
- Ethics
- Expectations
- Goals
- (And, Masotti and Bayer would add “employee experience” as an aspect of workplace culture)

Generally, *the character or culture of an organization is what defines the overall day-to-day experience of the employees who live in that culture*. From a civility point of view, this experience results largely from *people-treatment* (described in the introduction). And, it is often the character (plus aspects of personality) of the individuals who lead an organization that influences the culture. Over time, because *like attracts like*, the majority of employees either have similar character as leadership *or* employees take on the qualities and values



of those leading them, and as such, the organizational culture becomes a reflection of the character of the people living and leading in that workplace.

Traditionally, across sectors, management teams have focused on key performance indicators related to output, for example, how many parts are produced or how many injuries are incurred, how much market share is retained, and so on. However, many forward-thinking organizations are now a new approach to training that can address key performance indicators related to the people side of their businesses.

These indicators include:

- Engagement
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Retention
- Morale
- Stress at work
- Health at work, for example, sick days
- Ability to manage change
- Learning
- Teamwork
- Autonomy
- Communication
- And, overall workplace culture

As such, these organizations frequently have good data, good methods or tools, and processes in place, but some (or all) of these are rendered less valuable due to poor management of *the people aspect of business*. The employees in an organization represent an invaluable resource, which when mishandled and underleveraged can lead to debilitating and long-lasting issues in a workplace.

Research shows that when organizations embed civility—including incorporating specific aspects of civility in an overall communication approach and protocols, and engaging in strategic skill building, the *people* aspect is readily addressed, and the result is measurable impact to social cohesion, employee involvement, trust, collaboration, retention, productivity, engagement, and profitability.

## Elements of a Successful Civility Initiative

It must be understood and acknowledged that to take root, you cannot change workplace culture just by delivering civility competencies training. Training is one part of a comprehensive civility change initiative.

A civility change initiative must be strategic, well planned, and long term, and there has to be a clarified rationale for civility in the workplace. (This will make more sense after you define civility; more on this in Chapter 2.) Just like most change initiatives, incorporating civility into your workplace culture is going to take some time, money, and energy. You will likely have to delegate people and resources, and you will have to manage both the process and people sides of the change. To be successful, you will have to have a plan that includes identifying stakeholders, assigning roles, completing assessments, setting goals, implementing the plan, delivering alignment communications, planning and delivering training, and evaluating. How complex and costly each of those components are will depend on the context and on your business priorities. To be clear, when we talk about how complex a civility initiative might be, we are referring to how many components are included in the plan. This is different from the level of difficulty or how complicated the initiative might be. Civility as a change initiative might be complex, in that there are a lot of components to consider, but it is not necessarily complicated.

We must understand and acknowledge that the work will be ongoing and continuous. The reality is, due to the fact that the situation, the people, the priorities, and the conditions in a workplace are constantly changing, you are never really finished with civility as a change initiative. Let me repeat that, there is no end point. You are *never* really finished with civility as a change initiative. And, this is an extremely important realization. I believe that this realization is one of the biggest barriers most organizations face in moving forward with civility initiatives. Planning and implementation can be very hard work initially. It is going to cost some time and money, and you have to be wholly committed long term. This can be prohibitive for some. But, if you can get past this hurdle, and if you use the Civility Culture Compass<sup>®</sup>—discussed in Chapter 5 as your guide—you will be successful. And, the rewards are often immutable, measurable, positive, and significant.

*Civility in the workplace is about change. Okay. But, we deal with change all the time, so why is this a big deal?*

The big deal is that 70 percent of the change initiatives fail. Somewhere along the way, the change management strategies and processes we have been using have become ineffective. And, 70 percent is a lot of failure. And, a lot of time, a lot of resources, a lot of frustration, and a lot of desperation. (You may recall from the introduction how problematic desperation can be.)

Where this failure applies to civility initiatives, I have come to understand that there are two main reasons organizational civility projects fail. This understanding could potentially be applied to other types of change initiatives, but for the moment, we are, of course, focusing on civility as a change initiative. The reasons are:

- a. Change management processes, efforts regarding application of these processes, and for the most part, competencies required to apply the processes, are all rendered less effective, without commitment to the process, and more importantly, without understanding of both the desired outcome of the change and the value that outcome. Put simply, *engagement is essential to facilitating lasting, meaningful culture change.*
- b. Many individuals, teams, and organizations simply do not have the capacity—in terms of their skill set to make the required change. *Skills-wise, the organization is not change-ready.*
- c. Engagement is essential to facilitating lasting, meaningful change. Effective change happens when an organization and individuals in the organization are *ready* competency-wise, for change.

Let us first look at point (a). What is engagement? For our purposes, *engagement* means that individuals (employees) actively and consciously choose to contribute to the workplace in a meaningful way. In doing so, they show that they believe in the organization, they acknowledge that they, as individuals, have value and are valued, and they have an understanding of, and share, the organizational values and goals. So, engagement goes far beyond attendance. Showing up and doing just what you are required to do is not engagement. Our research has shown that there

are definite causal factors when employees become disengaged, and the most powerful of these relate to:

- a. How clearly the organizational goals have been communicated.
- b. The extent to which employees recognize their value and feel valued.
- c. Whether or not the day-to-day contributions of employees are properly aligned with the organizational goals—this creates a shared purpose.

These three factors contribute to the overall levels of trust and help create workplace culture. (More on this in Chapter 5.) When any or all of the aforementioned factors are not in place, we start to see disengagement and other symptoms of incivility begin to emerge.

Imagine a workplace where some or all of the symptoms of viral incivility are present.

Some common and measurable symptoms of incivility have been identified over 20 years of field work by Civility Experts Inc.

### **Civility Symptoms Survey**

- Persistent miscommunication, such as nonresponsiveness, misunderstandings, arguments, and withholding of information
- Diminished morale and/or mood, for example, negative attitudes, lack of energy
- Poor engagement, lowered confidence, and low trust
- Measurable lack of accountability
- Decreased productivity
- Increased lateness and laziness
- Reduced quality and quantity of output
- Diminished collaborative effort
- Increased customer service complaints, for example, due to visible decrease in product and/or service standards
- Growing gap in alignment between personal and/or corporate goals and leadership's abilities
- Lack of integrity and ethics
- Inability to adapt effectively to change
- Inability to navigate cultural and communication barriers

- Increased difficulty recruiting and hiring competent personnel
- Difficulty identifying and practicing core values
- Lowered common sense
- Failure to attend to social cues and follow social conventions
- Increased disengagement, for example, as indicated by difficulty maintaining relationships, less involvement in social, civic, and community events

Over the years, we have learned that the more symptoms there are present, and the greater the frequency of observance of the symptoms, the more these symptoms support the statistics referenced in the introduction, which suggested that 80 percent of the people are dissatisfied with their work. Dissatisfied means that employees do not feel valued, they do not feel adequately compensated, they do not feel safe at work, they are experiencing unmanageable stress, they are being bullied, they do not feel secure, do not trust their boss, and so on. If employees are dissatisfied, it is unlikely that they are focused on skill-building and productivity. They are more likely focused on those desperate *coping selfies* we referenced earlier—the social survival behaviors; self-preservation, self-promotion, self-indulgence, self-absorption, self-pity, self-interest, and so on. Self-focus does not lend well to team orientation or collective goals.

An organization might implement respectful workplace or conflict management training in an effort to alleviate one of the incivility symptoms, and this training might even be deemed *good* because employees gain some knowledge or skill. But, employees may not be inclined to transfer that skill and knowledge to the workplace in a meaningful way because they are not sufficiently engaged. Most employers would agree that it does not matter how much people learn if they cannot connect and use their new knowledge and skills effectively on the job. Unfortunately, a lot of time and money are often spent on good but ineffective training before leadership realizes there has not been sufficient transfer of learning. Without transfer of learning, there likely will not be much measurable impact or benefit to the workplace. And, you need engagement to ensure meaningful transfer of learning.

When building a culture of civility in the workplace is the goal, much of the conflict management, general communication, and diversity training delivered in workplaces these days constitute good—but

ineffective—solutions. If employees are not engaged, it does not matter how many conflict resolution strategies, how much cultural knowledge, or how many communication courses you offer them, you will likely not experience a significant decrease in incivility in your workplace.

Full engagement means employees are willing and wanting, not only to participate, but also to contribute through that participation in a way that is useful and valuable—beyond meeting the minimum requirements to stay employed. Activity does not equal engagement. Attendance is not necessarily an indication of engagement. Buy-in, trust, and active, conscious, meaningful contribution—these are indicators of engagement.

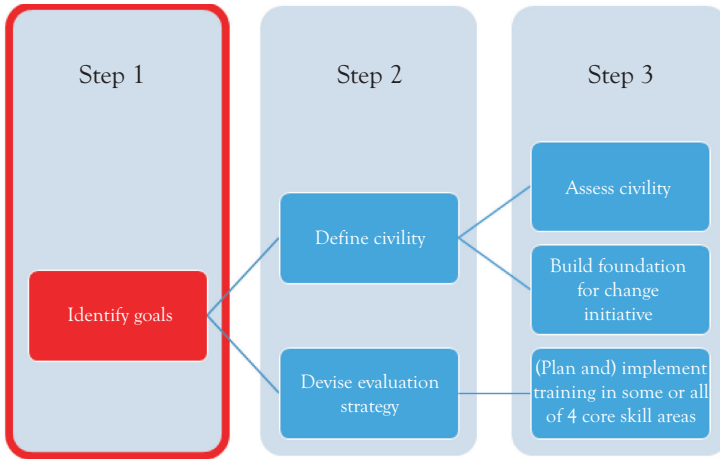
## Readiness as an Indicator of Success for Civility Initiatives

That individuals, teams, and/or the organization overall are not *change-ready* skills-wise is the second reason we (the team at Civility Experts Worldwide) find that many civility initiatives fail. By *change readiness*, we are referring to competency in specific skills that underpin the ability to exhibit civility at work. We have identified four core competency areas necessary to change uncivil workplaces into positive, healthy, civil organizations. These four competence areas are social intelligence, cultural competence, systems thinking, and continuous learning. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 7, *The Civility Competency Matrix*.

The basic idea is that while we hope and expect that people who adopt civility as a core value will necessarily adopt a positive, proactive attitude, attitude change is not enough. We need behavior change too. We need everyone in the organization to be able to exhibit skills that reflect their civil attitude. Building competency in the four key skill areas outlined in the *Civility Matrix*<sup>®</sup> enables individuals, teams, and organizations to behave more consistently in ways that support a culture of civility in a workplace.

## The Civility Initiative Process at a Glance

As you make your way through the next few chapters of this book, you will come to understand how to devise and implement a civility initiative in your workplace. If you are not yet clear on what civility is, Chapter 2,



**Figure 1.1**

Defining Civility, should be helpful. And, if you are not yet sure about the benefits of starting a civility initiative, we present the business case in Chapter 3.

Please note Figure 1.1, which outlines a general three-step process for devising a civility initiative:

There are just three general steps in the civility initiative process, seems easy enough, right!

*Step 1* in the process *is identifying your goals*. This means starting with the end in mind. In the case of devising a civility initiative, we know in advance that because of the nature of change in our workplaces, and because civility competencies are soft skills that are never fully developed, we are *always* going to identify some need related to one or more of four core skill areas. And, based on 18 years in the field combined with the research, we also know that training in the civility competency areas does result in specific outcomes, and these outcomes are most likely on your *end in mind* wish list.

To begin, ask yourself (or work with your team to answer) the following questions. If you do not have an answer for each, you are not ready to move on to Step 2:

1. *What exactly do you want to happen as a result of the initiative?*  
Stated differently, what is the purpose of building a culture of civility? For example, reduced turnover, higher productivity, increased

engagement, more collaboration, and so forth. Sometimes, using a tool like the *Symptoms of Viral Incivility Checklist* referenced earlier can help you identify what you do not want. And/or, a review of the list of 32 possible positive outcomes of civility training included at the beginning of Chapter 2 can help you identify what you do want.

2. *Why do you want whatever it is that you want?* Think about how, and if, a successful civility initiative is something you should invest your time and money in. If your immediate response is something like: “Because it seems the right thing to do” or “We have a lot of bullying and legal issues and this seems like a necessary next step” or “We don’t want to be the only company without one,” please take some additional time to think about whether these motivators will be enough to propel you through the process. In the past, when organizations adopt civility as a means of running away from something as opposed to running toward something, we frequently do not get past the first two stages of the process.
3. *What specifically is the benefit or impact to the employee(s), and/or to the organization, if you get what you want?* For example, if you say you want more collaboration, why would this be good for employees? How does it benefit the organization? And, what if you get what you want? Will you actually do something with it? Will you be able to manage it? Will increasing collaboration, for example, potentially result in any unforeseen costs? Will it require employees work differently and can you support that? Is the management team on board?
4. *What evidence do you have that the outcome you want could, or would, in fact result from the initiative?* We want to be sure that we can clarify what exactly civility will look like in the workplace. This enables us to measure success. Consider doing a comprehensive situational analysis so that you can understand the current situation and recognize factors that could hinder or facilitate the impact of your civility training plan. (The Civility Culture Compass® can help you with this.)
5. *Are there any drawbacks or unfavorable consequences to you, the team, or the organization if you get what you want?* Are you prepared if the outcomes are different than you expected? As an example, what if employees start to work better as a team? What will you do with



the potential time savings? What if the teams are even 10 percent more productive? Positive change typically results in more positive change, and you have to be prepared to manage these changes ongoing. As an example, if people become more competent, do you have to pay bonuses? Will you have to secure more accounts to keep up with increased productivity? Will you end up laying off employees because production is more efficient? Be sure to consider the trends, changes, and other influences impacting the organization, and forecast any impacts that could influence change in your workplace over the next five years at minimum.

6. *Are your goals realistic, for example, SMARTER: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-set, and/or timely, evaluated, and rewarding/rewarded?* Do you have a goal that is clearly defined? This is going to drive the whole process, so it is important to take some time to devise this SMARTER goal.

## Recommended Homework

*There is some good news!*

The good news is that awareness is growing about the benefits of civility at work, and they are ready for change. Nearly eight in 10 employees with coworkers (78 percent) report that civility at work provides tangible upsides. Four in 10 say civility at work improves their work morale and increases their loyalty to their employer (40 percent each) and nearly as many say it improves their quality of work (36 percent)<sup>16</sup>.

### *People-Treatment Self-Assessment*

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Review the following listing of positive people treatment behavior, and consider how frequently, and how consistently you exhibit these behaviors, and if you do not exhibit them, why don't you?

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<sup>16</sup> "Civility in America 2019: Solutions for Tomorrow." 2019. Weber Shandwick. <https://webershandwick.com/news/civility-in-america-2019-solutions-for-tomorrow/>

**Table 1.2 People Treatment Assessment**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posture, for example, I present myself (physically) as open-minded, ready to engage, and approachable.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time management, for example, I show that I understand time is a valuable resource, for example, do not waste my time or time of others, be on time.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations, for example, have clear expectations for oneself and for others.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat people fairly, for example, equal opportunity, use same criteria to measure equally.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honesty, for example, be honest, tell the whole truth whenever possible.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone, for example, I consider tonal elements when I interact verbally with others including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Pace</li> <li>◦ Word choice</li> <li>◦ Volume</li> <li>◦ Timing</li> <li>◦ Privacy or confidentiality</li> <li>◦ Emotionality</li> <li>◦ Impact</li> <li>◦ Relationship, for example, accountability and familiarity</li> <li>◦ Cultural nuances</li> <li>◦ Risk, for example, perceptions related to gender</li> <li>◦ Expectations of listener, for example, generational aspects</li> <li>◦ Mode of communication, for example, face to face, phone, and so on</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indication of bias, for example, Am I aware that I change my approach depending who I am interacting with?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common courtesy, for example, eye contact, handshake, proximity, smile, introductions, please, thank you, offering food or beverage, and others</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care with word choice, for example, consider frame of reference</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspectives on role, rank, status, and contribution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication approach, for example, formal versus informal, conversational versus legal, personal versus professional</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to adapt to individual need, for example, if someone needs supports due to physical or physiological barriers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of differences, for example, do I see differences as advantages or as barriers?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to show respect, for example, by interacting in a way that leaves the other person feeling valued (I understand that respect is not something people need to earn; we are all deserving of respect because we are human beings.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to build rapport, for example, ease and flow of interaction</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response in stressful or emotional settings, for example, do I stay calm? Do I help others be calm? Can I exercise restraint?</li> </ul>

**Table 1.2 (Continued)**

• Ability to build trust and to be perceived as trustworthy
• Openness, for example, authenticity and vulnerability
• Ability to effectively interpret verbal, nonverbal, tonal, and contextual cues
• Situational awareness, for example, recognize factors that might impact people
• Ability to adapt social style appropriately
• Cultural competence, for example, recognize, adapt, and work with differences
• Emotional intelligence, for example, be aware of my own issues and hot buttons
• Ability to empathize and share perspective
• Ego, for example, attitude about one's own importance
• Humility, for example, ability to acknowledge gifts and contributions of others over focusing on one's own gifts, talents, and contributions
• Willingness to learn
• Patience, for example, to listen
• Willingness to apologize
• Curiosity, for example, interest in learning and asking questions
• Readiness to forgive, for example, accept apologies with grace
• Recognition of human condition, for example, acknowledge that I cannot always understand or know what another person is experiencing
• Generosity, for example, ability to give with no expectation of return
• Systems thinking, for example, ability to consider impact of actions and decisions
• Social acuity, for example, ability to assess and interpret interpersonal connections and cost, benefits, and consequences of same
• Values, for example, can I articulate my values if necessary, and do I live my values?
• Ability to acknowledge and celebrate achievements and contributions of others
• Positive attitude, for example, look for the best in people and in situations
• Responsibility, for example, take care of myself, do not blame others or expect other to manage me (my daily life or actions or activities)
• Accountability, for example, own my own tasks and decisions
• Service orientation, for example, do I show through my actions that I am <i>other-focused</i> and can put needs of others before my own needs and wants when appropriate or required?

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Increasingly, people are choosing employers who understand that civility is good business. In the remaining chapters of *Civility at Work*, we discuss the definition of civility, the business case for civility, and we explain how entrepreneurs and business owners can increase employee

retention, performance, and overall revenue by building civility competencies and creating a workplace culture of *human kindness and civility*.

### Test Yourself

1. How many people die in genocides, which are global incivilities, every day?
  - a. 10,000
  - b. 5,000
  - c. 35,000
  - d. Over 100,000
2. When writing SMARTER goals for civility initiatives, the “E” refers to:
  - a. Eliminate
  - b. Evaluate
  - c. Encourage
  - d. Elaborate
3. Workplace “culture” is described by Masotti and Bayer as:
  - a. How people dress and act at work
  - b. The power division or hierarchy of a workplace
  - c. The day-to-day experience of living in a workplace
  - d. The tone of a company, for example, how people feel