

If someone tells you that your actions or comments are unwanted, offensive, harassing or discriminatory, pay attention. Intent to discriminate or harass is not a requirement for a finding of harassment/discrimination. It is the impact or effect that is important.

If someone approaches you about your behaviour, just remain calm and listen to them. It may be upsetting to be accused of harassment/discrimination, but anger will only complicate this situation. Listen to what the person accusing has to say about your behavior and remain serious. Remember it is not an easy conversation for either party. Let the individual speak their mind and consider what they are saying before you respond.

How is the other person feeling? What did I do that caused that feeling? Could I have done something differently?

If you believe the allegations against you could be true, you may wish to acknowledge and apologize for the behaviour whether the behaviour is intentional or not.

A thoughtful and genuine apology includes . . .

Part 1: Share how you feel

- Be genuine and sincere in what you say. Elaborate on your remorse.

Part 2: Admit your mistake AND the negative impact it had

- Be specific. Speak specifically about what you did that was wrong, why it was offensive and recognize the negative impact of such behaviour.

Part 3: Make things Right

- Outline the steps you have taken / or will take to change behaviour. Ask if there is anything you can do to help repair the harm done to that individual specifically. Follow-through with steps stated.

Whether, you believe the allegations to be true or not, you should state the behavior will not continue and takes appropriate to adjust your

behaviour and change your style of communication to avoid a similar situation in the future. Stay open to all the constructive feedback you receive and be prepared to change your behaviour at the workplace.

If concerns are brought forward from a third party, never confront the individual who laid the complaint. Such behaviour is considered harassment under the [personal harassment policy](#) and can cause further harm to all parties involved. It may even strengthen allegations made against you.

Make sure to only discuss the case with appropriate supports (these can be outlined in consultation with a HRES advisor). Gossip between colleagues might even spur more allegations against you.

Retaliation is prohibited by Dalhousie University's [Personal Harassment Policy](#) and is considered harassment under this policy

If a formal complaint has been filed, talk to your supervisor and [Human Rights and Equity Services](#) immediately. You will have the opportunity to discuss with a Human Rights and Equity Services Advisor how