

ADDRESS: TOOLS 4.9–4.14

Based on the understanding developed from the ‘Assess’ tools, the ‘Address’ tools empower companies to take action on gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) and build a respectful workplace. To avoid further harm, all activities should be based on a survivor-centered approach which, in turn, is based on the principles of respect, confidentiality, and safety (see **BOX 4I**, below). Here are the steps to follow:

- **Ensure Leadership Commitment.** Leadership commitment is fundamental to addressing GBVH in your workplace. It must be gained before moving on to subsequent steps and actions, or the GBVH efforts will fail. Use the business case to engage your leadership team and gain commitment (see **TOOL 4.2**), and then as a first step publicly commit to address GBVH and role model respectful behavior. See the checklist in **TOOL 4.9**.
- **Identify and train key staff to be focal points for GBVH:** Choose staff that are respected in the workplace and have a role in employee well-being, along with at least one senior management sponsor. **TOOL 4.10** includes guidance on choosing staff. Once focal points have been selected, conduct training to strengthen their knowledge, skills, and attitudes about GBVH. The training should include information on the business case to address GBVH, definitions and concepts of GBVH, and fundamentals about preventing GBVH, effectively supporting survivors, and managing perpetrators. **TOOL 4.11** offers more information on training focal points.
- **Develop GBVH and respectful workplaces policies and procedures:** Review and update existing policies, procedures, and reporting and investigation mechanisms (if any), or develop them if they do not exist. **TOOL 4.12** includes guidance and a sample policy.
- **Foster employee awareness:** Improve employee awareness about the company’s GBVH commitment and initiatives by providing training and everyday reminders, such as posters in the workplace. **TOOL 4.13** offers more information and materials.
- **Support focal points to drive progress and change:** Consider debriefing with other focal points or GBVH service providers or counselors, offering refresher training, providing acknowledgement and/or rewards, recognizing and celebrating their efforts and successes, and encouraging self-care. **TOOL 4.14** provides information and materials to support focal points.

BOX 41 | Key Principles to the Survivor-Centered Approach

One important way you can create a respectful workplace culture and remove barriers to disclosure is to apply a survivor-centered approach to managing disclosures when they arise. A survivor-centered approach seeks to empower the employee by prioritizing their rights, needs, and wishes.⁷⁷

This approach encourages employees to come forward and seek support because they know they can expect the company to take their incident seriously and respond to it ethically and fairly.

There are three key principles to the survivor-centered approach:

The first principle is respect—appreciating and valuing the complainant’s experiences, decisions, and actions. It is about active listening, being non-judgmental, and showing respect. It means the employee feels more trusting of the support from you. It encourages a complainant to tap into their strengths and resilience—and accept that they know what is best for them.

The second principle is confidentiality. The employee’s confidentiality should be respected and protected. Their informed consent is important to this process—this means making sure they understand your obligations if they proceed with a complaint. In certain contexts and circumstances, it may be a legal requirement to break confidentiality. **TOOL 4.12** provides further guidance on this issue.

The third principle is safety. This is important to ensure employees feel safe to seek help or make complaints, but also to maintain their safety and dignity once they do.

⁷⁷ Learn more about the [survivor-centered approach](#) at UN Women.