

Safe and Respectful Workplaces

Thank you very much to all those who took part in our recent national survey on Safe and Respectful Workplaces. We will be publishing a complete report later in the spring, but here is an initial overview of the survey and its results.

Response Levels

We received responses from 1043 members, sufficient to provide results indicative of the broader membership within a small margin of error. Over 90% of respondents completed the survey as far as the last mandatory question, which is excellent for a survey of that size, especially one that needed to dig rather deeply into a complex subject.

Just under 70% of respondents were performers, and we had good representation from directors and stage managers as well. 56% of respondents were female, 40% male, with the remainder declining to identify. We had excellent representation from all groupings from 25 to 70 years of age.

Results overview

The first section in the survey explored current knowledge and awareness of Equity policy, agreements, resources, and member perception of the frequency of various toxic workplace behaviours.

Roughly 95% of respondents indicated that having a safe and respectful workplace is among their most important values, and they generally feel (83%) that engagers support respectful workplaces (see chart 1). Half are aware of Equity's complaint process and our support for safe and respectful workplaces. A similar number are aware of our brochure on the topic, but 70% have not read it. 80% report awareness of the safe workplace provisions of the agreements under which they work.

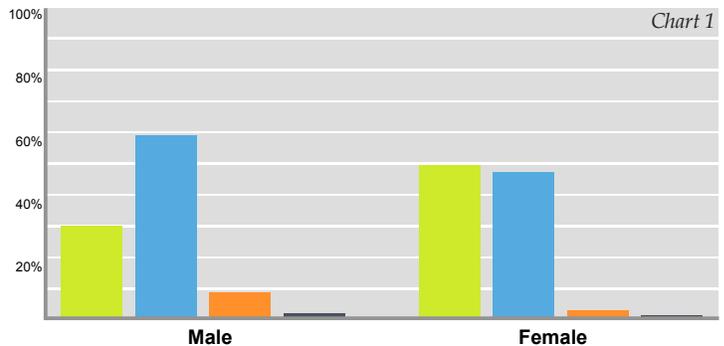
Reports of a hostile work environment

The next major section explored circumstances where a member had been a target of behaviour that would create a toxic workplace situation.

Almost exactly half of women report being the target of that sort of behaviour, with 37% of men reporting the same. Over half mention having experienced this on more than one contract, with a very sizeable percentage of reported incidents having occurred in the past five years. 70% of those who were a target reported personal harassment, with 30% reporting sexual harassment. This split is not identical for men and women. While both report a higher incidence of personal harassment, the rate of

"2/3 of occurrences take place in a rehearsal setting."

Members ascribe a high importance to respectful and supportive workplaces



Q: Relative to all workplace issues pertaining to Equity contracts, how important to you is it that you have a workplace free from behaviours that create a toxic work environment?

Legend: It's top of the list (light green), It's among the most important (blue), It's of lesser importance (orange), It's of little importance (grey)

sexual harassment for women was markedly greater than that reported by the men (see chart 2 on 2nd page).

In 43% of the cases reported, the instigator was noted as a director, with just over 30% being reported as a performer, 6% as stage management, and another 6% from administration or management. Men reported far more issues with directors than with performers, while for women they were roughly equal. In terms of context for the behaviour, rehearsal is the standout at almost two-thirds, with performance falling far behind, and all other contexts in minor numbers.

When asked about how they responded to issues, roughly 45% of those reporting an occurrence said they took no specific action. Among those who did act to end the behaviour, the effectiveness was

similar in both cases, with most reporting partial or no improvement. Only in a small minority of cases (13%) did action cause the behaviour to cease. 85% did not approach Equity for assistance.

This section of the survey also looked at witnessed occurrences of various types. Results were very similar to those above, with slightly more than half of respondents indicating they had witnessed an issue, and reporting occurrences on between 1-3 contracts.

As noted earlier, personal harassment far outranked sexual harassment in prevalence, and was identified as occurring much more often in a rehearsal context than in performance. Directors and performers were identified as the primary instigators in percentages similar to those above. Less than half of those who witnessed an occurrence took any action, with only 10% involving Equity.

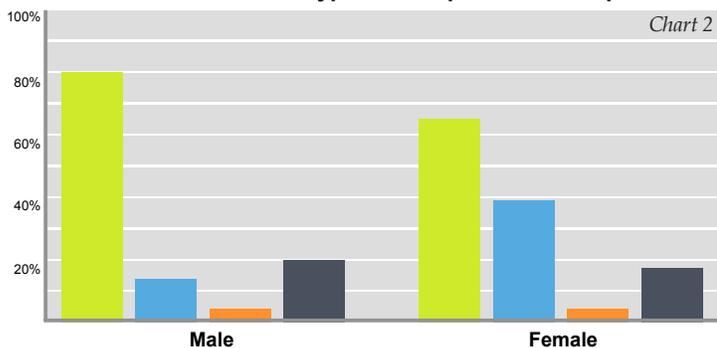
“Almost half report having been the target of hostile workplace behaviour.”

Next steps for Council and Staff

Even from these broad strokes results, it's pretty clear that Equity and its producing partners have some work ahead of them. Awareness of and desire for respectful and supportive working conditions are high among the membership, but clearly the message is not getting through to some. The need to balance the open and sometimes raw-edged work environments that can give birth to great live performance, while ensuring that workplaces don't become hostile, is a challenge we are all going to have to meet. Both education, and providing appropriate support and response mechanisms, should they be needed, will be key priorities going forward.

Deeper analysis of the results, including further exploration of any demographic differences is the next thing to pursue, and a more comprehensive report will be published later in the spring.

Gender differences in the type of workplace issue experienced



Q: Did the occurrence involve...?

- Personal harassment or bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Discrimination on a legally prohibited ground
- Other behaviour that created a toxic work environment

Multiple selections were permitted, therefore the total is more than 100%

Open text comments

The final main section of the survey solicited input on the challenges members experience in responding to adverse workplace behaviour, and suggestions for preferred education and association resources to assist them. These critical questions brought in over 1600 comments, and much of our upcoming work is going to be centred around their review and analysis.

We welcome any comments or questions you may have. You can email Council at president@caea.com, or contact us through the National Office at 1-800-387-1856 (416-867-9165 in Toronto).