

'Thank God It's Friday' – Employee behaviour improves throughout the week

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Individuals with low mindfulness exhibit more uncivil behaviour at work and are least civil on Monday before improving throughout the week, finds new research from BI Norwegian Business School (<https://www.bi.edu/>) and Maastricht University (<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/>).

Workplace incivility includes rude, impolite behaviour such as using a condescending tone, making negative remarks or addressing others unprofessionally. This can have consequences for both targets of the uncivil behaviour and organisations as it is associated with decreased motivation and job satisfaction, as well as increased levels of emotional exhaustion, depression and counterproductive work behaviour.

Associate Professor Suzanne van Gils from BI Norwegian Business School, and Ute Hulsheger and Alicia Walkowiak from Maastricht University, studied how mindfulness can help to stabilise workplace incivility. The trait of mindfulness refers to an individual's tendency to bring attention and awareness to present-moment experiences and is related to self-regulation of behaviour. Data collected from a variety of organisations and occupations, using questionnaires and daily surveys across five working days, measured enacted incivility as well as received incivility, guilt and mindfulness.

They found that those with low mindfulness show higher levels of incivility compared to those with high mindfulness. Furthermore, for low mindfulness individuals, uncivil behaviour was highest on Monday and decreased throughout the working week, whereas incivility was more stable for high mindfulness individuals. Also, employees with high trait mindfulness reacted in a more morally mature manner and experienced guilt when they did engage in uncivil behaviour. However, experiencing guilt did not lead to lower levels of enacted incivility the following work day.

The researchers explain,

"Workplace interventions focusing on incivility and mistreatment need to target not only the victims, but also the perpetrators of incivility. Our findings may inform such interventions by showing that mindfulness can help to reduce incivility at work. Evidence is abundant that mindfulness is malleable and can be increased through mindfulness-based interventions. The implementation of such programs could enhance relationships with organisations and reduce incivility at work. Organisations may also wish to make sure their work environment fosters mindful behaviour."

These findings were published in the Journal of Applied Psychology.

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For more information, a copy of the research paper, or to speak with Suzanne van Gils, please contact Kyle Grizzell from BlueSky Education on 01582 790709 kyle@bluesky-pr.com