What’s going on?

When power dynamics are strong, particularly when there is a strict hierarchy and large gaps between the power of a junior and senior employee, it can complicate daily workplace social interactions. **Nearly one-third of participants identify power disparity as causing the greatest level of conflict at work.**

This doesn’t mean that our workplaces are full of manager-tyrants. Almost three-quarters of employees believe it is rare for people to get away with disrespectful behaviors because of their authority.

### Most often, employees see those in authority act with respect

**% of employees, “Do people in your organization get away with disrespectful behavior because of their authority?”**

- Very often: 7%
- Somewhat often: 13%
- Neither often nor rarely: 7%
- Somewhat rarely: 13%
- Very rarely: 60%

*Source: Emtrain Workplace Culture Report 2020, ©2020*

Employees recognize an abuse of power when they see it

**% of employees, “Bob is using his power as a manager to start something with Christine”**

- Strongly agree: 61%
- Somewhat agree: 34%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 2%
- Somewhat disagree: 2%
- Strongly disagree: 1%

*Source: Emtrain Workplace Culture Report 2020, ©2020*

And when we consider the most consequential kinds of power abuses, people at all levels of authority recognize them when they see them. For example, when employees see a workplace scenario of a manager persistently pushing an uncomfortable subordinate to attend an event with him outside of work, though this isn’t (legally) harassment, 95% at least somewhat agree it is an abuse of power.