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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scaramucci's Scary Interview

IS PROFANITY DIRECTED TOWARD CO-WORKERS EVER APPROPRIATE AT WORK?

CHICAGO, July 31, 2017 – The new White House Communications Director, Anthony Scaramucci, made the news last week after a profanity-filled interview with The New Yorker's Ryan Lizza was published. Scaramucci was criticized for using derogatory terms and slurs to describe his co-workers at the White House, specifically targeting former Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and Chief Strategist Steve Bannon. Critics contend his interview was unnecessarily vulgar, especially for someone representing the United States.

Scaramucci's rant brings up a serious question that impacts everyone in the workforce - when is using colorful language appropriate and when does it become unprofessional?

"In the vast majority of cases, using profanity in an interview setting is unprofessional, for both the interviewer and the candidate. This is also typically the case when job seekers are looking for work and posting on social media," said Andrew Challenger, Vice President of global outplacement and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

"In fact, according to a recent Challenger survey, 60 percent of recruiters said vulgar language on social media was 'most problematic' when vetting a candidate. With 80 percent of recruiters turning to social media as a means of vetting candidates, according to Challenger, it is clear that, at least for the time being, it is better to keep digital footprints PG," said Challenger.

In-person interactions between co-workers are a different story. According to an article published by The New York Times, profane language at work can have its advantages. For example, vulgar language can act as a social connector between co-workers, and help them vent about day-to-day frustrations.

“Using ‘cuss words’ every once and awhile at work is very human, and co-workers will see that and relate to it, which strengthens bonds and creates sympathy,” said Challenger.

Despite potential benefits like those listed in The New York Times article, many companies still feel extremely negative about profanity. According to a recent CareerBuilder survey, 81 percent of employers believe profane language makes employees seem unprofessional.

That said, Millennials may contribute to a more profanity-friendly work environment. According to an article published by the Chicago Tribune, Millennials are more inclined to use profanity at the office and less likely to be bothered by colorful language compared to their older counterparts.

Discussing co-workers in the manner Scaramucci used, in a public setting, is a huge knock to many workplaces. It paints a picture of a highly unprofessional and divided workplace, ultimately impacting morale across the company.

“Moreover, professionalism is key to maintaining a positive brand image in most workplaces, and employers may take using profanity as a sign that those employees do not respect the mission of the company or their co-workers,” said Challenger.

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