



What do the BBC's Jeremy Clarkson case and Qatar Airways' air hostess case have in common?

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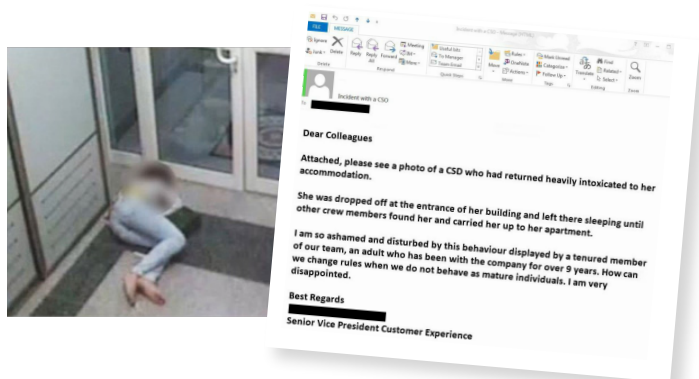
In principle they are two different incidents in different companies.
In reality they have more in common than you may think.

To be fair they are not isolated or unique cases. But we all know about them because of the media attention! If these two employers have been singled out, they are not alone. Any employer is challenged by what we call in employment jargon the risks associated with Bullying and Harassment conduct in the workplace.

It is more wide spread than you may think and the consequences for employers and employees alike can be devastating. Did you know that in recent years, awards for discrimination in UK employment tribunals have exceeded £300,000, not to mention the associated legal expenses? Did you know that over 150,000 cases are expected to go through the Acas & employment tribunal process this year?

Let's pick on the example of Qatar Airways. As it was widely reported by the media, a flight attendant arrived intoxicated to her accommodation (provided by the employer) and ended up sleeping in the entrance of the building.

Subsequently, her senior manager, who was disappointed by such conduct, sent an email to all members of staff explaining that the behavior displayed by this member of staff is unacceptable, and to make sure it doesn't happen again, he attached a picture of the employee to the email.



Is this the right way to deal with an employee's misconduct? Ultimately if this case is taken to court, it will be for a judge to determine whether this is Bullying and or Harassment. But judging from the public reaction, tweets and online blogs, the public has already made up its mind! The employer has been mentioned in every national newspaper and everyone is having a say about it.

The exposure of the Jeremy Clarkson case is something that the BBC is also now suffering from. Let's consider for a minute about the financial consequences for the BBC who will now lose out on a show that attracts an estimated 350 million viewers, and reportedly makes the BBC £50m a year. And how much it will ultimately cost them as an employer, as they do have a responsibility for the actions of their employees. Not mentioning another blow (no pun intended) to the reputation of this institution, with an online petition for Jeremy's reinstatement that has exceeded 1 million signatures.



So, now you are the Qatar Airways' CEO or the BBC's Director-General: **what would you do?**

BBC case

I would fire Jeremy! ☐

I would fire The other guy ☐

I would fire Both! ☐

I would do nothing and let things settle down ☐

I don't know!
(and would love some advice!) ☐

Qatar Airways case

I would fire The Stewardess ☐

I would fire The Manager ☐

I would fire Both! ☐

I would do nothing and let things settle down ☐

I don't know!
(and would love some advice!) ☐

As an employer we all have more important things to deal with than a little bit of 'banter' in the office or the workplace. However, when we think about the consequences that this could have for our businesses it is worth to spend a little bit of time thinking about what we could do to manage these risks effectively. And whether we are actually prepared and ready to face a similar situation.

Are company policies about Equal Opportunities or about Bullying and Harassment the answer? How do we educate our employees accordingly on what behaviors are acceptable or not, and what conduct is expected from them - at work as well as outside work? Do you have the financial protection in place to face the consequences?

As employers, we all need to be prepared, as the risk is an unlimited court award that somebody could claim in a case of harassment and or discrimination. Together with the cost to defend ourselves. Not to mention the damage to the reputation to our businesses, which can be more costly than any tribunal award.

So... what would you do?

Let us know on our LinkedIn page!

www.linkedin.com/company/concordia-employment-services-limited

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