

# “that’s what she said”

a ford & harrison blog about the popular television series “the office”

## At Work, Play Nice

September 01, 2011 - by: [Brian Kurtz](#)

In last season’s finale there was the following brief, fiery exchange between Kelly and Gabe. She was interviewing for branch manager, and he was doing a poor job of pretending to take her seriously.

Gabe: “What are your weaknesses?”

Kelly: “I don’t have any, asshole!”

This raises the question: Is civility in the workplace important? One prominent study says absolutely. In 2003 researchers from the University of Baltimore and Johns Hopkins published [The Baltimore Workplace Civility Study](#). The researchers surveyed a random sampling of Baltimore employees in a variety of industries and workplaces. A whopping 83% of respondents indicated that it was “very important” to work in a civil environment. Only 3% believed it was not important.

The Study suggested that workplace civility (or the lack thereof) can impact the employer’s bottom line. In response to an act of incivility, 70% of respondents contemplated changing jobs, 63% felt a lesser commitment to the organization, and 37% would decrease their efforts at work. An overwhelming 84% believed that efforts to improve workplace civility would increase their personal productivity. Clearly, the money your business spends on training and improving employee relations provides a return on investment.

But statistics be damned. We are more than happy to sacrifice productivity to keep Dwight in the Scranton branch. That’s what we say. What to do you say? Let us know.

<http://blogs.hrhero.com/thatswhatsheaid/>