



# Want to Tackle Workplace Harassment? AI is Your Secret Weapon

Approximately 75% of incidents of workplace harassment and discrimination go unreported.

That means you're operating in the dark. But with an AI-based anonymous reporting tool, you can shed light on what's really happening inside your organization.

We are living in a time of unprecedented awareness around the issues of workplace harassment and discrimination. And yet it's estimated that approximately 75% of incidents go unreported, leaving organizations in the dark about their level of risk and the true health of their culture. So some proactive employers are looking to an **AI-based reporting tool called Spot** to shed light on what's really happening inside their organizations. Armed with anonymous insight, they can mitigate the costly effects of workplace harassment and discrimination on productivity, retention, and reputation.


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Learn more at [talktospot.com](https://talktospot.com)



## Outdated Solutions, Limited Results

*The world of work is changing.* No longer willing to tolerate discrimination at work, employees expect leadership to ensure a safe, inclusive environment. And as HR departments large and small feel increased pressure to address this issue, many are still relying on outdated systems for reporting.

	AVAILABLE 24/7	ANONYMOUS	UNBIASED AI	SINGLE MANAGEMENT TOOL	SECURE	ANONYMOUS FOLLOW-UP
Hotlines	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Web Forms	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
In-Person Reporting	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
 spot	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Hotlines

Hotlines are the most widely used reporting tool. They promise anonymity, security, and 24/7 availability. But they tend to be chronically underused because organizations fail to publicize them, perhaps only mentioning them passively in employee handbooks or similar outlets. Some organizations might mistakenly correlate low call volumes or few hotline reports with a lack of actionable concerns. However, lack of use typically indicates **a lack of trust in the tool or in the organization itself.**

### Web Forms

The second most popular harassment reporting tool is the **web form**. These systems might include options for employees to provide narrative responses through a single long form, a series of screens for gathering information, or even a chatbot feature. Like hotlines, web form reporting tools offer employees the benefit of anonymity and 24/7 availability. But since they often operate as a one-way form of communication, employees might receive only an automated response without any

further information about resolutions and employers can't ask follow-up questions to guide their investigation.

### In-Person Reporting

While well-intentioned hotline or web form systems can provide necessary outlets for reporting inappropriate behavior or unfair treatment, they usually don't offer a comprehensive solution to underreporting. The same can be said of **in-person reporting**. An in-person conversation might seem like the most desirable, intuitive system, but this form of reporting lacks flexibility, confidentiality, and privacy. Conversations with HR can only take place during working hours, and the outcome of those in-person sessions relies heavily on the individual HR team member. And then there's the issue of bias. Each of us, no matter how self-aware, conscientious, or expertly trained, possesses unconscious bias. That bias affects how we respond and react to accounts of incidents, ultimately influencing how incidents are documented. To ensure fairness and neutrality, even the most open-minded and deliberate among us need help uncovering our blind spots.

## Taking Bias Out of the Equation

Reporting reduces risk for organizations by providing opportunities to respond before things escalate, which in turn earns employees' trust. But if only about 25% of all harassment incidents are ever reported, we need to examine the reasons employees don't come forward. One of the major barriers to reporting is interaction with other humans.

Based on **Spot's review of existing research**, employees consistently say they:

- Fear not being believed
- Expect their company not to respond to incidents
- Feel it's embarrassing to report
- See others treated poorly when they do speak up
- Fear retaliation

One employee who submitted their anonymous report to Spot for research purposes described a consistent lack of follow-up:

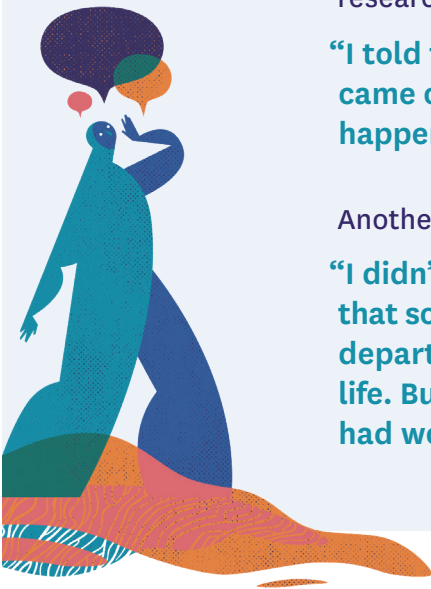
**“I told the office manager about the incident, twice. But nothing came of it. Then I went above her and told her boss, but still, nothing happened. Both ignored my concern.”**

Another anonymous reporter described their fear of retaliation and its effects:

**“I didn't say anything, but eventually I got quieter, not trusting, fearful that something worse would happen if I spoke up. I wanted to change departments because I was so unhappy, and it was really affecting my life. But I also really liked my team and wanted to finish the projects I had worked so hard on. But eventually, I just couldn't take it anymore.”**

With these fears around human interaction, most employees simply won't report, and **no HR department or leadership team can respond to employee concerns that they don't know about.**

But thankfully, *the future of reporting is here*, and it includes an AI-based bot that removes humans from the intake process. By leveraging technology where our human intervention is an obstacle, HR personnel are free to focus their attention on what they do best: problem-solving and building a culture of trust.



## AI: The Future of Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Reporting

The artificial intelligence **(AI)-based reporting tool Spot** is a specialized application that makes it safer for employees to speak up and easier for HR to follow up, even on anonymous reports. Talking through an incident of harassment or discrimination can be an intensely personal, sensitive, and even emotional experience. But Spot allows employees to talk through what happened whenever, wherever, and for as long as they need, without being constrained by working hours, the stress of human interaction, or the office environment.

**Our research** shows that when employees have more flexibility around how and to whom they submit a report, they are more likely to report. And since employees communicate with a neutral third party (a bot), there is no risk of the unconscious bias or judgment that might come into play in an in-person exchange. The tool also allows employers to confirm the report was received, ask follow-up questions through the bot, and communicate about resolutions, all while preserving the anonymity of the employee.



“We chose to implement Spot within our organization in order to provide the **safest and most inclusive work environment for our employees.**”

While our HR doors always remain open to our employees, we recognize that it is **not always easy to come forward on sensitive matters.** It was important that our staff has an outlet to not only address sensitive topics but also have a platform that is not intrusive in their day-to-day lives.

**As a leading digital media company,** with a staff that is mobile-first and constantly on the go, having something as easily accessible as Spot was a great advantage for us. From an HR perspective, we can then provide timely action, that ensures we are continuing to build a healthy work culture within these walls.”

**Julianne LaSorsa**  
HR Manager

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## Fewer Barriers, Better Outcomes

Since Spot's third-party AI securely facilitates the exchange of confidential information and removes the requirement of human interaction during an emotional or embarrassing experience, it also removes some of the key barriers to reporting: fear of being judged and not being able to stay anonymous. And when employees are empowered to report freely, organizations gain deeper insight into the health of their workplace cultures while at the same time building trust based on how they respond.

To be clear, **Spot isn't a replacement for HR personnel**. Rather, it offers a streamlined intake and follow-up solution that allows for better documentation and greater efficiency within investigations, while also facilitating reporter anonymity.

Spot can help your HR department:

- Identify those who repeatedly engage in inappropriate behavior
- Streamline the intake process
- Obtain more detailed reports
- Safely address concerns before they escalate
- Take proactive and preventative measures, based on insight from reports



## A Solution in Context

Of course, no matter the formula, a reporting system only works effectively if your workforce knows about it, understands how to use it, and trusts that leadership will respond appropriately once they raise a concern. And increased visibility doesn't prevent harassment and discrimination from happening, especially to marginalized groups. But Spot can provide the insight you need to show your employees that you value their input and will respond effectively, without retaliation, to their reports.

A safe and effective reporting system can reflect your organization's values and build trust. Communicating your commitment to confidentiality, anonymity, transparency, objectivity, and fairness can go a long way in preventing operational and reputational problems—problems that can often far outweigh the cost of implementing and maintaining a new tool.



# Proactively Improving Workplace Culture

By using Spot, employers aren't operating in the dark anymore. HR and leadership have a clearer sense of what's happening in their organization. And companies enjoy greater employee engagement and retention because their employees know that they have a voice.

When HR staff is informed by bot-facilitated anonymous reports that still allow them to communicate with the reporter, they can spend less time on intake and respond more efficiently to each report. A streamlined reporting process and earlier visibility into issues empower HR to implement proactive programming and make other systemic cultural improvements.

But using Spot to shed light on the health of your organization is not merely a matter of risk reduction, enhanced ROI, more efficient HR workflow, or a robust bottom line. When employees can choose how and when to report, decide whether to identify themselves or not, and skip talking to a human if it makes them anxious, they feel safe, respected, and free to do their best work.

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## Interested in bringing Spot to your organization?

To learn more about how anonymous reporting can help you improve retention and productivity while mitigating risk, contact us at [sales@talktopot.com](mailto:sales@talktopot.com)

