



# Scenario: A Cybersecurity Employee Faces Bias

## Group Size: 4-15

***This scenario contains explicit language and references to xenophobia, and situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).***

Natalia is a civilian employee working for the Department of National Defence (DND) in a cybersecurity team. She was born in Russia, moved to Canada when she was 15 years old, and then became a Canadian citizen. She loves her job and living in Canada, but lately she has been facing some harassment and discrimination from some of my co-workers.

Natalia decides to speak to her supervisor, Raphael, about it. "My teammates have been talking about my accent and questioning my loyalty," she says. "They have been spreading rumours about me that I am a spy or a traitor. They also sometimes exclude me from important meetings. Sometimes I can't tell if they are serious or just joking around. Either way, I feel isolated, humiliated, and stressed about it."

Raphael tells her that she should learn to take a joke. This does nothing to ease Natalia's state of mind or uncomfortable situation at work. She goes home and wonders how she can return to work every day in such a toxic environment. She wonders what, if anything, she should do.

### Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of All Persons, Serve Canada Before Self
Values:	Integrity, Loyalty, Courage, Excellence
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Harassment, Discrimination
GBA Plus Themes:	Race/Ethnicity
Audience:	Defence Team

---

# Facilitator's Guide

## Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of Respect the dignity of all persons and Serve Canada before self.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity, loyalty, courage, and excellence in this scenario.

## Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the ethical dilemma in this scenario?
  - Open group discussion.
  - The ethical dilemma in this scenario is whether Natalia should report the harassment and discrimination she faces from her co-workers, or whether she should tolerate it and risk compromising her mental health and job performance.
  - She also must deal with the lack of support from her supervisor, who dismisses her concerns, and gaslights her into thinking the behaviour is just jokes.
  - Natalia must balance her personal and professional values, as well as her sense of belonging and identity, in a hostile work environment.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to the DND and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Code of Values and Ethics?
  - Open group discussion.
  - Respect the Dignity of all Persons: Natalia has the right to be treated respectfully.
  - Courage: Natalia will need to show courage to act on harassment and discrimination.
  - Loyalty: Natalia's supervisor and teammates must ensure that all personnel are treated fairly.
  - Excellence: Disrespectful, undesired jokes must be stopped in order to promote an inclusive and safe workplace; it will allow better individual behaviour and group thinking to promote a healthy teamwork.
3. What possible courses of action could take in this scenario? Which is the best option? Why?
  - Option 1: Natalia could report the harassment and discrimination. The effects of this could potentially put an end to the toxic behaviours and improve her well-being. On the other hand, she worries, it could potentially damage relationships with her colleagues and supervisor.
  - Option 2: Ignore the incident. Nathalie could take her supervisor's advice and ignore the treatment. Perhaps her colleagues are, indeed, just joking around.
    - Facilitator note: this option should be avoided. The Defence Team should be a welcoming and inclusive space for all. Humour should not come at the cost of someone's dignity or mental health.
  - Option 3: Seek advice. Natalia could speak to her unit's ethics officer or reach out to the local [Conflict and Complaint Management Services \(CCMS\) office](#) to better understand her options in dealing with her current situation.
4. How can we foster a culture of respect, diversity, and professionalism in the DND workplace? Keeping in mind this scenario with Natalia, what could be some of the benefits of having a diverse and inclusive team? Especially a team where everyone feels safe and comfortable bringing their whole self to work.
  - Open group discussion.
5. What does the CAF/DND stand to lose when someone like Natalia decides to leave the organisation due to a toxic work environment?
  - Open group discussion.
  - Loss of expertise, corporate knowledge, and diverse lived experiences.
  - Better ability to serve a diverse forces, as well as diverse Canadians in the work we do.