



Scenario: A Discriminatory Joke

Group Size: 4-15

Ce scénario peut contenir un langage explicite et des références à des situations blessantes qui pourraient déclencher des émotions fortes chez certaines personnes. Si vous avez besoin d'aide, des services sont disponibles via le [Programme d'aide aux membres des FAC \(PAM FC\)](#) et le [Programme d'aide aux employés \(PAE\)](#).

Liuna Adjuk, originally from an Inuit community in Nunavut, is a civilian employee who works in a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) repair and maintenance crew. Captain (Capt) Henri is a recent addition to another team that works in the same building. The two have chatted a few times.

One day, Capt Henri approaches Liuna to ask if she wants to hear a joke about Indigenous peoples. "I guess," she says. She is curious about what he has to say, even if the joke is at the expense of her culture and people.

The joke is moderately funny but implies that Indigenous people are uneducated. Liuna guesses that Capt Henri doesn't realize she is from an Indigenous community or else he might not have risked it. She doesn't have the heart to tell him that she is from an Inuit community as she thinks it might cause him more discomfort than he caused her.

Liuna knows that Capt Henri works with another Indigenous person as well. Maybe he even realizes where she is from, and that's why he asked her for permission first, in case she would have found it bothersome. Maybe Capt Henri and his other Indigenous colleague swap jokes about Indigenous people all the time and think nothing of it?

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons
Values:	Integrity, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Service, Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Hateful Conduct, Racism
GBA Plus Themes:	Indigenous (All), Race/Ethnicity
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” in this scenario.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity and courage.
- Discuss Hateful Conduct and racial/ethnic discrimination policies with respect to this scenario.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario? Open group discussion.
2. What considerations are there with respect to Defence Ethics and the CAF ethos? Open group discussion.
 - Discuss the ethical principle of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” in this scenario.
 - Capt Henri was not considerate of his coworkers' culture/background or feelings about their own ethnicity. While it is perceived that the joke was not meant to be harmful to anyone, Capt Henri's joke was insensitive to Indigenous culture, and perpetuates harmful stereotypes.
3. How does the harassment and Hateful Conduct policy come into play in this situation? At what level is this situation best addressed? Open group discussion.
 - Culturally insensitive or offensive comments can be a form of harassment and must be taken seriously. To address this situation further, Liuna should act and inform leadership, as “military supervisors and civilian managers have the primary responsibility and means of ensuring the compliance of their Department of National Defence (DND) employees and CAF members.” (DAOD 5012-0) What if Liuna does not feel comfortable informing leadership of this incident? What would be the impact if this action goes unchecked?
4. What actions could Liuna take?
 - To consider: Does Liuna have an obligation in a respectful workplace not to tolerate jokes about people of a certain culture/background/ethnicity/group, even if they are part of the group being joked about, and they did understand the humor?
 - To consider: Would it be okay for Liuna to tell her own jokes about Indigenous People to other teammates if the jokes were, for example, implying that Indigenous Peoples had better abilities than other people?
 - To address the comments informally, Liuna could have a conversation with Capt Henri to express that she is uncomfortable with hateful jokes and that the recipient may perceive the joke as being offensive. Capt Henri should then take the necessary steps to ensure that he understands why his actions may be offensive and to be avoided in the future. If this does not work, take it further up the chain of command.
5. Is there a difference if colleagues are at work or outside of work? Can we still make that kind of joke if someone is not personally offended?
 - Joke tellers need to be aware of the possibility that their jokes may be funny to them, but could be offensive, a form of microaggression, or even harassment to others. The acceptability of a joke largely depends on the relationship that exists between the person who is telling the joke and those hearing it.
 - Context matters, and while potentially sensitive jokes could be funny to some, those who find telling jokes as a form of connection should pay attention to their audience, the language they choose to use, and their own biases towards different cultures. Since CAF members are subject to the CAF policy on Hateful Conduct (under DAOD 5019-0), hateful jokes would not align with expectations for CAF members or be reflective of expected military conduct.