



Scenario: A Grand Affair

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful 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 \(EAP\)](#).

Lucia has just opened her up her Outlook for the day. “Hey, Bashir, can I talk to you about an email Marc sent yesterday?” “Sure,” answers Bashir. “What’s up?” “Well,” says Lucia, “Marc seems to be allowing something that, by my interpretation of the policy, he shouldn’t be doing.”

Bashir reads the email and compares it to the policy document on Lucia’s desk. “I agree with you,” he says. “To begin with, Marc is not a proper approving authority for this. He’s only a section head. That aside, what he is allowing would be stretching the policy. You’d think he would have sent it to the Major for approval before releasing it.”

“Yesterday,” says Lucia, “Marc told me that it wouldn’t be necessary because he had talked to the Major and she agreed with him. But I don’t think the major really knows. In fact, this is not the first time this kind of thing has happened in the past few months.”

“We can always check with the Major, just to be sure,” suggests Bashir. “I know Marc is away for a few days.” Lucia’s eyes widen. “Are you kidding?”

“Huh? Am I missing something here?” asks Bashir. “Maybe you haven’t noticed, but Marc and the Major have been going for coffee outside the office a lot lately,” Lucia insinuates.

“So? Maybe they’re friends. Maybe they’re discussing business” Notes Bashir. “I think they’re having an affair,” says Lucia. “Friends of mine outside our section told me they’ve seen the two of them holding hands at these coffee outings. Here’s the real kicker, Natalie told me she saw Marc and the major sitting together a few rows in front of her at the movies a few weeks ago. They were not just holding hands and that was no business meeting.”

“I thought the Major was married,” says Bashir. “Yeah, she is,” Lucia answers. “Oh. I see your point.” Bashir is left wondering what to make of this situation, and how to move forward with the policy document.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons
Values:	Integrity, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Identity, Leadership
Misconduct Types:	General Misconduct
GBA Plus Themes:	Not Specific
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligation of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” in this scenario.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity and courage in the workplace.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion.
 - This scenario illustrates an awkward situation that can be particularly challenging when the professional and personal spheres come into conflict (personal relationship).
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the military ethos?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Discuss the ethical obligation of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” in this scenario.
 - Discuss the ethical values of integrity and courage in the workplace.
 - Discuss how gossip can erode culture evolution within the Defence Team.
3. What actions should Lucie and Bashir take in this situation?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Option 1: Ignore it. Even though it would be reasonable for Lucia and Bashir to seek clarification, the case leaves us with the impression that they will probably keep quiet (but continue to spread rumors) because they are afraid of making waves. Bashir and Lucia also need to consider they do not know all the details of Marc or the Major's personal life or relationships. Assumptions can lead to further gossip and mistreatment of others.
 - Option 2: Clarify the job issue with the Major. Lucia has already questioned her supervisor, Marc, about the proper levels of authorization required by the directive, and he has told her that the Major agrees with what he is doing. However, Lucia and Bashir seem to indicate that the directive, as it stands, would not allow Marc to be delegated that authority. In addition, they believe that Marc's interpretation of the policy is questionable. If they are correct, there could be quite a mess to clean up later, once a more accurate interpretation of the policy is applied.
 - Option 3: Discuss the “rumours” with the Major. Alleged romantic relationships have the potential to become problematic when they include personnel in a direct chain of command to each other. In such circumstances, there could be, at a minimum, a perception of special treatment for the person in the relationship who is lower in the organizational hierarchy. Left unchecked, the situation has the potential to render the workplace very dysfunctional and even, toxic. In our scenario, rumours of the alleged workplace romance are causing Lucia and Bashir to reconsider the way in which they would normally exercise their professional duties, in this case, seeking clarification on the application of a policy directive.

*Note to facilitators: Please review [DAOD 5019-1, Personal Relationships and Fraternization](#) and discuss as it applies to CAF members in relation to this scenario.