



Scenario: Ageism in Hiring

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario contains references to ageism and discrimination 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 \(EAP\)](#).

Amelia has been working at the Department of National Defence (DND) for over 30 years. She has always been a loyal, diligent, and competent public servant. She recently applied for a position as a senior analyst. She knows she meets the essential qualification criteria, but she wonders if her age is going to be a factor in the selection process.

She noticed that the hiring manager, whom she already knows, tends to hire younger people. During her interview, the hiring manager asked Amelia about her retirement plans and how much longer she was planning on working. The hiring manager also asked if she thought that she would have any issues keeping up with the much younger members of the team.

In the end, Amelia did not get the position. A younger and less experienced person was given the job.

Her work friend Pat noticed Amelia was looking glum and asked what had gotten her so down. Amelia explained the situation and told Pat that she felt it she might have been discriminated against. "I wonder if I should speak up or file a complain," she said.

"I wouldn't rock the boat if I were you," said Pat. "There is no way to prove that you deserved the job more than the other candidate. Besides, at our age, we are lucky to have these jobs at all. I suggest you put your head down and focus on securing your pension."

Amelia is not sure what to do.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the dignity of all persons, Serve Canada before self, Obey and support lawful authority
Values:	Integrity, Loyalty, Courage, Stewardship
Cultural Themes:	Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Discrimination, Employment Inequity
GBA Plus Themes:	Age
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the three ethical principles in this scenario.
- Discuss the values of integrity, loyalty, courage, and stewardship in this scenario.
- Discuss discrimination (ageism) and employment equity in relation to this scenario.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the ethical dilemma in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion.
 - The ethical dilemma in this scenario is whether Amelia should stand up for their rights and challenge the hiring decision that she believe was based on age discrimination, or whether she should accept the situation and avoid any potential conflict or retaliation from her employer.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to the DND and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Code of Values and Ethics?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Which ethical principles and values did the hiring manager potentially breech? Why?
 - How were Respect the dignity of all persons and integrity breeched during the interview?
3. What possible courses of action could Amelia take in this scenario? Which is the best option? Why?
 - Option 1: Act. Amelia could make a complaint based on their perception that they faced age discrimination in the hiring process.
 - Option 2: Ignore the incident. Amelia can not be sure that they were not hired based on her age, although there is evidence that this could be the case. Amelia could take their friend's advice, do their work, and just focus on getting their full pension. She could contact the Employee Assistance Program and talk to someone confidentially.
 - Option 3: Seek advice. If Amelia is not sure that she has faced age discrimination, she could speak with the Human Resources team who specialize in hiring practices and discrimination. They could help Amelia determine if she had, indeed, been discriminated against and provide options to take to resolve the issue.
4. Does this scenario show an example of employment inequity?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Definition: Employment Equity is a strategy designed to eliminate discrimination or barriers and open the competition for employment and advancement opportunities to those who might otherwise be excluded. The purpose of the Employment Equity Act is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfillment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences.

*For more information on Employment Equity: [CAF Commitment: Employment Equity Plan 2021-2026](#) and [Employment Equity and Diversity \(CMP site\)](#) [DWAN link] in preparation for this discussion.