



Scenario: Just a Little Token of Our Appreciation

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 \(EAP\)](#).

Captain (Capt) Villeneuve and **Sgt Garcia** are on a recruiting tour with several personnel from the regional recruiting office. They are just getting settled in at the first of several hotels they will be staying at as they travel throughout the region.

Sergeant (Sgt) Garcia: “Sir, it’s Sgt Garcia calling. Are you available now for a sitrep?”

Captain (Capt) Villeneuve: “Sure, Sgt,” “I’m on my way for a workout at the hotel gym, so I’ll come to your room.”

The Capt arrives at the Sgt’s room and knocks on the door. The Sgt invites the Capt in and upon entering the Capt notices an unopened bottle of wine and a very large fruit basket on the desk.

Capt Villeneuve: “Your wife must be missing you if she is sending gifts like that already!”

Sgt Garcia: “Oh, I wish that was from my wife, Sir, but it’s just from the hotel management. Since I booked the 14 rooms we needed for this leg of the trip, I guess they thought I paid for them too. They are probably hoping that we’ll book with this hotel the next time we tour through the city.”

Capt Villeneuve “But Sgt Garcia – is it okay to accept them? What if we don’t book with this hotel again in the future?”

Sgt Casey looks surprised and a little bit confused.

Sgt Casey: “But Sir, they are just gifts, and nobody’s getting hurt. Besides, we’re giving them good business, and it’s normal practice with most hotels. During the last recruiting trip I organized, we got free drink vouchers at the hotel restaurant.”

Capt Villeneuve is uneasy, and unsure about what to do.

Categories

Principles:	Serve Canada Before Self, Obey and Respect Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Stewardship
Cultural Themes:	Service
Misconduct Types:	Conflict of Interest
GBA Plus Themes:	Not Specific
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the specific policy elements of DAOD 7021-3, Acceptance of Gifts, Hospitality and Other Benefits relevant to this case.
- Discuss how a Conflict of Interest (COI) situation can damage the reputation of not just the individuals involved but also the reputation of the Department of National Defence (DND)/Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) as an institution of high ethical standards.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
 - What value do you estimate these items are worth? Why is that relevant? (see policy element regarding “minimum value” regarding the acceptance of gifts).
 - What might an outside observer think of Sgt Garcia’s acceptance of the hotel’s gift?
 - Is it reasonable to think that such gifts might influence Sgt Garcia’s booking decisions in the future?
 - Is Sgt Garcia in a personal conflict of interest situation?
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the military ethos?
 - Using the DND and CAF Code of Values and Ethics, discuss “Serve Canada before Self” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in relation to this scenario.
 - Discuss personal integrity in relation to DND/CAF ethical standards. See ethical obligations as they relate to COI in DAOD 7021-1. Which of those obligations are in play in this scenario?
 - Discuss avoiding or preventing situations that could give rise to personal conflicts of interests.
3. Should Sgt Garcia keep the gifts? Why or why not?
 - The "welcome gifts" are not being offered to everyone when they register at the hotel. In addition, these two items are not of low economic value (“minimum value”).
 - Sgt Garcia is aware that the hotel is probably hoping that the recruiting office will book with them again. Thus, by accepting these "extras," Sgt Garcia would be receiving an unauthorized significant personal benefit from his position and would be contributing to an unacceptable implication that the recruiting office may show future favouritism towards the hotel. Both these factors would place Sgt Garcia in a COI situation.
4. What courses of action should Capt Villeneuve and Sgt Garcia take in this situation?
 - Do nothing or return the gifts?
 - Regardless of whether there is or isn’t an actual COI, there is a risk of a potential or apparent COI, which could be damaging to the reputation to both Sgt Garcia and the DND/CAF.