



## Scenario: Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

### 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 \(EAP\)](#).***

You are a junior member of the Navy undergoing summer training onboard a ship. You are the course senior for the training program and, as such, you report directly to the ship's Training Officer (Trg O). One training activity is a navigation exercise called "upper deck watch keeping." Each student must navigate from a designated starting point to a distant anchorage point under the supervision of the Officer of the Watch (OOW).

During the exercise, the OOW prefers to situate himself above and behind the students. If the trainees are hesitant to act in response to a situation, the OOW berates them in a loud and very sarcastic manner. This is both humiliating and disruptive to the trainees. Even though instructors are aware of this behaviour, they fail to do anything about it. When the Commanding Officer (CO) or Executive Officer (XO) is on the bridge, this OOW changes his behaviour.

Some students urge you, as course senior, to report their concerns. However, as summer training ends in three weeks, other students are more willing "to let sleeping dogs lie."

### Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Loyalty, Courage, Stewardship, Excellence
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Abuse of Power, Harassment
GBA Plus Themes:	Rank
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

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# Facilitator's Guide

## Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligation of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in the workplace.
- Discuss the ethical values of courage, stewardship, loyalty, integrity, and excellence, as well as duty, a professional expectation in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) ethos, in the workplace.

## Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
  - Allow open discussion from the group.
  - Ethical concerns: The OOW's behaviour is humiliating and disruptive. Of special concern is the fact that although the other instructors are aware of this behaviour, they refuse to intervene.
  - Personal factors: You are a student like the others, the only difference is that you are the course senior. There is pressure to act, but at the same time, there is pressure to leave it the way it is.
  - Environmental factors: This is a training setting, and the students must perform under stress, but should be provided with an effective learning environment. The fact that the other instructors seem to condone this conduct might be an indication that such behaviour is common practice amongst the instructors. The fact that the OOW changes his behaviour in the presence of the CO and XO may be an indication that the senior leadership is unaware that this is taking place. There is only three weeks left before the end of the training.
  - What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
  - You are torn between respecting the wishes of some of your peers to “let sleeping dogs lie” and to respond adequately to those who want you to take action.
  - This situation puts you in a very awkward situation and will require courage to report an instructor. By reporting the OOW's behaviour, you will also involve the other instructors' lack of responsiveness to address the situation, regardless of their rank or qualifications. Their professionalism and integrity will also be questioned.
  - You are aware the CAF has been in the media in recent years for issues related to culture; you know that if senior leadership is not held accountable, culture issues will prevail, and the CAF could be displayed in a negative light.
2. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
  - Option 1: Speak directly to the OOW and advise him that the students view his behaviour on the bridge as humiliating and not conducive to learning. He might acknowledge his conduct and change. However, you must advise him that if he dismisses your concern, you will be obliged to talk to the Trg O.
  - Option 2: Take the issue directly to the Trg O and explain that the students do not feel that this is a good learning environment. It is the Trg O's responsibility to follow through with the concern and correct the situation. The OOW may become vindictive or spiteful with the students.
  - Option 3: Consult the harassment advisor or an experienced, trusted senior member who may be able to recommend possible courses of action.
  - Option 4: Do nothing and hope that the situation will not deteriorate further.