



## Scenario: No 'Off' Button

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

"Omar, turn it off now!" Pierre Debien says to their partner as they watch their kids play in the resort pool. "Your body is here but *you're* not here with us on this vacation. In fact, you've been glued to your phone ever since we left home."

"Um, just a minute, Pierre," Omar replies. "Almost... done...." A few minutes later, Pierre tells Omar that they are taking their kids to go to lunch. "Okay," Omar replies, not looking up from their work-issued phone. "See you in a few minutes."

Major Omar Debien has taken their family on a vacation out of the country. Since their boss, a Lieutenant-Colonel, was deployed overseas without a backfill, Maj Debien is the acting section head on a major procurement project. Things have been constantly busy since they joined the project a year and a half ago, and it was difficult for them to take leave. In fact, they felt guilty leaving their staff and only one captain to deal with the section's workload. However, Omar didn't have any choice because they were told that they could not carry over any annual leave to the next year. Omar now understands why, as the Lieutenant-Colonel was leaving for their deployment, they said, "I'm really glad to get away from the ridiculous timelines created by the Colonel. It just causes people to work unreasonably long hours."

Omar knows that their partner Pierre is not happy, but the Colonel insisted that Omar bring the phone with them on leave.

Later that afternoon, Omar tracks down Pierre and their kids, "Hey family! Having fun? Let's go down to the beach and sign out a paddle boat."

Pierre looks angry. "Where have you been? Answering e-mails?"

"Pierre, I don't have any choice," says Omar. "I must stay on top of everything at work. You know that the Colonel insisted that I bring the phone along so I could stay in the loop. What am I supposed to do?"

"You could have said 'no'," Pierre answers. "You could have said that you weren't going to take it because you needed the rest with your family."

Omar seems to be between a rock and a hard place.

### Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons
Values:	Courage, Stewardship
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Not Specific
GBA Plus Themes:	Family Status, Rank
Audience:	Defence Team

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# Facilitator's Guide

## Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of Respect the dignity of all persons in this setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of courage and stewardship in this scenario.

## Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
  - Allow for open group discussion.
  - The ethical dilemma in this scenario relates to balancing the conflicting demands of work and personal obligations. It relates to the ethical dilemma of wanting to maintain all work commitments while also deserving rest, the right to unplug from work while on leave to maintain personal health and dignity and maintaining family integrity.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the military ethos?
  - Allow for open group discussion.
  - Discuss the ethical principle of Respect the dignity of all persons in this setting.
  - Discuss the values of courage and stewardship in this scenario and how the individuals in this scenario are demonstrating those values.
  - Omar needs and is entitled to rest and personal time off. Military members may be called upon when during emergencies or operations. However, in a typical, routine workplace situation, once leave is granted, a member should not be disturbed, and they should be encouraged to disconnect from their work phones as much as possible. Respecting the dignity of all persons also includes recognizing the importance of setting boundaries to protect personal health and wellness, as well as ensuring a good family life.
  - How can supervisors maintain and encourage boundaries when their subordinates are on leave? What are the supervisors obligations towards stewardship here?
3. What possible action(s) could Omar take in this scenario?
  - Allow for open group discussion.
  - Option 1: Omar could discuss the issue with the Colonel. Omar could have a conversation with their boss to set boundaries between their work and personal life. They could set the boundary that they are on vacation and won't be available for work-related matters during that time unless it is a genuine emergency where their military service is required.
  - Option 2: Omar could delegate responsibility. Where possible, Omar could delegate some of their work responsibilities to a colleague or a subordinate, ensuring that the workload is manageable in their absence. Delegating can help alleviate the pressure and allow Omar to disconnect during their vacation.
  - Option 3: Do nothing. This option is not recommended as it will most likely have negative impacts on Omar's family, their personal health and wellness, and their job satisfaction. While there may be short-term pressure to fulfill their work responsibilities, neglecting the needs and concerns of their family and their personal health could lead to significant challenges in both their personal and professional life (burn out, family issues, poor work performance, etc.).