



Scenario: Not Everyone Speaks the Same Language

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 \(EAP\)](#).

It's mid-morning on Monday and Camille Paré, Jean Roussy, and Major (Maj) Luis Snowe are three colleagues having coffee in the National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) cafeteria. It's more of a working coffee break since they plan to discuss how the one-day conference, organized by Maj Snowe, was received by the conference participants last week.

Maj Snowe, speaking in French, asks Camille and Jean what they thought about the conference. Camille says, "Well, people seemed really interested in the subject matter, and the discussion groups also seemed to go well enough," they pause then continue, "but I heard a couple people complaining about the lack of French."

Maj Snowe nods his head. "Regrettably, I've received many complaints, including a few from Anglophones, about the fact that the conference was held virtually only in English," replies the major. "I know that they have a point. There should have been more French, especially since the conference was held in Ottawa where English and French are both the languages of work. With an emotional tone of voice, Maj Snowe continues, "The complainers have no idea how difficult it is to get technical speakers in both languages." "Plus," they pause to take a breath, then add, "it would have been impossible to get all the material translated in the time I was given to put this together."

At a nearby table, Maj Geneviève Morneau, Captain (Capt) Alain Francoeur, both newly posted to Ottawa, and Philippe Cousineau overhear the comments made by Maj Snowe and Camille Paré. Looking at each other, they quickly realize that the conference being discussed is the one that they had attended together the week before. They all shake their heads in unison. Capt Francoeur says, somewhat frustrated, "so that's how it works at NDHQ. It's a good thing you were with us Philippe to translate some of the difficult parts." "You know," says Maj Morneau to her two friends, "I had actually heard that the use of both languages had improved in Ottawa."

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Excellence
Cultural Themes:	Service, Leadership
Misconduct Types:	Not Specific
GBA Plus Themes:	Language
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principles of Respect the Dignity of all Persons and Obey and Support Lawful Authority in this scenario.
- Discuss the ethical value of excellence in this scenario.
- Discuss inclusion in relation to the use of both official languages within the Defence Team.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion.
 - The problem in this scenario relates to a failure to adequately address linguistic diversity and inclusivity during a conference. The conference was conducted predominantly in the English language in a bilingual environment.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the CAF ethos?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Respect the Dignity of all Persons is relevant because it highlights the importance of respecting linguistic diversity and ensuring that all participants feel valued and included.
 - Obey and Support Lawful Authority is relevant due to the directives related to the usage of official languages at work.
 - Excellence - Although there were constraints, the organizers should have explored all possibilities to address language challenges and provide a bilingual experience.
 - The scenario pointed out the organizational culture and values within NDHQ, especially with linguistic inclusivity and communication practices. The situation may have led to feelings of exclusion, dissatisfaction, and a lack of respect for linguistic rights and dignity among participants.
3. What possible courses of action are there for this scenario?
 - Option 1: Organizers address conference participants. Maj Snowe and Camille Paré should communicate the reasons behind the language choice and express their willingness to address the issue in future events. They could issue an apology to participants who felt excluded.
 - Option 2: Provide linguistic support in the future. For future conferences, consider providing linguistic support, such as translation services or bilingual facilitators to ensure that all participants can access the content and discussions. This should also include American Sign Language (ASL) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) interpreters when requested.