

## Meeting in a Box Sample Scenarios & Discussion Questions

### Scenario One

During a staff meeting, Thomas sits grumpily in his chair staring at the wall. When he is asked if he'd like to contribute his ideas, he shakes his head to say no. But, when Thomas leaves the meeting, he slams the door behind him.

#### Consider

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How do you feel when you see or hear Thomas in that state?
- Although Thomas's behaviour isn't directed at you specifically, how does it affect you?
- How would you handle this situation if this was regular behavior for Thomas as opposed to a single incident?
- Who do you speak to about this?
- What would be your supervisor's role in this?

### Scenario Two

Terry likes to use humour in the workplace. However, Terry's jokes sometimes cross the line. You notice others, especially the two new employees, look uncomfortable with Terry's humour.

When Kim, a newly hired employee, tells Terry, "I'm a bit uncomfortable with that remark," Terry replies, "Don't be so uptight. I'm just joking. It's who I am."

"Then you need to change," retorts Kim.

#### Consider

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How do you feel Terry responded to Kim's comment?
- How do you feel Kim responded to Terry's response?
- What do you think Kim's impression of Terry is after this incident?
- What do you think Kim's impression is of the workplace?
- What kind of workplace culture is established?
- How else could this situation have been handled?
- How would you feel as an outside observer on the scene?
- Genders are not stated in the example. How might knowing the gender of "Terry" and "Kim" impact your answers?

### **Scenario Three**

You've just been hired. Two months in, you notice that four members of your six-person team always go out for coffee together. Sitting in the staff room with the other member of your team, you say, "Those four seem pretty tight. No one else ever seems to be invited to their coffee klatches." Your co-worker replies, "They've been doing that since I joined the team. I've been the odd person out for the past three years. Welcome to the club."

#### **Consider**

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How does this make you feel?
- How do you think your co-worker feels?
- What would you do about it?
- Was there ever a time those four invited you or the other member to coffee?
- Would you go if they did invite you to coffee?

### **Scenario Four**

A co-worker shares with you in confidence that a fellow team member is harassing them. The co-worker expresses to you that you cannot speak to anyone about it for fear of making the situation worse.

#### **Consider**

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How does this make you feel?
- How do your co-worker's feelings affect you?
- Can you keep it a secret?
- Why do you think your co-worker told you?
- How should this conversation take place?

## Scenario Five

Henry, a well-known, poor performing employee has just been transferred to Eric's unit. Eric assumes that this is a test from his work superior. Eric intends to succeed in improving Henry's performance. He meets with Henry to review his past performance issues and concerns. Eric suggests that they design an action plan together to correct Henry's weak areas. Eric also commits to monitor Henry's performance and to keep him informed of any positive or negative progress.

Henry agrees with the plan at the meeting, but on leaving, goes to other employees and complains of harassment. Eric has recently seen an e-mail written by Henry being that is critical of Eric's supervisory capabilities.

### Consider

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How do you think Henry feels about Eric's behaviour?
- How do you think Eric feels about Henry's response?
- How could this situation been improved?
- How else could this situation have been handled?

## Scenario 6

When you speak with a colleague, you notice they always use the term "manpower" to describe employees in the organization. You have previously spoken to this colleague to suggest the term is outdated and may be offensive to some people. However, your colleague insists that when they use the term "manpower", they are merely making reference to the traditional use of the phrase and do not mean to imply anything about gender. In a meeting two weeks later, you hear this colleague use the same term.

### Consider

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- Do you a have role to play?
- How might it affect you?
- How might the term affect others?

## **Scenario Seven**

Brianna is one of four new employees to the organization. Her supervisor is introducing the four of them to other employees in the workplace. During introductions, employees on two occasions have paused to ask Brianna specifically, “That’s a really interesting last name you have. Where are you from?” Brianna notices this question often comes up when she is getting to know others and it makes her uncomfortable.

### **Consider**

- Is this an issue? Why or why not?
- How could this question make someone uncomfortable?
- What would you do about it?