

TALKING THE WALK

CONVERSATIONS FOR ETHICS & COMPLIANCE TEAMS

Case Scenario

Case 16

A TALE OF TWO FIRST DAYS

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Kiran

I know that I have every right to be here—they hired me after all. But I feel like the new kid on the first day of school, who has no idea where my classes are or who I'll sit with at lunch. Ugh. Equipped only with a brief office tour and the security that comes from knowing where the bathroom and the coffee are, I head into the conference room to meet my colleagues for the first time.

I'm curious to see who's early, on time, late—and their attitudes towards each. Who chats beforehand, and what about? Who sits where? Who turns on their camera, and who won't? Who talks first, and how balanced is the conversation? How do people know when to jump in? Is there any disagreement, what does it look like, and how is it raised?

While we wait for everyone to join, a friendly face catches my eye across the table. He smiles and nods, wordlessly welcoming me. Thank you, I nod back; I'm excited to be part of this team.

Jordan

I know that I have every right to be here; this is exactly the kind of room I commanded before the merger, and I was retained for a reason. Still, I feel a bit like a ringer traded onto the lineup mid-season; the higher-ups found me valuable enough to keep, but these people didn't pick me as their teammate. It's a delicate balance I have to strike: knowledgeable yet humble, a contributor but not a know-it-all. With the experience I bring, I need to hit the ground running—just not too fast.

After an awkward office tour, I am escorted into the conference room to meet my colleagues for the first time. I take note of who's early, on time, late—and their attitudes towards each. Who chats beforehand, and what about? Who sits where? Who turns on their camera, and who won't? Who talks first, and how balanced is the conversation? How do people know when to jump in? Is there any disagreement, what does it look like, and how is it raised?

While we wait for everyone to join, a familiar face catches my eye across the table. She smiles and nods, wordlessly reminding me of the pleasant chat we had last year at IMPACT. Thank you, I nod back; I'm excited to be part of this team.

THE CHARACTERS

Kiran – 23, has recently joined the company and its E&C team, after spending a couple of years working in HR

Jordan – 37, worked for 9 years in E&C at a recently-acquired competitor

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Questions for Discussion

TALKING THE TALK

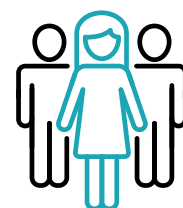
1. Both Kiran and Jordan are welcomed by their colleagues through intentional, but nonverbal overtures. How else could a person welcome a new colleague? What if the new employee works remotely? Alternately, how can a remote employee welcome a new colleague?
2. How else might people have reacted to their coming? What behaviors—even unintentionally—might be perceived as being unwelcoming? What might the impact be for Kiran? Jordan? The team?
3. Who do you think it was easier to accept “into the fold?” Why?

WALKING THE WALK

1. Kiran and Jordan are both new in the literal sense of the word. But people can join our team or even just a project for lots of different reasons. Why else might someone be “new” here?
2. How do we welcome new members to our team? How does our approach vary depending on the circumstances, e.g, a newly-created position, because of a merger, working remotely vs. in office, etc.??
3. Both Kiran and Jordan take note of whether and how conflict is raised in their meeting. Why is conflict important for our work? What strategies do we employ to make conflict productive? What else might we do?
4. Kiran and Jordan are both welcomed in their initial meeting. With the return to work, many of us are feeling awkward and “new,” even about simple things like appropriate work attire. What can we as a team do to address this time of transition? Is there anything about the way we work as a team that we’d like to “reset”? If so, how can we make that happen?

FROM THE ECI DATABANK

The newest employees at an organization are more likely to feel pressure to commit misconduct. More than one in eight employees with less than a year of tenure feels pressure to commit misconduct. Fewer than 6 percent of the most tenured employees feel such pressure.



Organizational change often leads to increased stress and pressure for employees. Rates of pressure to commit misconduct more than double (from 7 to 15 percent of employees) and the rate of observed misconduct is 50 percent higher (from 20 to 30 percent) in companies that have undergone a merger and/or acquisition in the previous two years, compared to organizations not experiencing such significant changes.