

Chris's Dilemma – Aftermath and Resolution

Following what they felt was a debacle of a team meeting, Roderick Cage and Marilyn Hue wandered down the hallway to the staff room. As Marilyn started the cappuccino machine, Roderick reached over her shoulder to retrieve a sachet of camomile tea from the cupboard. The aroma of the brewing coffee and Hue's expensive perfume filled Roderick's nostrils.

Roderick confided in Merily, 'Chris seems to be having a hard time. Doesn't Chris understand what a manager is? Asking for a volunteer, really!'

Merilyn, leaning gently and provocatively against Roderick's shoulder, replied, 'that certainly was a mistake. That is not how we do things around here. I'll bet Cora is not happy with her old friend.'

Roderick felt his heart race and started babbling on. 'And they just put the new name plate on Chris's office door. Mistake number two. Shall I submit a work requisition form to Facilities alerting them to the need to change that nameplate again, soon?' he joked.

Merilyn, turning to gaze into Roderick's eyes, and narrowing her own, stated conspiratorially, 'you might want to make that two requisition forms.' Placing her hand on his forearm, she moved her lips close to his ear, 'can you keep a secret? My special leave next week is to check out a position at *Horizon Properties* in their international office. They approached me through a head-hunter. I have had enough of this place.'

Roderick straightened his back and tried not to look surprised though his eyebrows shot upward anyway. He went crimson and said, 'all the best, Merilyn but what about your husband and what about "us"?''

Meanwhile, down the hallway, Chris took a deep breath and gingerly entered Phil Bosevic's office. Chris began, 'I have to apologise, Phil, for trying to dump work on the project on you at the last minute.'

Chris heard a grunt, and Phil did not look up from his computer screen. The pungent odour of cigarette smoke permeated the room even though the office was a no 'no-smoking' zone. No cigarette was visible, though, just a faint plume of smoke climbing from the corner of Phil's closed desk drawer.

Chris continued, 'since getting back from the Leadership Program, I have been trying to include staff in making key decisions and, I guess I just lost the plot back there. I know that joint decision making and sharing the load have not been the culture here. A mistake on my part!'

'Too right,' muttered Phil, his grating voice and Australian accent slicing the air like a chainsaw. Phil swung his chair around to face Chris, glaring, he continued, 'and, you just got this promotion over me, Chris. What are you trying to do? Rub my nose in it in front of the staff?'

Chris paused, recalled the exercises from the Leadership Program, and then replied, 'you are right, and I am sorry. But the project has got to be finished, and you have the skills and capacity to do the job properly.' Chris paused again then continued, 'I guess that I need to know how I should have asked.'

Phil leaned back in his chair, interlacing his fingers behind his head. 'You are doing it right now,' he said. 'You just need to ask but not put me on the spot.'

'Fair enough,' replied Chris.

'You will learn,' added Phil in a more relaxed, ironic tone.

'I will work with you on the final figures tonight. Would you appreciate that?' said Chris.

'And what about Marilyn?' asked Phil in a low voice, gripping his chair's arms and rocking it from side-to-side.

'I lined up a job for her at *Horizon Properties*,' replied Chris firmly, 'so that will get rid of a major problem for me. It's hard to have someone always "in your face" making you look stupid!'

'I am impressed,' said Phil. 'You are good. I am beginning to wonder who else is in your sights!'

Chris then leaned over and whispered, 'anyone who gets in my way, Phil,' winking at the same time, and then turning abruptly and strutting out of the room with a certain air of bravado.

Questions about the case:

1. What is going on here?
2. Overall, does Chris's handling of the meeting seem like a major 'stuff up' or something else?
3. Has your opinion changed of Chris, why and in what way(s)?
4. Does this scenario resonate with any experience you have had?

You will return to this again and with a surprise install for some of you.

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