

CONVERSATIONS  
FOR ETHICS &  
COMPLIANCE TEAMS

# TALKING THE WALK

## *"A Tale of Two First Days"*

LEADER'S GUIDE for Case #16

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## ABOUT ECI

The Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI) empowers organizations to build and sustain High Quality Ethics & Compliance Programs (HQPs). ECI provides leading ethics and compliance research and best practices, networking opportunities and certification to its membership.

## CONVERSATIONS FOR ETHICS & COMPLIANCE TEAMS

# TALKING THE WALK

At ECI, we know that you spend a great deal of time developing resources to help employees in your organization make good decisions when they face ethics & compliance challenges. In that same spirit, we want to provide you a resource to help you and your staff consider the challenges that YOU face as E&C professionals. Think of this as a regular opportunity for the professional development of your team.

We've developed this Leader Guide to equip you with the tools you need to lead a successful conversation with your team. To make this as painless as possible, we've scripted out much of what we suggest you say to your group. **Scripted remarks are in the navy print.** **Optional scripted text is in green.** We've also included key points (located adjacent to the script) in case you'd rather speak to the main points in your own words, or as a guide to help you if you lost your place while reading the script.

As an E&C manager and leader, you play an integral part in the growth of your team and in helping your organization to build and sustain a high quality ethics & compliance program. Thank you for all you do!

Each month, Organizational Members and Fellows of ECI are provided a new case study. The topics pertain to issues in ethics; compliance; leadership; managing up; working as a team; and more! Each case includes questions for discussion and some related statistics from ECI research.

## GOALS

Through this training, we want your E&C team to:

- Discuss the challenges you face as E&C professionals in the work you do every day.
- Walk through what happens when a similar issue surfaces, including what managers and the team should do.
- Consider the alignment of your daily decisions with the core values of your organization.
- Think through ways your team can work better together.
- Talk about the resources available to your team to ask questions, seek guidance, or raise a concern.

## SESSION OVERVIEW & TIMING

We suggest that you allocate 30 minutes of time for the following activities.

### ⌚ 3 Minutes

- Introduce the Talking the Walk case study series and your interest in having your team discuss the case.

### ⌚ 5 Minutes

- Distribute the case.
- Read the case aloud to the whole group.

### ⌚ 20 Minutes

- Work through the two sets of discussion questions in the case (Talking the Talk and Walking the Walk).
- If multiple tables are working on the discussions:
  - Make sure each table has a leader. You can ask for volunteers or pick a selection criteria (who's been working for the organization the longest, next birthday, most pets, etc.).
  - Introduce the discussion question sets to the whole group.
  - Circulate during the group discussions, to get a sense of the themes of each table's conversations.
  - After the table groups have discussed the questions, ask discussion leaders to debrief about key themes from their tables' conversations. If time allows,

engage the full group in a brief conversation of any common themes and/or salient issues that arose.

🕒 2 Minutes

- Read the Concluding Messages and brainstorm ideas for future cases.

## TRAINING MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Leader Guide
- ☐ Copies of case (one per participant)
- ☐ Parking Lot page (in case there are questions or topics you table for later)
- ☐ Copy of your organization's core values

## TIPS FOR LEADING THE CASE CONVERSATIONS

- If your group is at a single table, sit down at the table, so you can be part of the group.
- We recommend you use a "Parking Lot" page. If there is a good, but off-topic question or one that you don't know the answer to, let participants know that you are going to **"Park it."** **Write it down (or ask a participant to record the comment) on the Parking Lot.** If you have time during your session, review the items that were parked. As needed after the session, make sure to revisit any lingering parked issues and questions.
- After each question you ask, wait at least ten seconds (count it out in your head) for participants to respond.
- Make sure to look at everyone in the room. (Be careful not to favor one side or the other, which most people do naturally.) Use eye contact to include everyone and encourage participation. When you look someone in the eyes, they are more likely to feel supported and answer.
- Aim to get each participant to speak at least once. If someone looks like they

have a thought, feel free to ask, “[Name], you look like you have something to say. Would you like to share with the group?” or “[Name]”, I’d love to hear what you think.”

- Avoid having one or two people take over the conversation. If necessary, gently taper individuals that are dominating, “Thank you, [Name], you’ve offered some great ideas. Let’s hear what others in the room think.”
- If you feel like the discussion is getting off course or stuck on a single point, redirect. “We’ve had some interesting conversation about this, but let’s refocus a bit.” Then return to the topic or question you want to discuss next.
- During the conversation, keep track of points you can include in your “recap” at the end of that case.
- Join in the conversation. Share your opinions and ideas. Correct mistaken ideas if the need arises.
- Include a personal story at least once, which creates an atmosphere of openness.
- Have fun! This discussion should be an enjoyable, engaging experience. Your positive attitude sets the stage.

## TROUBLESHOOTING FOR CASE CONVERSATIONS

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- If the discussion gets too heated and personal:
  - Step in and redirect the conversation.
  - Remind everyone of the goals of the session and that you’re working as a team to help your organization and its employees succeed the right way.
  - Redirect the conversation back to the case (a neutral, safe space).
  - If necessary, explain that this is not an appropriate topic of discussion.
- If participants defend an unethical position:
  - Involve the other participants, so they can express the correct view.
  - Frame your questions in terms of your organization’s values.
  - Do not be neutral. Take a stand, relate the proper ethical choice, and justify your position.
- If someone brings up a controversial issue, such as religion or politics, which is outside of the realm of appropriateness for the discussion:

- Remind participants that it's important to respect differences, and that we do share our organization's values.
- Direct discussion back to the issue at hand and how it relates to the workplace.

## STARTING YOUR SESSION: INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

Thank everyone for their work and for being part of the discussion.

Review the goals for the training.

Ask everyone to turn off their cell phones and put away their laptops.

Begin the discussion with these opening remarks:

- Thanks for being here—and for all the good work you do for our company.
- I'm really looking forward to our conversation today. I enjoyed talking with you last time and am excited to have this time to talk together about:
  - challenging situations that arise in our work
  - how we meet those challenges
  - our core values, and
  - ways to help our team work together better.
- Just a quick reminder: This is a dedicated time together, so let's let go of distractions by turning off phones and putting away laptops.

## CASE 16: A TALE OF TWO FIRST DAYS

### GETTING STARTED

Distribute a copy of the case to each member of your group. You may choose to:

- Read the case aloud, and ask participants to follow along as you read. OR
- Give the participants a few moments to read the cases independently, then have a volunteer (*if someone volunteers*) read the case aloud. If no one volunteers, read it aloud yourself; do not select someone to read.

### CASE

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.

#### THE CHARACTERS

**Kiran** – 23, recently joined the company and 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

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.

## LEADER SCRIPT TO INTRODUCE QUESTION SETS

Point out the two categories of questions.

Remind the group about the Parking Lot and its purpose.

Before we dive in, just a quick refresher on the conversations. There are two types of questions we'll be discussing together: [Point out the two categories of questions on the handout.]

- Talking the Talk: the suggestions we would make to the characters in the situation.
- Walking the Walk: the relevance of this situation to us, and the ways we might address the issue.

Just like last time, we have a "Parking Lot," to capture your questions. We'll park good but off-topic questions, then work through them at the end as time permits. If there are any questions that I need to look further into, those will get parked as well. I'll make sure to circle back about any question on the Parking Lot that we aren't able to work through before we close today.

### QUESTION SET 1

**Talking the Talk:** the suggestions we would make to the characters in the situation.

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?

### QUESTION SET 2

**Walking the Walk:** the relevance of this situation to us, and the ways we might address the issue.

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?

### KEY POINTS TO MENTION

In case they didn’t come up naturally during your conversation.

- Great teams aren’t built on talent alone; they’re about the magic that happens when talented people work together well. This case has given us an opportunity to reflect on how we build and nurture our teams and our relationships.
- I’d like to challenge us each to take a little time to reflect on how we’re doing as a team, what we do well, and where there’s room for growth. You’ll likely find there’s someone you want to take a moment to thank or affirm or someone you’d like to reach out and try to better integrate. Please do so; how we treat each other matters—a lot.

## KEY POINTS TO MENTION CONTINUED

- Transitions and change are hard on people and organizations. Many are an unavoidable part of the life of an organization: people come and go, projects finish, priorities shift. But we've been through an extraordinary amount of change in the past few years. Even small changes are natural pressure points, and what we've weathered together hasn't been small. I'm proud of your resilience, and I support you.
- Lastly, if you're struggling right now, please know that I support you and that asking for help is a sign of strength. [This might be a good time to remind your staff of the resources that are available, especially for dealing with stress and mental health.]

## CONCLUDING THE CASE

Thank everyone for their honesty and insights.

- Point out a couple of good points you heard.
- If it didn't naturally come up in your conversation, be sure to mention:
  - The core values of your organization and how they apply to the decisions and actions of the characters.
  - Your perspective of how relevant the case is to your team, and how you would like your employees to handle the situation.
  - A personal story about a similar situation you faced, and what you learned from it.

## FINAL COMMENTS

Thank everyone for the good work they do and for doing it with integrity.

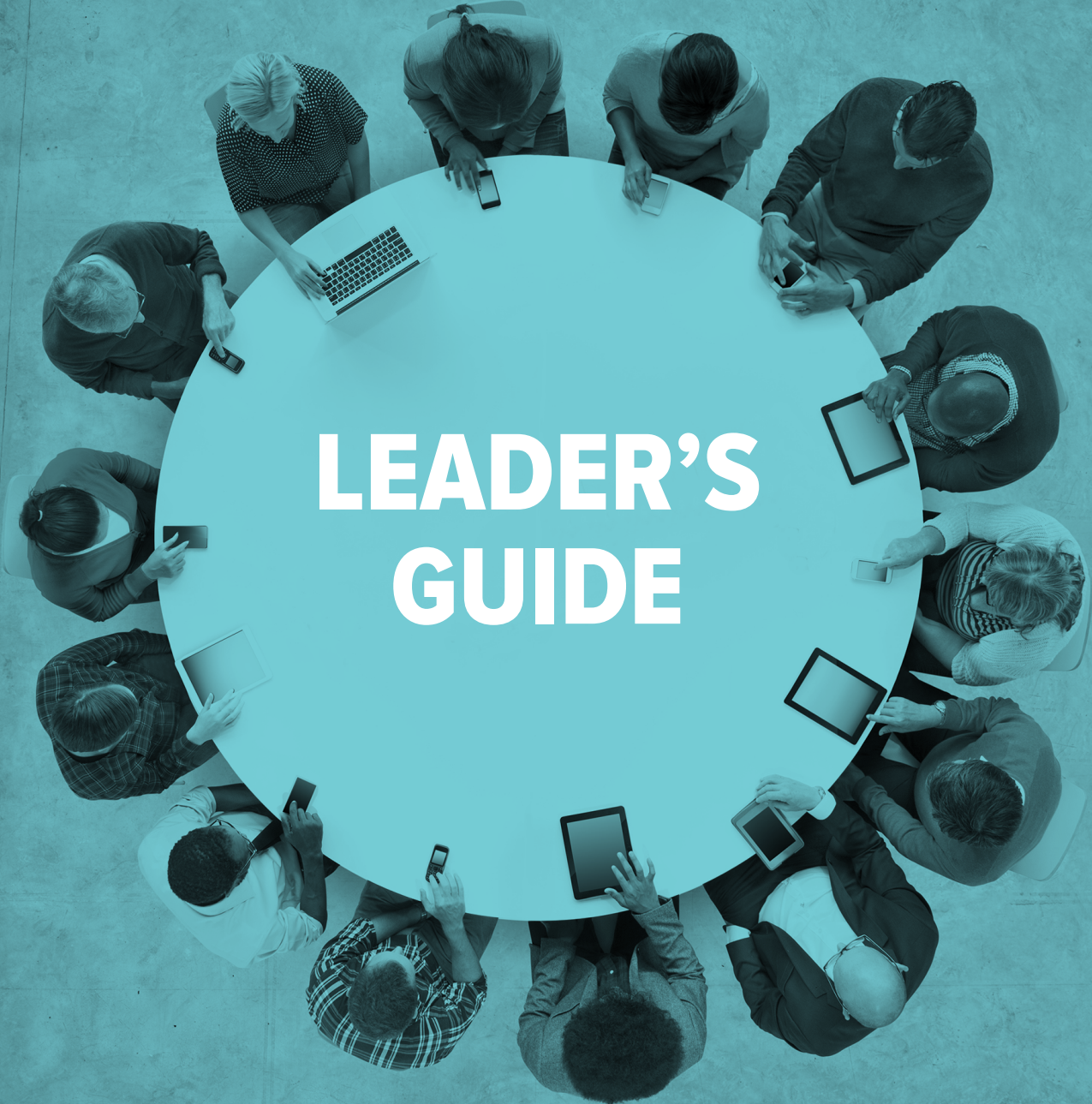
- Before we close, I want to encourage you to come to me or any leader here with concerns and questions you have. I can't resolve issues if I don't know about them, so I need your help bringing concerns to my attention.
- We'll be respectful about both the issues you raise and your courage in raising them.
- I'm looking forward to our next case discussion.
- Thanks for the important work you do every day as part of the E&C team and for your commitment to our work.

**We welcome requests!** If you or any of your staff have ideas for future cases, please send them to ECI at [Membership@ethics.org](mailto:Membership@ethics.org).



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