



Color Discrimination

Facilitation Guide



Overview

This facilitation guide and accompanying video have been developed to assist equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) professionals and practitioners in holding discussions on Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces.

Additional information on how to conduct a facilitation can be found in the Leader's Conversation Guide at: [GDE-Leaders_Conversations-20210428.pdf \(defenseculture.mil\)](https://defenseculture.mil/GDE-Leaders_Conversations-20210428.pdf)

This guided discussion is focused on the Color Discrimination video. The associated video demonstrates potential behaviors one could see or hear in many environments. The facilitator can use the video and guide to discuss the demonstrated problematic behaviors and how the unit members and leaders can prevent, mitigate, or address them. Adherence to this facilitation guide is encouraged to ensure consistency in training delivery.

However, this guide is not all-inclusive and may be expanded based on the facilitator's experience. Throughout this guide, questions are framed to stimulate the facilitator's thoughts on areas to explore and consider in this process and on the specific topic. Users should provide a controlled, safe, and non-attributional environment where individuals will be willing to share their perspectives. EO and EEO professionals, practitioners, and leaders can use this event as an opportunity to review and educate members on policy and acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Discriminatory harassment is covered in DoD Instruction 1020.03.

Purpose

The objectives for this discussion:

- Define discriminatory harassment
- Discuss the video and the behaviors seen within it
- Grasp how the fear of harassment can affect the individual and the organization
- Understand how discrimination can be targeted towards color
- Discuss discriminatory harassment prevention strategies

Based on the objectives provided to you, what is your purpose for this discussion?

What do you hope to gain from having this discussion?

Use this space to write down important names of participants or leadership.

Preparation

This guide has been developed with the assumption that users have some basic facilitation skills and understand the facilitation process. Users should also review the Leader's Conversation guide for additional parameters, techniques, and information on facilitation at: [GDE-Leaders Conversations-20210428.pdf \(defenseculture.mil\)](https://www.defenseculture.mil/GDE-Leaders-Conversations-20210428.pdf). The Leader's guide provides areas to consider, including:

- Site selection
- Ground rules the facilitator may use
- Question development
- How to conduct the discussion

Definitions

Discriminatory harassment is covered in the Department of Defense Instruction 1020.03. DoDI 1020.03 defines these terms as follows:

- Harassment is defined as behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to a reasonable person, whether oral, written, or physical, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- Discriminatory harassment is defined as: A form of harassment that is unwelcome conduct based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender-identity or sexual orientation.
- Retaliation encompasses illegal, impermissible, or hostile actions taken by a Service member's chain of command, peers, or coworkers as a result of making or being suspected of making a protected communication in accordance with DoDD 7050.06.
- Reprisal, a form of retaliation, is defined as taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action, or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action, for making, preparing to make, or being perceived as making or preparing to make a protected communication.

What is Discriminatory Harassment?

As stated in DoDI 1020.03 discriminatory harassment is a form of harassment that is unwelcome conduct based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender-identity or sexual orientation.

Harassing behaviors include:

Offensive jokes or epithets	Insults or put-downs
Ridicule or mockery	Racial or other slurs
Stereotyping	Intimidating acts
Derogatory remarks about a person's accent	Displays of offensive objects or imagery

Impacts of Discrimination

Service members may fear being retaliated against when reporting harassment allegations. According to DoD Instruction 1020.03 Section 2.5b, the DoD will hold leaders at all levels appropriately accountable for fostering a climate of inclusion that supports diversity, is free from harassment, and does not tolerate retaliation against those filing harassment complaints. Anyone who experiences discriminatory harassment may be fearful of being retaliated against. An organization that allows discriminatory behaviors to persist may experience a decrease in productivity, morale, and mission readiness. It is important to ensure proper training and prevention strategies are in place to combat these behaviors.

Strategies to Prevent Discriminatory Harassment:

Leaders should be aware of the choices and decisions they make and how they could be perceived as discriminatory. It is critical for service members to treat one another fairly regardless of on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender-identity or sexual orientation.

- Promote a culture of accountability where service members feel empowered to address and challenge potential discriminatory behavior among their peers
- Empower the use of bystander intervention strategies
- Tailor training to address specific, relatable, real-life scenarios that could occur

Notes:



Process:

Before the participant's arrival, determine and prepare the setting for the guided discussion. Ensure the video is prepared to view ([Harassment Prevention and Response \(defenseculture.mil\)](https://www.defenseculture.mil)).

Video Description

FOR FACILITATOR USE ONLY: The video displays plastic toy soldiers in two different shades of green. The video begins with a group of green soldiers discussing how great it is to be the color that they are. Comments are made that they are the "better" shade of green. A toy soldier that is a lighter shade of green approaches the group and he starts getting ridiculed because of his color. When the group says he is here because of "lowered standards," the toy soldier tells the group know that he is just as capable to accomplish tasks as they. The video concludes with the toy soldier telling the group that they are all "green," just different shades, and should all be treated fairly.

Video Participants

- **Victim:** Light green toy soldier
- **Perpetrator:** Group of darker green toy soldiers
- **Bystanders:** Some in the group could be considered bystanders

Directions:

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Validate: Explain the purpose or objective of discussion/training.
3. Set expectations and establish ground rules.
4. Introduce the topic (Use the notes you create based on the topic).
5. Show and explain how the behaviors is categorized as discriminatory.
6. Provide the handout (if used) to the participants.
7. *Read Instructions:* You are about to watch a video that is made for awareness purposes only. As you watch the video, be aware of the discrimination that is taking place. Someone that is experiencing discrimination may immediately shut down in the situation.
8. *Read Instructions:* After watching the video, answer the questions in your handout individually. Then later, we will share your answers with the group.
9. Show the video.
10. Have participants answer the handout questions (5-10 minutes). Encourage them to use critical thinking as they view the questions.
11. Lead a discussion based on the questions used.

Facilitator Notes:



Facilitator Notes



Suggestions: Display the questions on a bulletin board, butcher paper, PowerPoint, or prepare them in a handout. Explain to the participants that they will need pen and paper (or handout) to answer the questions you will use during the guided discussion. **The anticipated responses (ARs) after each question can assist the EO in identifying potential discussion points.**

**Facilitator Note:* The facilitator should be prepared to discuss the questions (or similar questions) with the participants.

**Give students ample time to answer the questions.*

→ Facilitator- Develop Questions ←

Below are potential questions and ARs for use in guiding the discussion. Prior to the session, the facilitator should review them and may develop their own. The provided handout matches the questions provided below. If you modify or add additional questions, modify the handout accordingly.

**Facilitator Note:* The facilitator should be prepared to discuss the questions (or similar questions) with the participants.

- How is the group of toy soldiers acting discriminatorily towards the new toy soldier?

AR: The group of toy soldiers are all same color and talk about how great it is to be their color. When a toy soldier of a different shade of green approaches the group, they make comments about his different shade. They discuss how standards have been lowered since his arrival and that he is “too green.” As stated in DoDI 1020.03 harassment includes offensive jokes, mockery, stereotyping, etc. Their comments cross the line into discriminatory harassment because the new soldier’s color.

- What are the potential impacts of this harassing behavior? What if they are allowed to persist?

AR: The potential impacts are low morale in the organization and decreased mission readiness. If the behaviors continue, those being discriminated against may perceive a hostile work environment. Members may be fearful to report the behavior and lose trust with others in the organization. The new soldier may not feel accepted as a true team member and if the behaviors continued, could transform into bullying behaviors. This may cause doubt and could affect overall job satisfaction and belonging.

- Who could be impacted by these behaviors?

AR: Regardless of rank anyone can be affected by discriminatory harassment. Those in the ‘in group’ may think they are superior to the new arrival because of his different color. Those in perceived ‘out groups’ may feel discriminated against and become anxious and excluded. These feelings can affect unit cohesion, trust, and acceptance between team members.

- If you were a bystander in this situation, what could you do?

AR: Some potential responses may include educating the group that their jokes can be perceived as discriminatory because they are due to the new arrival’s color. A bystander could reach out to and befriend the new member and facilitate their entrance into the team. Leaders should proactively engage and stop these type behaviors. Leaders should state that this behavior is not acceptable and enforce a zero-tolerance policy.

- How can you prevent further occurrences of similar behaviors in your unit? As a leader, what appropriate action can you take to address and correct this issue?

AR: Be alert to these types of situations. Pay particular attention to how new members are treated, specifically those of junior rank. Incorporate onboarding processes and sponsors into newcomer and mentorship programs to support new members. Develop different types of training to raise awareness on the issue. Provide research resources and training to all DoD personnel. Hold discussions in a controlled environment where all can speak freely. Use the DEOMI website to gather more information about the Principles of Prevention and create a zero-tolerance environment for such behaviors in the organization. Hold each other accountable and encourage leaders to correct the issue.

Think about other questions you may wish to ask the participants.

Reflection Questions

Question and AR:	
Question and AR:	
Question and AR:	

Lead the Discussion

Open the discussion by asking volunteers to share their responses to the group based on the questions used. As you do so, keep in mind the following:

General Considerations:

- Ensure all participants have an opportunity to share their thoughts.
- Encourage open communication among participants.
- When applicable, ask clarifying questions.
- Use anticipated responses to help the group when needed.
- Avoid “why” and close-ended questions.
- Remind participants of the ground rules when necessary.
- Remember to let participants know that you are listening.
- Take notes when necessary for your summary and conclusion.
- Paraphrase when participants are not clear with their answers/assist them in reaching the objectives.
- Let the discussion be fluent with little to no disruptions or corrections.

Examples of other questions that can be asked during the discussion:

1. In your own words, how would you define discriminatory harassment?
2. Where have you seen these behaviors in your organization?
3. What are some preventive measures to avoid a hostile environment from occurring?
4. As a bystander, what can you do if you see someone acting in a discriminating way?
5. How can these behaviors, if gone unreported, affect mission readiness?



** Facilitator Note: During the conclusion, the facilitator can paraphrase some of the comments made by the participants, showing them that they were heard. The conclusion provided is just an example of how to close out the guided discussion.*

Close the Session:

You should end your session by reiterating the objectives covered at the beginning and provide closing comments.

Summary:

Restate the initial objectives:

- Define discriminatory harassment
- Discuss the video and the behaviors seen within it
- Grasp how the fear of harassment can affect the individual and the organization
- Understand how discrimination can be targeted towards color
- Discuss discriminatory harassment prevention strategies

Facilitator's Conclusion

Potential Closing Comments:

During this discussion, we discussed how jokes, mockery, and stereotypes while may seem insincere can still be used in a discriminatory manner. Individuals being discriminated against may be fearful to report the behavior especially if the behavior came from a supervisor. If harassing behaviors are not addressed, mission readiness can decline, and a hostile work environment may occur.

To mitigate harassing behaviors, we must be proactive in prevention, address allegations without bias, and take appropriate actions if necessary. Some might consider the behaviors exhibited in this scenario harmless, but they are not. They bring division, a lack of trust, and low morale. As leaders and members, it is important that we be aware of these behaviors and impacts and do what we can to proactively prevent, diffuse, negate, and address concerns if they appear.

Handout

Video: Color Discrimination

1. How is the group of toy soldiers acting discriminatory to the new toy soldier?
2. What are the potential impacts of this harassing behavior? What if they are allowed to persist?
3. Who could be impacted by these behaviors?
4. If you were a bystander in this situation, what would you do?
5. How can you prevent further occurrences of similar behaviors in your unit? As a leader, what appropriate action can you take to address and correct this issue?