




**BUILDING**  
**A DIVERSE**  
**WORK**  
**FORCE**  
**FOR THE**   
**GLOBAL**  
**MILLENNIUM**

**19. The Skip-Level Meeting:**  
When You Want to Talk to the  
Manager's Manager

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Building a Diverse Workforce for the Global Millennium video series. This set of twenty videos is designed to portray scenes that are occurring in the global workplace on a daily basis – scenes about such topics as leadership, teams, organizational change, human resources and diversity. Performed by more than thirty-five professional actors, the vignettes offer a bird's eye view into the challenges and issues that leaders, managers, employees, mentors and team members address on a regular basis.

The video series is, by far, the most significant effort to date to assist organizations in building high-performance teams of diverse global employees. The series has seven videos that relate to global cross-cultural issues, four that focus on the plant or manufacturing floor and the remainder relate to manager and employee issues. The videos address such issues as shifts in culture, style and value clashes; race, ethnic, and gender communications; conflict resolution; balance of work/family/personal; sexual harassment; mentoring/coaching; performance; and recruitment/retention issues.

## VIDEO DEVELOPMENT

In developing this series, Advanced Research Management Consultants (ARMC), a Philadelphia-based management consulting firm, created scenarios using the actual words and situations we heard from leaders, clients and workshop participants. Our goal was to infuse each scene with the tensions, feelings and emotions that one frequently experiences in organizational interactions. As a result, all of these videos depict situations that are complex, just as are the real life situations and relationships we experience.

Additionally, to heighten the sense of realism, ARMC researched the cultural and ethnic archetypes and mores depicted. Therefore, as the viewer observes the exchanges, he or she will also gather information on some of the norms and expectations of the Asian, Latino, European and United States cultures. In this regard, ARMC would be remiss if it did not point out that the data provided through academic and ethnological research represent broad patterns of behavior about groups, but does not and cannot represent the ways in which a particular individual from a given culture might react in a specific situation. As a result, it will always be incumbent upon each of us to get to know and understand as individuals the people with whom we interact.

## BRINGING DIVERSE PEOPLE TOGETHER

With respect to workplace interactions, sometimes the gentle simplicities and intricate turns of our lives can collide with those of our colleagues. This is especially true with interactions involving widely diverse individuals who are being asked to integrate their cultures, styles, skills and talents in an arena where excellence and high yield productivity are demanded. Such organizational rigors, pressures and expectations can produce uncomfortable exchanges. The viewer has ample opportunity to witness not only what is obvious, but also to explore the nuances of the vignettes.

As viewers wrestle with the issues, they will determine the extent to which the characters are impacted by varied factors. Such factors include: language, culture, age, personal style, religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, politics, family structure, organizational leadership, coaching and mentoring skills, communication and listening skills, conflict resolution skills and human resources policies and practices. Through introspection, dialogue and discussion, viewers will be positioned to develop better solutions to make their organizations the best among their peers or competitors.

## VIDEO PACKET CONTENTS

Your video packet contains the following materials:

- Character Profiles
- Closing Statements
- Video Highlights and Discussions Points
- Key Learnings
- Video Debrief Exercises
- Handouts for Debrief Exercises
- Reference I ( Diversity Management Defined)
- Reference II (Comparing Managing Diversity and Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity)
- Reference III ( Implementing Diversity Management Constituent Capitalization)
- A List of All ARMC Products and Services

## ARMC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is important to recognize that this video series would not have been produced if it were not for the foresight, leadership and generous financial support of Carrier Corporation and The Thomson Corporation. We at ARMC will be always indebted for their considerable support.

## CHARACTER PROFILE

### **BOB SMITH**

- 55-year-old White man
- Director
- B.S. in Engineering from the University of Montana
- Has been with the organization for 20 years
- Is married with two children. Bob's spouse is a full-time caretaker of children.
- Has been Mary's supervisor for 9 months.

### **MARY JOHNSON**

- 34-year-old Native American woman
- B.S. in Engineering from RPI
- Pursuing M.S. from the University of Minnesota
- Has been rated very highly as an Exceptional Performer for the past two years
- Married with one child. Mary's spouse is also working in a demanding career.

## CLOSING STATEMENTS

### 19. THE SKIP-LEVEL MEETING: WHEN YOU WANT TO TALK TO THE MANAGER'S MANAGER.

#### BOB

You know I brought Mary in here to give her advice based on my experience, but she didn't seem to accept it. What could I have done differently?

#### MARY

I am very disappointed with my meeting with Bob. I feel he's not concerned about my career. I think he is worried about how he'll be perceived when I talk to George. How should I handle this?

# VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS AND DISCUSSION POINTS

## 19. THE SKIP-LEVEL MEETING: WHEN YOU WANT TO TALK TO THE MANAGER'S MANAGER

In this video, Bob asked Mary, his direct report, to come to see him. He wanted to speak with her about the “skip-level” meeting she was going to have with Bob’s supervisor, George. This video provides an example of a botched attempt by a supervisor to coach his direct report “constructively” for a successful meeting with George, his supervisor.

### VIDEO DEBRIEF

Bob tells Mary that he wants to speak with her about the “skip-level” meeting that she is going to have with his supervisor so that he can help her ensure that it goes well. However, it becomes clear during their meeting that Bob has a hidden agenda as well: to ensure that she presents a positive picture of him.

Bob:

- states that he asked to meet with Mary to coach her and give her the benefit of his experience;
- points out that he is aware of her unhappiness about her workload, travel schedule, and the fact that she was not promoted. He claims that he thinks highly of her, but that sometimes his “hands are tied.” He appears to want to make sure that she not hold him in any way responsible for any career-related issues she may have;
- asks Mary to tell him what the meeting is about so that he can help her plan for its success;
- denies being concerned about what Mary might say, merely repeating that he is only interested in being helpful;
- he continues to push her to talk to him about the subject matter of the meeting despite her explanation that she does not feel she needs help in light of the fact that she has had a lot of contact with George over the years and feels she knows him well;
- states that he does not like hidden agendas, yet his constant pushing leaves Mary with the clear impression that Bob has one; it appears that he is really

interested in looking good to George rather than in how well she does in the meeting;

- says that he does not want to make Mary uncomfortable and yet he proceeds to ask prying questions that back Mary into corners and force her to talk to him about what she plans to discuss with George;
- takes every opportunity to make self-serving statements. When Mary informs him that she wants to talk with George about how people are perceived when they utilize flexible work options, he talks about his commitment to ensure that individuals can utilize flexible work options without it negatively affecting their ratings. When Mary tells him that she wants to speak with George about the direction of her career, he says, "I hope you will tell him that you and I have had several good discussions about your career";
- tries to manipulate Mary into being "positive" and not telling George anything negative about his department by telling her that George "likes solutions, not problems"; and
- makes a last ditch effort to curry George's favor by asking her to "let George know that we have three excellent female candidates we'll probably make job offers to".

Mary:

- is uncomfortable from the start, wanting to know why Bob asked to meet with her;
- tries, as graciously as possible, to decline Bob's invitation to coach her by explaining that she knows George and, therefore, does not think she needs help;
- asks directly whether Bob is concerned about what she might say to George;
- tries to avoid Bob's prying questions by telling him that the subject matter of the meeting is "personal";
- has not felt supported in her attempts to utilize flexible work options;
- lets Bob know that as head of the department, she holds him responsible for the problems she is encountering when she utilizes flexible work options;
- challenges Bob when he mentions the female job candidates, asking, "you're going to make them offers, or just consider them?";
- overall remains businesslike and appropriate; and
- may, as a result of Bob's attempts to manipulate her, end up presenting a more negative picture to George than she might otherwise have.



**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THIS CASE:**

- What did Bob do well in this meeting? What could he have done differently or better?
- What did Mary do well in this meeting? What could she have done differently or better?
- What was Bob's real motivation for meeting with Mary?
- How did Mary feel as a result of this meeting? Did Bob achieve his desired results?
- Did this conversation serve to build trust and respect between Bob and Mary? Why or why not?
- What kind of feeling does this type of "coaching" create in the work environment?
- If Bob really wanted to "mentor" Mary, what could he have done that would have been more effective?
- What could Bob have done that would have been more supportive of Mary?
- Could a conversation like this take place in your organization? What are some examples?

**GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What is the purpose of a "skip-level" meeting?
- Do you think skip-level meetings are generally a good idea? Why or why not?
- Have you ever been involved in a "skip-level" meeting? What was its purpose? How did your manager perceive it? How did that make you feel?
- What is an appropriate way for a manager to coach a direct report for a meeting with his or her supervisor?
- Do you have open, honest communication in your organization that promotes relationships of trust and respect? What are some examples?
- Do you have effective coaching and mentoring systems in operation in your organization that encourage career development and retention of individual employees?
- Does the kind of communication interaction that occurred between Bob and Mary occur in your organization?
- How can employees, their supervisors, and the supervisors who supervise them be empowered to feel comfortable with skip-level coaching, given that it is an important part of success, for the individual employee and for the organization as a whole?
- In coaching and mentoring relationships in your organization, do women and people of color receive different treatment from that accorded men and White people? How so? If there is a difference, what steps must be taken to balance the treatment of employees of diverse

backgrounds and provide equal and fair opportunities for all employees?

- Should any action be taken toward supervisors who attempt to coerce employees into discussing or avoiding certain subjects in skip-level meetings for personal reasons? If so, what kind of action should be taken?
- There may be times in one's career when it is appropriate to meet with your boss' supervisor. How do you do this in a positive, constructive manner? How do you reassure your supervisor that you are not undermining his or her reputation? What can you do if your supervisor tries to manipulate you into saying things that serve his or her purposes?
- What may be some fears or concerns of a manager whose direct report is meeting with his or her supervisor? What personal insecurities and organizational dysfunctions might drive a manager to attempt to manipulate an employee to carry such self-serving messages?
- What policies and practices should your organization implement in order to resolve the issues surfaced in this vignette? What can you do personally?

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## KEY LEARNING POINTS

1. Open, honest communication promotes relationships of trust and respect. Organizations should consciously create a safe environment that enables all employees to express their concerns without feeling threatened.
2. A skip-level coaching relationship must involve trust, respect, and honesty. Any attempt to jeopardize that will jeopardize the effectiveness of the sessions.
3. The opportunity to have a skip-level meeting is important to provide employees with the chance to receive coaching and mentoring from executives at higher levels to enable them to develop and prepare more effectively for their career advancement. It is also important for individuals to be seen and known at higher levels, especially when one's career may seem blocked by one's direct supervisor. Organizations should help employees, supervisors, and managers understand how skip-level meetings contribute to overall organizational effectiveness.
4. Skip-level meetings can create anxiety for the manager in the middle. Although openness between the employee and his/her immediate supervisor can reduce the latter's anxiety, one is never required to report everything before or after a skip-level meeting. While it is important for everyone to recognize that anxiety, it should never interfere with the coaching relationship.
5. When employees' concerns are listened to and taken into account, they feel enfranchised. This contributes to job satisfaction, healthy team relationships, and high performance.
6. When supervisors learn good communication and facilitative management skills, they feel effective and empowered to be good listeners, even when they hear less than positive feedback.
7. Only when employees feel safe to discuss their concerns and what is not working well, will organizations have the opportunity to improve in these areas and increase employee morale.

8. Recent research demonstrates that many women still see a glass ceiling limiting their advancement and perceive their work environments as not supportive. These perceptions are increasingly driving women to leave their organizations for other opportunities. As a result, it is important that managers take such concerns seriously, and work to develop detailed career plans with their direct reports (both male and female), and ensure that women are receiving key developmental assignments and opportunities.
9. In today's world, family structures are dramatically changing. The percentage of traditional families – with a working father and homemaking mother – is on the decline. At the same time, the number of dual career families and single working parents is rising. In addition, increasing numbers of employees are caring for elderly or dependent adults. As a result, the pressures of balancing work and family issues are becoming more pervasive and more varied.
10. Many employees are increasingly demanding that employers recognize their need to balance their work and personal life. In order to remain competitive, especially in this extremely tight labor market, employers must take these concerns seriously by creating cultures and programs that support achieving balance. Such culture change begins with clear, visible senior leadership support, and fair, consistent application of flexibility policies and procedures.
11. Managers should not discourage employees from using flexible work options and finding ways of working that work for them. Employees should be encouraged and supported in finding creative ways to get their work done while successfully balancing personal matters as well.
12. Contemporary technology enables many employees to work from off-site locations and to use flexible working schedules. The added benefit is that employees working non-traditional hours can provide service to customers in different time zones and during off-hours.
13. Managers of some of today's leading organizations recognize that employees who have rich, rewarding personal lives become more productive, creative, and satisfied employees. They have created cultures and

instituted policies and practices that encourage employees to have personal and professional lives that are equally fulfilling.

14. Allowing employees the time to engage in and enjoy the various aspects of their life increases job satisfaction, team effectiveness, and overall productivity. Organizations should create cultures and systems that encourage and enable employees to have personal and professional lives that are both fulfilling.
15. When managers support employees in their efforts to balance their work and personal lives, it sends a message to employees that they are valued and that there is a concern for their needs. Employees feel that they are being viewed by their organization as whole people, which is the message of a diversity management strategy. Sending such a message increases loyalty to the organization and thereby helps organizations to retain skilled employees.
16. Work/family and work/personal issues are both employer and employee issues. An organization's failure to support employees effectively in balancing these needs may result in an inability to recruit and retain skilled employees. Organizations that wish to retain skilled and qualified employees will need to become sensitive to these pressures and find creative ways to enable employees to balance their work, personal life, and travel demands. Being open to a variety of solutions in the context of ensuring that the job gets done is critical.
17. Employees should be rated and rewarded on their contributions, not on "face time" or work and travel schedules. Performance, defined as both bringing in the numbers and doing so in a way that builds staff capability and interpersonal relationships, is the bottom line. Organizations need to train managers in managing and developing people effectively. Organizations must evaluate, recognize, and reward managers based on their ability to utilize and develop fully their employees.
18. Managers and employees must be thoroughly educated in the business benefits of diversity. While most managers can recite reasons for valuing diversity, many still do not fully understand it. They should receive training to help them understand, value, and

appreciate the increasing diversity in the U.S. and globalization of organizations worldwide, in order to build trust and respect among diverse employees, customers, and stakeholders. Moreover, managers and employees at all levels should be held accountable for understanding and valuing diversity; it should impact their performance evaluations, their compensation, and their assignments and promotions.

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# VIDEO DEBRIEF EXERCISES

## INTRODUCTION

While each video makes a strong presentation, its highest value can be attained through energetic, impactful and effective debriefing. It is toward this end that we offer these ideas.

- It is absolutely crucial that facilitators or anyone who uses these videos become very familiar with the video, video highlights, and key learnings. Given that you may choose to use the videos and their associated materials in a variety of ways, it is important that your discussion or group activity focus on the video highlights and key learnings for each video scenario.
- It is suggested that video scenarios be shown not only in training sessions, but also in different forums, e.g., staff meetings. Dedicating time (45 minutes to 1 hour) to each individual scenario allows for full dissection of that scenario's particular issues. In addition, use of this option demonstrates a commitment to sustain dialogue around diversity and other critical organizational issues.
- The scenarios can be integrated into other types of training in order to link diversity to concurrent organizational initiatives. For example, the videos could be used in communications, team building, conflict resolution, coaching, mentoring, leadership, performance management, career planning and development training. Again, such uses help to demonstrate the importance of diversity as an overall business strategy and may help to alleviate the perception that diversity is an isolated program.

Outlined below is the general sequence of steps we have found most effective in the overall utilization and presentation of the videos.

1. Give a very brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.

*Video 19: The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager*

2. Pass out the Character Profiles.
3. Show the Video.
4. Conduct the Debrief Exercise and/or exercises related to the video highlights.
5. Discuss the Key Learnings.
6. Hand out the Key Learnings.
7. Wrap-up.

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## VIDEO DEBRIEF METHODS NINE DEBRIEF EXERCISES

Over the years ARMC has used a variety of methods to debrief the videos. Each method is listed below and discussed in detail in the following pages. You should select the one that would be most appropriate for the group with which you are working.

1. Interactive “Hit and Run” Exercise
2. Supporting a Position Exercise
3. Role-Play Exercise
4. Fish Bowl Exercise
5. Empathy Exercise
6. Brainstorming/Consulting Exercise

*Additional exercises for use with specific videos are also included. These Supplementary Debrief Exercises are:*

7. Employment Interview Exercise
8. Exit Interview Exercise
9. Preventing Stereotypes Exercise

Finally, associated with each video are video highlights and unique key questions which are very useful in involving participants in developing understandings, skills and solutions to the key issues presented in the videos.

## INTERACTIVE “HIT AND RUN” DEBRIEF EXERCISE

**Note:** ARMC's experience shows that one of the most effective methods to debrief these videos is the Interactive or “Hit and Run” method. In order to debrief effectively in this manner, there must be two trained facilitators who are thoroughly familiar with the videos.

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; and VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions)

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes as they watch.
4. Watch the video.
5. Each facilitator assumes the role of one of the characters. For example, one would approach a participant for advice, opinion, insights, etc. If she/he takes on the role of the manager of the individual in the video, she/he might say to the participant, “You are my manager, mentor or friend, how do you think I handled the situation? What did I do well? Where do I have opportunities to improve?”
6. After some dialogue, the facilitator in the role of the direct report would approach another participant and say, “You are my mentor or my friend, what do you think of the meeting I just had?” The two trainers would alternate turns asking questions or challenging positions stated until they have each approached three or four participants individually.

7. Then, the facilitators would open the discussion to the group by saying something such as “Does anyone else have any insights or opinions they would like to add?” Give others, particularly those who were not approached, an opportunity to share their thoughts, advice or questions.
- 7A. At this point, the facilitator could further debrief the videos using the Video Highlights and associated Key Questions.
8. Facilitator should ask participants what they obtained from the video and interaction.
9. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.
10. Facilitators should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

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## SUPPORTING A POSITION EXERCISE

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Handout (Questions and Closing Statements); Key Learnings; Video; and VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions)

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes as they watch.
4. Watch the video.
5. Form four sub-groups and assign each of the four sub-groups a role (Manager, Direct Report, Manager's Manager and Direct Report's Mentor). Explain to them that they must place themselves in the roles they are assigned despite their personal sympathies or desires to take a different role. In short, they have to assume the character and role of the person assigned to them. (20 minutes in the sub-groups)
6. Provide the following instructions to participants, along with the Handout:
  - As you discuss the video and your role in the upcoming interaction, please keep in mind the manager's and direct report's final thoughts that appear at the end of this guide. It is important for all sub-groups to discuss their own feelings and thoughts. Identify someone in your sub-group to record the thoughts that are shared.
  - **To the sub-group representing the manager:** For those of you who are the manager, you are going to approach your immediate manager to discuss your feelings and seek advice. Try to reach a consensus on the questions; however, if you can't, that's fine. Use the questions in your handout as a guide.

- ***To the sub-group representing the direct report:***  
Each of you has now become the direct report. As the direct report, you are going to approach your mentor to discuss your feelings and seek advice. If there is a consensus in your group about how you feel, fine. If there is not, that's okay also. Use the questions in your handout as a guide.
- ***To the sub-group representing the manager's manager:*** The manager has just described to you the meeting with the direct report. Review the questions in your handout and be prepared to advise and counsel the manager.
- ***To the sub-group representing the direct report's mentor:*** You are the direct report's mentor. The direct report has just described the scenario to you. The direct report is coming to you for insight and advice. We have provided you with a list of questions we anticipate the direct report will want you to answer. As we have said, a consensus in your group about how to respond to the questions in your handout is not necessary.

7. Reconvene the large group and discuss their insights. Facilitator should ask participants what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.

7A. At this point, the facilitator could enhance the discussion using the video highlights and associated key questions.

8. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.

9. Facilitators should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

#### ***Manager's Closing Statement***

(Facilitators Must Provide)

#### ***Direct Report's Closing Statement***

(Facilitators Must Provide)

#### ***Direct Report's Questions***

(Given to group representing the Direct Report)

- As the direct report, what is your reaction to your meeting with your manager? To your manager's closing comments?
- How do you feel?

Video 19: *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager*

- How will you approach your mentor?
- What will you say to your mentor?
- How will you describe the situation to him/her?
- What advice will you ask for?

### ***Manager's Questions***

(Given to group representing the Manager)

- As the manager: What is your reaction to your meeting with your direct report? To your direct report's closing comments?
- How do you feel?
- How will you approach your manager?
- What will you say to your manager?
- How will you describe the situation to her/him?
- What advice will you ask for?
- What additional information do you need, if any, to deal effectively with this?

### ***Direct Report's Mentor's Questions***

(Given to group representing the Direct Report's Mentor)

- What is your opinion about the direct report's attitude and behavior?
- What did you see or hear that supports your opinion?
- What is your role, if any?
- What questions do you have for the direct report?
- What advice will you give to her/him?

### ***Manager's Manager's Questions***

(Given to group representing the Manager's Manager)

- What is your opinion about the manager's behavior and attitude? What did you see or hear that supports your opinion?
- What is your role, if any?
- What questions do you have for the manager?
- What advice will you give the manager?

## ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions) and Flipcharts

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes.
4. Watch the video.
5. Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4 to 5 participants.
6. Provide participants with the following instructions:
  - In your sub-group, identify the key diversity problems and key issues. Post these on the flipchart. (20 minutes)
  - Identify what contribution each character made to the problem, if any. Identify what each character did that was positive or helpful.
  - Identify the individual with whom you are more empathetic. Why?
  - Prepare a role-play in which you demonstrate how the participants might resolve the problems you identified. Role-play the exchange within each group and discuss the results.
7. Reconvene into the large group and discuss the participants' Key Learnings. Following this, the facilitator might request a single group to perform their role-play for the group.
8. Facilitators should ask participants what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.

- 8A. At this point the facilitators could enhance the discussion by using the video highlights and associated Key Questions.
9. Facilitators should ask participants what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.
10. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.
11. Facilitator should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

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## FISH BOWL EXERCISE (VARIATION OF ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE)

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; and VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions)

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes.
4. Watch the video.
5. Ask for two volunteers. Each will play one of the roles portrayed in the video.
6. Divide the large group into two groups.
7. Each group will coach one of the characters in resolving the problems identified in the interaction. (20 minutes)
8. The two volunteers will perform the role-play before the large group, using the feedback they received from the group.
9. After the role-play the facilitator should debrief the participants on how well the role-play came out. Ask what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.
10. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.
- 10A. At this point, the facilitator could enhance the discussion using the video highlights and associated key questions.
11. Facilitator should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

## EMPATHY EXERCISE

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions) and Flipcharts

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled \_\_\_\_\_ and it is about \_\_\_\_\_, as the title indicates.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes.
4. Watch the video.
5. Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4 to 5 participants.
6. Provide participants with the following instructions: (20 minutes) Individually jot notes on your answers to these questions:
  - Toward whom did you, personally, feel most empathetic? Why?
  - What do you believe are the legitimate issues from the person's point of view?
  - What should the other person have said/done differently?
  - After each individual has made his or her notes, the group should discuss them and try to come to a consensus. List key points on a flipchart. Select a spokesperson to report back to the group.
7. Reconvene the large group. Have spokespersons present their group's advice/strategies. After the first group, the facilitator may ask if other groups cited additional strategies, in order to avoid repetitive report-outs.
- 7A. At this point, the facilitator could enhance the discussion using the Video Highlights and associated Key Questions.
8. Facilitators should ask participants what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.

*Video 19: The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager*

9. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.
10. Facilitator should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

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**BRAINSTORMING/CONSULTING EXERCISE**

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions) and Flipcharts

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes.
4. Watch the video.
5. Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4 to 5 participants.
6. Provide participants with the following instructions and appropriate handout:
  - First, brainstorm and record on the flipchart the diversity and other related issues you saw in this vignette. (20 minutes)
  - Discuss and prioritize the list; identify the top 3 to 6 issues your group thinks are the most important. Be prepared to report-out on these.
  - Put yourselves in the role of a consultant to both individuals and their company in the video. How would you recommend they resolve this situation? List your advice/strategies on the flipchart and prepare to report these out to the large group, as well. Select a spokesperson to report back to the group.
7. Reconvene the large group. Have spokesperson present their group's advice/strategies. After the first group, the facilitator may ask for additional strategies other groups cited, in order to avoid repetitive report-outs.

- 7A. At this point, the facilitator could enhance the discussion using the Video Highlights and associated Key Questions.
8. Facilitators should ask participants what key learnings they obtained from the video and interactions.
9. Hand out the Key Learnings. Allow participants a brief time to review and respond to them.
10. Facilitator should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

PREVIEW

## SUPPLEMENTARY DEBRIEF EXERCISES

The exercises in this Supplementary section are best used in conjunction with particular video scenarios, although you may still find ways to adapt them. The numbers of the relevant scenarios are listed in the introductions to each exercise.

### EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW EXERCISE

**Note:** *This debrief method will be especially relevant to those scenarios that deal with issues of recruitment and retention of women, people of color, people who speak English as a second language and other non-dominant groups. Thus, it will be particularly relevant to scenarios #11, #15, and possibly #1.*

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions) and Flipcharts

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes.
4. Watch the video.
5. Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4-5 participants.
6. Provide participants with the following instructions:
  - Each group will develop employment interview questions that address the difficulties and tensions that potentially arise when women, people of color and those who speak English as a second language are interviewed for employment by someone of a dominant cultural group, such as White, male, or native English-speaking. Make certain that the questions are ones

*Video 19: The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager*

that do exhibit understanding, experience, connection, etc. as to why members of non-dominant cultural groups may have a hard time initially gaining employment because of intercultural shortcomings in the interview process.

- Once the questions are developed, role-play the employment interview within each group. One person should represent the organization and another, a prospective employee hoping to join the organization.
  - Following the role-play, all members of the group should discuss the results of the interview, the efficacy of the questions posed, the utility of the information obtained, any intercultural communication glitches, etc.
7. Reconvene into the large group, where the facilitator should request examples of effective employment interview questions, where the interviewer and interviewee have different cultural backgrounds. The facilitator should chart the questions.
  8. Following this, the facilitator might request a single group to perform their role-play for the group.
  9. Hand out Video Highlights and Key Learnings.
  10. Once the Video Highlights and Key Learnings are distributed, facilitate a discussion around them.
  11. Facilitator should wrap up with appropriate concluding comments.

## EXIT INTERVIEW EXERCISE

**Note:** *This debrief method will be especially relevant to those scenarios that deal with issues of recruitment and retention of women, people of color, people who speak English as a second language and other non-dominant groups. Thus, it will be particularly relevant to scenarios #11, #15, and possibly #1.*

**Time:** 45 to 60 minutes

**Materials:** Character Profiles; Key Learnings; Video; VCR; (Optional: Video Highlights and Key Questions) and Flipcharts

**Instructions:**

1. Give a brief overview of what the participants are about to watch. For example, the video we are going to watch is entitled *The Skip-Level Meeting: When You Want to Talk to the Manager's Manager* and it is about a woman who has a meeting planned with her supervisor's supervisor, and goes in to talk to her supervisor about it at his request.
2. Hand out the Character Profiles.
3. Ask participants to watch for ways in which the characters could have improved their communication. You may also invite participants to take notes as they watch.
4. Watch the video.
5. Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4-5 participants.
6. Provide participants with the following instructions:
  - Each group will develop exit interview questions that address the reasons why women and people of color leave organizations. Make certain that the questions are hard-hitting, for example: Do you believe your race/gender played a role in your inability to move to a higher position in the company?
  - Decide the interview logistics: when and where the interview will be conducted, who will conduct it, and the amount of time that will be allotted. For example, should the interview be conducted the last day the person is in the office, three weeks in advance of their leaving or three weeks after they have left? Should it be conducted by the human resources person, a same-level colleague, a supervisor, a diversity council member, or another person?