# LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE

**Treating Each Other with Respect and Tolerance** 





**United Nations** 

# LEADER'S GUIDE AND PROGRAM MATERIALS 2014

# WELCOME TO THE UNITED NATIONS LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE

Thank you for participating in the second United Nations Leadership Dialogue. This year we are focusing on the crucial importance of treating each other with respect and tolerance.

Tolerance and respect are basic human values. They are also basic practices that we must cultivate in order to work together harmoniously, serve the world's people more effectively and fulfil the UN's mission. As an Organization that champions our common humanity, the United Nations can do no less than embrace all people within its ranks.

It is my hope that all staff in all locations at all levels will participate. By creating a workplace characterized by mutual respect and tolerance, each of us will be better equipped to interact with the UN's global stakeholders as we strive to enhance peace and security, uphold human rights and promote sustainable development.

Let us honour the pledge enshrined in our Charter, that "we the peoples" are determined "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours". No matter what role we play at the United Nations, we all have a responsibility to respect differences among people — and to value the wondrous diversity that enriches and strengthens our Organization and our world.

> **BAN Ki-moon** Secretary-General of the United Nations

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# **GETTING STARTED**

Welcome to the 2014 Leadership Dialogue. In 2013, we asked you to lead discussions with your teams on the topic, *What Does It Mean to be an International Civil Servant?* We considered the UN Oath of Office and how it guides our decisions and actions.

We received very positive and feedback from you. Managers and leaders confirmed that staff members want to talk about important ethical issues. You told us that ethics on the job matters deeply to UN staff everywhere.

We chose this year's Leadership Dialogue topic based on overwhelming interest in discussing how to maintain a working environment filled with respect, tolerance, fairness and courtesy. Often, behavior that is intended one way is perceived in a different way, due to our varied backgrounds, personalities, and experiences. We can and do hold differing points of view on many topics. We follow a wide range of cultural practices. Out of those differences, comes great strength—especially if we show tolerance, interest in, and respect for our colleagues' perspectives.

This Leader's Guide provides you with everything you need to lead a dialogue with your staff about our shared responsibility to uphold United Nations values. Tolerance and respect are key ethical behaviours that permit us to work together productively—and in peace.

We have developed this guide with consideration for your time and schedule. This guide provides stepby-step instructions for conducting your dialogue session with your direct reports. Please use these materials to lead your discussion. Your team members will expect you to use the same materials that are used throughout the Organization. If you require support for this session, or wish to supplement these materials, please contact the Ethics Office at *ethicsoffice@un.org* for guidance.

A feedback form is included in the appendix. Once your session has concluded, I would very much appreciate if you could fill it out and send it to the Ethics Office. Your feedback will help us improve future Leadership Dialogue materials and select new topics.

Finally, remember that you are a leader in this Organization. Your staff and other stakeholders observe your words and actions. The more you make the dialogue relevant, the more it will help everyone understand what we can do to create a harmonious work environment by treating others with mutual respect and tolerance.

Thank you,

Joan Dubinsky Director, UN Ethics Office

# How the leadership dialogues will work throughout the UN

The discussion you are about to lead with your group is one of hundreds that will take place throughout the United Nations Secretariat. Here is the order in which it will work:

- 1. The Secretary-General will launch the dialogue with his direct reports.
- 2. Under-Secretaries-General will host dialogue sessions with their own direct reports.
- 3. Assistant Secretaries-General will host dialogue sessions with their direct reports.
- 4. Directors and P-5 level staff members will host dialogue sessions with their direct reports.
- 5. P-4 level staff members who manage teams will host dialogue sessions with their direct reports, if their direct reports were not already included in the Director/P-5 led discussions. And so on.
- 6. Ultimately, all UN staff globally will be part of a Leadership Dialogue session.

By the time you are leading your own session, you should have already completed the session with your own manager. This way, you will have a sense of how the dialogue works, and you will have had an opportunity to think through the activities, cases and questions that may arise. **Please note that all managers are expected to complete their sessions by 31 December 2014.** Thus, if you have managers who report to you, schedule your session as soon as possible after your manager has completed his or her session with you, to ensure all managers in your department or mission complete their sessions on time.

All heads of department will be asked to certify to the Ethics Office that all managers in their department have completed their dialogue session by 31 December 2014. The Ethics Office will provide a final report on participation to the Management Performance Board.

# Planning your leadership dialogue session

Being an international civil servant is difficult. Our loyalty to the United Nations includes creating a work environment where respect, tolerance, fairness and courtesy to all should prevail. Treating others with respect and tolerating our differences can present challenges in a globally diverse workforce. This dialogue will help you and your staff members understand how to deal with such challenges.

The three main objectives of this dialogue are:

- 1. Develop a deeper appreciation for the United Nations core values;
- 2. Improve our ability to accept others' differences and treat others with respect and tolerance in order to create a harmonious work environment; and
- 3. Consider how these behaviours better prepare us to deliver on the UN's mission.

The materials in this guide are designed to be used in a single session with a group of up to 25 staff members. If you have more than 25 staff members, we recommend conducting two or more separate sessions. The programme is designed take about one hour, but you are free to use as much time as you deem necessary.

We recommend you conduct the dialogue session during a face-to-face meeting, unless this is not practical. Issues of ethics and integrity can be intimidating to discuss, and a more personal setting will help you and your staff feel at ease.

# Your role in the session

The leadership dialogue is designed to allow staff members to discuss what it means to be a respectful and tolerant international civil servant in realistic situations. You are the facilitator of the discussion. You will guide discussions, ask questions, and engage staff members. Staff members often leave a dialogue session remembering points that they and their coworkers made much more vividly than those made by you. Remember that your role is not to lecture, but to guide the learning experience in a way that allows your team to arrive at important understandings on their own.

Discussions like these often lead to more discussions afterward. This is a good thing. Indeed, be prepared for one or more of your staff members to approach you to ask questions or report concerns. This is a difficult topic; what is important is that we have open discussions, not that we have all the right answers.

# **Pre-session checklist**

To ensure that all staff complete the dialogue sessions by 31 December 2014, you should plan to lead the session no more than a few weeks after your supervisor has completed his or her session with you.

DATE	TASK
	Read this guide and select one or two case studies from this guide which will be most relevant for your team
1-2 weeks ahead	Invite your staff to the session, noting that attendance is mandatory
	Reserve the room/location and equipment
	Consult your supervisor or the Ethics Office if you have questions about the materials or the session
	Send reminder to staff about the date and time for the session
	Print materials you will hand out (copies for staff of the selected case studies)
1-3 days ahead	Obtain a copy of the Roadmap and Putting Ethics to Work guides, available from www.un.org/en/ethics
	Confirm room
	Lead a great dialogue!
	Report the completion of your session to your Executive Office
Dialogue Day	Send feedback to the UN Ethics Office

# Session plan

You should lead the session as follows:

SECTION	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS	TIME
1. Introduction	<ul> <li>Staff members sign in</li> <li>Explain why the UN is conducting this dialogue</li> <li>Review the session agenda</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Participant sign-in sheet</li><li>Opening Remarks</li></ul>	10 minutes
2. Opening Activity	<ul> <li>Read selected text from the <i>Preamble to the UN Charter</i></li> <li>Discuss what the statement means</li> </ul>	UN Charter —     Preamble	15 minutes
3. Case study	<ul><li>Review selected case or cases</li><li>Discuss cases using questions provided</li></ul>	Case studies —     select one or two	30 minutes
4. Conclusion	<ul><li>Closing comments and questions</li><li>Thank staff for attending</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Closing remarks</li> <li>Collect sign-in sheet (see Appendix)</li> </ul>	5 minutes

# Post session checklist

Once the session is complete, please do the following:

- Managers Collect and send the completed sign-in sheet and evaluation form to your Executive Office or other designated recipient. See the Appendix for these forms if you need them.
- Executive Officers and Administrative Officers once you have collected all sign-in sheets and forms, please send a copy of the evaluation forms to the Ethics Office. Please do not send the sign-in sheets to the Ethics Office; they are for your records. Instead, please send the Ethics Office a total participant count at the conclusion of all of your department's sessions.

# LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE MATERIALS

# INTRODUCTION

- As staff members arrive, ask them to sign in using the form provided.
- At the scheduled time for the session to begin, greet your staff, and thank them for attending.

### Read or summarize the opening script below:

Welcome to the 2014 Leadership Dialogue session. For this year's topic, we are going to consider how we demonstrate respect and tolerance for one another as colleagues, and how that fits in to the overall mission of the United Nations. We work in a globally diverse environment. This is one of the greatest aspects of working at the UN, but it also presents challenges. So it is worthwhile to spend time to discuss these challenges. This is what we are going to do today.

The Secretary-General has asked us to engage in a formal discussion about important issues like this, once per year. So, please participate and ask questions. If you don't feel comfortable talking in front of others, speak to me after this session. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to me, speak with someone else, like our Executive Officer (or Administrative Officer), HR, or the Ethics Office.

This is a time to consider how our daily interactions reflect the values set forth in our Charter and governing documents. However, this is not a forum for raising specific allegations of wrongdoing. Those should be directed to our confidential reporting channels like OIOS, the CDT, or our head of office. The Ethics Office published a guide called the Roadmap to steer you to the right office when you have an issue. Feel free to consult their website for a copy.

Our colleagues at the Ethics Office have provided us with some materials to guide our discussion. My supervisor has conducted a similar session with me, so I am already familiar with the materials. I think you will find them interesting. **So let's get started.** 

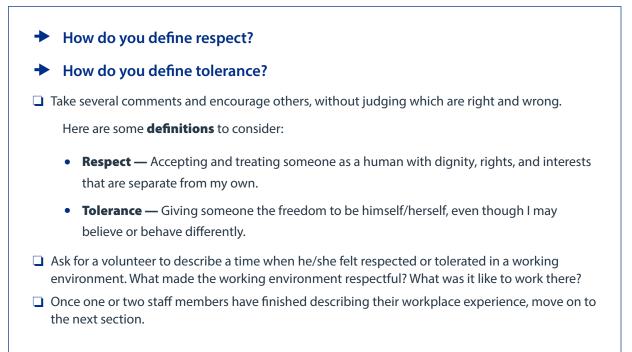
### ✤ Explain the plan for the session

For the rest of the session, we will:

- Have an open discussion about this topic.
- Consider one [or two] case study[ies] in which we will see how issues of respect and tolerance can arise in the workplace.
- Conclude with a summary of today's activities and discussions.

# **DISCUSSION ACTIVITY**

# Begin by asking staff:



Last year, we looked at the Oath of Office, which is taken largely from Article 100 of the UN Charter. This year, let's consider another part of our Charter, the Preamble.

Ask one or two staff members to read the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations (see script, next page).

### "We the peoples of the United Nations Determined

To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and

To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

To establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

### And for these ends

To practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and

To unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

To ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

To employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

### Have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims

Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations."

# Ask: To whom does the Preamble refer when it says "We the peoples of the United Nations?"

Possible answers may include: All the people of the world, citizens of all nations, each one of us, or a similar answer.

### Ask: Does this include us as UN staff members?

One possible answer could be: Yes, we are all citizens of the world, and the fact that we work at the UN does not change that.

If staff say it does not include staff of the UN, ask them why and then seek comment from the rest of the group. Close with the positive answer that yes, we are all citizens of the world.

### Refer again to the paragraph that says:

And for these ends, to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors

**Question:** What does this mean for "we the peoples" to "practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors?

(Take comments from the group)

Question: Is this also relevant to us as UN staff members? How?

(Take comments from the group)

**Question:** Do you think we as colleagues throughout the UN always show each other respect, and tolerate each other's differences?

(Survey the group informally by show of hands)

If yes, how? If not, why?

# Key points that may be raised (or which you should cover in your summary) include:

- We can all agree on the importance of showing respect and demonstrating tolerance. But the difficulty is in how we do this in particular situations.
- □ It can be difficult to tolerate differences in others when you are used to interacting primarily with people of your own background, culture, religion, etc.
- Pressure to perform may make "showing respect and tolerance" seem less important than getting the job done.

# After participants have had a chance to discuss these questions and points, explain:

Now we will discuss some situations where we are challenged to demonstrate respect and tolerance in the course of our daily interactions with each other.

# **CASE STUDIES**

There are five case studies on the following pages. You should select one or two to use in your dialogue session. They can be discussed in full group or small groups. We suggest you do as follows:

If you have 10 or fewer staff, select one or two case studies, time permitting, for full group discussion. You should lead the conversation. Solicit advice and opinions from participants. Be aware that some participants will be more comfortable than others speaking in front of the group. You should encourage the quieter members to participate by asking them to offer their views on the case being discussed.

If you have more than 10 staff members, divide them into smaller groups and select one or two case studies, time permitting, for the groups to discuss and report back with their thoughts. If you want to use all of the case material, you may have each group consider a different case, and report back with a summary of the case and their analysis. Be prepared to answer questions the small groups may ask.

Each case study is designed so that it can be discussed within 15 — 20 minutes. You may choose to spend more time. And if you do not finish all the material by the time your session must close, this is not a problem. The point is to have a meaningful dialogue with your staff, not to cover all of the material in detail and find the right answers. Indeed, while talking points are provided, there are no "perfect" answers to these case studies. These are not easy issues for most people.

The table below provides a brief synopsis for each case study.

CASE	NAME OF CASE	KEY ISSUE
1	Email Blast	Convey respect in written communication
2	Lunch Time	Tolerance for colleagues' habits
3	Zones of Comfort	Respect for personal space and cultural differences
4	Outsiders and Insiders	Tolerance and respect for new ways and existing norms
5	Change of Scenery	Respect for challenges and tolerating new arrivals

# Full-group case study — instructions

The full-group discussion format is best if you have a small team (10 or fewer staff members). Choose one or two case studies well in advance of the session and follow the steps below:

- 1. **Introduce the case:** Each case includes a small introduction you can read or paraphrase to the group. The case should be projected or posted on the wall, or passed out to staff members.
- 2. Read: Read the case study aloud to staff, or have someone read it aloud.
- 3. Ask questions: Each case study has several questions. Ask a question, and allow staff to discuss it fully before moving on to the next one. You should ask these questions in order, as they are designed to guide the discussion. However, you are not required to ask every question.
- 4. **Wait:** Give staff members time to consider each question and potential answers. It can take several seconds for a person to hear a question and formulate an answer. Ask for volunteers to offer their thoughts.
- 5. Conclude: Once you have discussed each of the questions, conclude by reviewing the key points. If people are still actively discussing, say, "Let's hear one more comment before we close out this case."

# Small-group case study — instructions

If you have a large group (more than 10), it is recommended that you break them into smaller groups. Select one or two case studies well in advance of the session that you believe will be of greatest interest and relevance to your staff. You should have several printed copies of the cases and discussion questions available to hand out to the small groups.

- 1. **Group:** Divide staff into groups of 4 to 6. If possible, give each group a printed copy of the case study you selected.
- 2. **Read:** Read the case study aloud to staff or ask a staff member to read it aloud.
- 3. **Small group discussion:** Ask staff to discuss the case and questions in their groups. Tell them that you will ask them to have a volunteer from the group to report back to the full group. Give participants several minutes to discuss the case study and a 1-2 minute warning when their time is almost up.
- 4. **Report back:** After the groups seem to be finishing up their discussion, or several minutes have passed, call them back to the full group. Ask for the volunteer from each group to share their group's discussion points and answers to the questions. Make sure you give each group an opportunity to present their key points.
- 5. **Conclude:** Once every group has had an opportunity to share, conclude the case study section by asking for any additional comments from the entire group. Close with final comments, using the discussion points provided.

# CASE STUDY 1: EMAIL BLAST

### Read or paraphrase this introduction to the case study:

In this case, we see that our tone and intent may not always convey as expected in written communications.

### Read the case study

For the past year, Tamara has been responsible for summarizing weekly world events that pertain to the country of Katuni, and for sending the summary via email to several of her colleagues. She regularly copies others who are not in her work unit because she believes it is important for them to also know about issues arising in this region.

Tamara's most recent email includes the following statement about the southwest region of Katuni:

Many of the people in southwest Katuni are under-educated — they can only read and write in their native language, and have trouble functioning outside their local areas. Therefore, these people do not always understand the implications of global events on the Katuni people. It will be difficult to provide them with developmental assistance beyond basic needs.

One of the newer recipients on Tamara's emails, Claudio, happens to be from Katuni. He read this email and found it demeaning, especially the reference to "these people." This is not the first email from Tamara that offended Claudio, but now he is starting to sense a pattern of insensitive language.

Tamara writes these emails very quickly to get the information out to those who need it. She intends for her emails to be brief, clear, and factual in the information she summarizes. She does not intend to be negative or insulting.

Claudio is not aware if others have been offended by Tamara's emails. However, he feels very strongly that the email content should be more respectful and balanced toward the Katunian people.

### Discuss the following questions:

After you finish reading the case study, give staff a few moments to think about it. Then, ask the following questions (possible answers to share follow):

- Q. What is happening in this case? What are the relevant facts?
- **A.** A staff member writes summary emails about a certain country which one of the recipients finds insensitive. The writer does not intend her emails to be offensive, but the recipient is offended.
- **Q.** Have you experienced similar reactions to email messages based on the words used, tone, or other factors?

After allowing participants a chance to respond, summarize their points

- **Q.** What would you advise Claudio to do in this situation?
- **A.** He could speak to Tamara privately about his reaction, but without accusing her of intentionally offending him. He could offer language which would be less offensive but still make clear the information to be conveyed.
- Q. What can Tamara do to help ensure her emails do not unnecessarily cause offense?
- **A.** She could review them before sending them out, or ask a colleague to preview them. She could ask a colleague for periodic feedback.

# Key Points — As the discussion comes to a close, make sure you address the following key points:

- It is easy to blast off an email (or other communication) without being careful about its language and tone. At the same time, we can quickly take offense without considering the intent of the person communicating.
- It is possible for one person to be offended by someone's words, even though there was no intent to offend. Both perspectives are valid.
- We should show respect to our colleagues and for the people we serve in everything we do, even in the simplest communications.
- By respectfully sharing our concerns with each other, and offering suggestions to improve the situation, we can better understand and tolerate each other's sensitivities.

# CASE STUDY 2: LUNCH TIME

### Read or paraphrase this introduction to the case study:

In this case, we consider how we can demonstrate tolerance for each other's personal practices.

### Read the case study

Boris's team members occupy a small set of offices and cubicles. Many of the staff bring their lunches into the office and eat at their small conference table. Tomas thinks Grace's lunch always has a pungent odor. He has commented to Boris that Grace's lunch always smells weird. Recently, Tomas told Grace, "You must really love garlic; it seems that you are always eating garlicky foods!" He pinched his nose when he said this. Grace has not complained about Tomas's comments. However, Boris is concerned that repeated comments of this nature may be creating an uncomfortable environment for the team.

### Discuss the following questions:

After you finish reading the case study, give staff a few moments to think about it. Then, ask the following questions (possible answers to share follow):

- **Q.** What is happening in this case? What are the relevant facts?
- A. Boris is concerned that Tomas's comments about Grace's food may make Grace and other team members uncomfortable. It is unclear whether Boris is himself offended by Tomas's comments.
- **Q.** Is this a minor issue, or a culture clash? How can something as minor as "the odor of my lunch" impact the work environment?
- **A.** It can seem like a minor issue, but these are often the kinds of things that brew discontent and dissatisfaction. It is one thing to tease someone in good fun, but it is another to regularly complain about something so basic as what and how we eat.

- **Q.** Is Tomas showing respect for Grace and/or her culture? Is he being tolerant of her eating choices? Why does this matter?
- **A.** Tomas is not being respectful or tolerant. He could show respect by not pinching his nose, or by not commenting in a sarcastic manner. He could show tolerance by refraining from saying anything at all. If he had some kind of food allergy, he could politely ask her not to bring certain foods into the small office space. How he addresses Grace could greatly affect how she responds.
- **Q.** Does Grace have an obligation in this situation?
- **A.** Yes. In close environments, we should be mindful of how our personal practices (foods, scents, tone of voice, etc.) affect our colleagues. However, as this may be Grace's normal diet, she may not have realized that anyone was bothered. Here, she could ask Tomas directly whether he is bothered by the smell of her food.
- **Q.** What should Boris do in this situation, as manager of the team?
- **A.** Boris could talk with Tomas privately and tell him that while his comments may be in jest, they could be taken as intolerant. Suggest to him that he talk to Grace privately if he is bothered, or accept that this is an element of working together in close quarters.

# Key Points — As the discussion comes to a close, make sure you address the following key points:

- □ In such a diverse environment as ours, personal practices such as how someone's food smells, or how loudly or softly one speaks, can affect our colleagues and the workplace.
- Tolerance does not mean we approve of something another person is doing; indeed, it means we accept that a person's behavior is different from ours.
- □ Tolerance is expected of us even if others do not complain.
- Before expressing something you may think is funny, think first about whether you could come across as insensitive.
- □ If someone's personal behavior causes you real problems (e.g., allergic reaction, or affects your ability to work), speak to the person in a respectful way about it, or talk with your supervisor.

# CASE STUDY 3: ZONES OF COMFORT

Read or paraphrase this introduction to the case study:

How we view personal space and physical contact can raise questions of tolerance and respect for others.

### Read the following case study

In Devon's mission, everyone seems to have a different way of greeting colleagues. Some shake hands; others "air-kiss" one, two or even three times; while others may hug. Devon finds all of this confusing and somewhat unsanitary. Therefore, whenever a staff member approaches him as if to offer a greeting, Devon folds his arms in front of his chest to ensure the person does not try to touch him. Some of Devon's colleagues and visitors find this a bit cold and are offended by Devon's behaviour.

### Discuss the following questions:

After you finish reading the case study, give staff a few moments to think about it. Then, ask the following questions (possible answers to share follow):

- **Q.** What is happening in this case? What are the relevant facts?
- **A.** Colleagues have different practices when it comes to greeting each other. Devon feels that he must block anyone's attempt to physically touch him. Some colleagues find this cold and are offended.
- **Q.** What is your custom for greeting new and familiar colleagues? Is there a standard way of greeting colleagues at the United Nations?

After allowing participants a chance to discuss the major issues, summarize the points they made.

- **Q.** What do you think of Devon's reaction to his colleagues' greetings? What do you think of their reaction to him?
- **A.** Neither Devon nor his colleagues are respectful of each others' practices. Some colleagues may think Devon is being unreasonable, but he also could just be extra cautious about passing on germs. Devon may think his colleagues are too familiar with each other, but it could just be their custom.
- **Q.** How can Devon indicate his zone of personal space without putting off his colleagues?
- A. Devon could greet colleagues first, with a smile, a nod, and/or a verbal greeting.

# Key Points — As the discussion comes to a close, make sure you address the following key points:

- We define personal space according to our culture, familiarity with others, and comfort level. These differ among colleagues.
- The mechanisms we use for greeting and communicating may or may not indicate warmth or coldness.
- Until we know for sure what someone welcomes, it is best to greet others in the more formal manner that we would use to greet someone we do not know well. This can also help ensure that we avoid claims of harassment based on misunderstood intentions.

# CASE STUDY 4: OUTSIDERS AND INSIDERS

Read or paraphrase this introduction to the case study:

When experienced UN staff and staff new to the UN are brought together, there can be tension.

### Read the following case study

Fahad and Yvette are colleagues. Fahad joined the UN six months ago. He previously worked solely in private corporations on international finance matters. Fahad had been used to making critical decisions independently. Here at the UN, he is surprised by what he sees as the slower pace of deliberations and the need for consensus building on nearly every decision. Fahad has informally shared this concern with Yvette and other colleagues from time to time.

Yvette has worked at the UN for 21 years. In a meeting, Fahad asks the team why they are required to take several steps that he believes are unnecessary to complete a project. Yvette tells Fahad, "You are just too new to the UN to understand. It is better if you listen more and speak less until you have been here long enough to appreciate how we do things here." Fahad is taken aback by Yvette's comment.

### Discuss the following questions:

After you finish reading the case study, give staff a few moments to think about it. Then, ask the following questions (possible answers to share follow):

- **Q.** What is happening in this case? What are the relevant facts?
- **A.** Fahad is adjusting to a new and different work environment. Yvette tells Fahad he should listen more and speak less until he understands how the UN works. Fahad is insulted.

- **Q.** Do you remember being new to the UN? Describe your reaction to the environment.
- **A.** After allowing participants a chance to discuss the major issues, summarize the points they made.
- **Q.** How do we react to colleagues who are new to the UN?

After allowing participants a chance to discuss the major issues, summarize the points they made.

- **Q.** What should Fahad and/or Yvette do in this situation?
- **A.** Fahad and Yvette should speak privately about the exchange in the meeting. They could involve a supervisor, or a mediator, to facilitate the conversation if the environment is tense. Fahad could offer suggestions to speed up the process or to allow independent decision-making, and allow his colleagues to share their experiences and knowledge about how the UN works. Together, they may be able to improve existing processes and get a better outcome overall. Even if they still disagree, they will have taken a major step at building relationships on the team.

# Key Points — As the discussion comes to a close, make sure you address the following key points:

- The UN work environment is unique. It can be challenging for new staff to learn the UN's culture, and decide how and where they fit in.
- At the same time, we can all work to improve our business practices and processes. We should be open to new ideas and suggestions for improvement.
- No one likes being harshly criticized in front of a large group. When sharing feedback with a colleague, it is respectful to do so in private, to mitigate the risk of embarrassment on both sides.
- One resource we can all use when we have interpersonal conflicts is the Ombudsman and Mediation Services office. They offer confidential counseling and mediation services to help colleagues work out their differences.

# CASE STUDY 5: CHANGE OF SCENERY

Read or paraphrase this introduction to the case study:

An international staff member who arrives at a mission can have a difficult time adjusting.

### Read the following case study

Rose is a newly hired international staff member who was assigned to a peacekeeping mission. The existing team of international and national staff members has worked together for several years. They are well acquainted with the country, culture, and the mission environment.

Rose does not have much experience outside her own home country. However, she was very enthusiastic about the assignment and felt confident that she would do an excellent job.

Upon her deployment, however, Rose was overwhelmed by the differences between her new life and her old one. Essential things which she had always taken for granted, like secure transportation and housing, she now has to struggle to obtain. Despite her self-confidence, Rose now feels unprepared and frustrated.

Chatting with her new colleagues, Rose has said things like, "Getting around in this country is crazy! Back home, it is so much easier than here;" and "Trying to get connected to the internet in my apartment is impossible." Rose also said that she feels uncomfortable around the local population because the people stare at her a lot.

Rose's colleagues at the mission were initially understanding during her transitional period, but the complaints are starting to annoy some of them. To them, Rose does not seem to be adapting to the mission environment. Some national staff members have started to complain that Rose is insensitive.

### Discuss the following questions:

After you finish reading the case study, give staff a few moments to think about it. Then, ask the following questions (possible answers to share follow):

- Q. What is happening in this case? What are the relevant facts?
- **A.** An international staff member is having a difficult time adjusting to her mission assignment, and is vocal about it with her colleagues. Her colleagues are becoming annoyed.
- **Q.** Do you remember having to adjust to a new work environment (e.g., new to UN, new to mission, new to an HQ office or new department)? Describe that time.

After allowing participants a chance to discuss the major issues, summarize the points they made.

- **Q.** What should Rose do to help minimize the impact of her adjustment period on the work environment?
- **A.** Rose could ask colleagues for tips on how they adjusted to the new environment, and achieved a sense of safety and security. She also could visit with the Staff Counsellor's Office to learn ways to better cope with being deployed.
- **Q.** What can colleagues do to help prepare staff for (and welcome staff to) new country assignments, including showing them how to be respectful of the country and its people? Here, I especially welcome input from citizens of our host country.

Receive suggestions from staff and summarize them.

# Key Points — As the discussion comes to a close, make sure you address the following key points:

- Adjustments to the UN and to new assignments can be difficult for some staff. Being tolerant and encouraging of these staff not only helps the staff member, but also furthers the mission/ office's goals.
- □ When we find ourselves having a difficult time adjusting, it is important to consider how our attitude can affect our colleagues and the work environment.
- **Q** Resources are available to assist us in adjusting to new duty stations.

# **CLOSING ACTIVITY**

### After concluding the case studies, read or paraphrase the following:

That was an excellent discussion. You made very interesting points.

Think back to the preamble we read, which speaks of tolerance, and living together in peace as good neighbours. When we think about our professional lives, we may think of projects, reports, and meetings. Yet, working together at the United Nations means more than this. How we act and treat each other at work reflects our commitment to the ideals set forth in the UN Charter. Do you have any thoughts on how we can use these ideas to better deliver on our own department's mission?

(Take suggestions, and offer encouragement to share more ideas going forward).

I offer these quick points which were present throughout our discussion. Showing tolerance and respect means that we try our best to:

- · Welcome what seems new or different
- Be careful about our own behaviours and communications
- · Pause before assuming negative intent when someone causes offense

Each one of us can take these steps in our daily work. I think in that way, we will be furthering the mission of the UN as stated in our Charter.

# **Concluding the Dialogue**

Thank staff members for their willingness to engage in an important discussion

Read or paraphrase the following final remarks:

Thank you for participating today. I hope it was useful.

Before we close the session, are there any final questions or comments?

### Take any final questions

Close the session

# LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE APPENDICES

# LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE SIGN-IN SHEET

Date of Session:
Discussion Leader:
Department:
Office/Mission:

1.	14.
2.	15.
3.	16.
4.	17.
5.	18.
6.	19.
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8.	21.
9.	22.
10.	23.
11.	24.
12.	25.
13.	

# APPENDIX B: CASE STUDIES (FOR HANDOUTS)

## Case Study 1— Email Blast

For the past year, Tamara has been responsible for summarizing weekly world events that pertain to the country of Katuni, and for sending the summary via email to several of her colleagues. She regularly copies others who are not in her work unit because she believes it is important for them to also know about issues arising in this region.

Tamara's most recent email includes the following statement about the southwest region of Katuni:

Many of the people in southwest Katuni are under-educated — they can only read and write in their native language, and have trouble functioning outside their local areas. Therefore, these people do not always understand the implications of global events on the Katuni people. It will be difficult to provide them with developmental assistance beyond basic needs.

One of the newer recipients on Tamara's emails, Claudio, happens to be from Katuni. He read this email and found it demeaning, especially the reference to "these people." This is not the first email from Tamara that offended Claudio, but now he is starting to sense a pattern of insensitive language.

Tamara writes these emails very quickly to get the information out to those who need it. She intends for her emails to be brief, clear, and factual in the information she summarizes. She does not intend to be negative or insulting.

Claudio is not aware if others have been offended by Tamara's emails. However, he feels very strongly that the email content should be more respectful and balanced toward the Katunian people.

# Case Study 2 — Lunch Time

Boris's team members occupy a small set of offices and cubicles. Many of the staff bring their lunches into the office and eat at their small conference table. Tomas thinks Grace's lunch always has a pungent odor. He has commented to Boris that Grace's lunch always smells weird. Recently, Tomas told Grace, "You must really love garlic; it seems that you are always eating garlicky foods!" He pinched his nose when he said this. Grace has not complained about Tomas's comments. However, Boris is concerned that repeated comments of this nature may be creating an uncomfortable environment for the team.

# Case Study 3 — Zones of Comfort

In Devon's mission, everyone seems to have a different way of greeting colleagues. Some shake hands; others "air-kiss" one, two or even three times; while others may hug. Devon finds all of this confusing and somewhat unsanitary. Therefore, whenever a staff member approaches him as if to offer a greeting, Devon folds his arms in front of his chest to ensure the person does not try to touch him. Some of Devon's colleagues and visitors find this a bit cold and are offended by Devon's behaviour.

## Case Study 4 — Outsiders and Insiders

Fahad and Yvette are colleagues. Fahad joined the UN six months ago. He previously worked solely in private corporations on international finance matters. Fahad had been used to making critical decisions independently. Here at the UN, he is surprised by what he sees as the slower pace of deliberations and the need for consensus building on nearly every decision. Fahad has informally shared this concern with Yvette and other colleagues from time to time.

Yvette has worked at the UN for 21 years. In a meeting, Fahad asks the team why they are required to take several steps that he believes are unnecessary to complete a project. Yvette tells Fahad, "You are just too new to the UN to understand. It is better if you listen more and speak less until you have been here long enough to appreciate how we do things here." Fahad is taken aback by Yvette's comment.

# Case Study 5 — Change of Scenery

Rose is a newly hired international staff member who was assigned to a peacekeeping mission. The existing team of international and national staff members has worked together for several years. They are well acquainted with the country, culture, and the mission environment.

Rose does not have much experience outside her own home country. However, she was very enthusiastic about the assignment and felt confident that she would do an excellent job.

Upon her deployment, however, Rose was overwhelmed by the differences between her new life and her old one. Essential things which she had always taken for granted, like secure transportation and housing, she now has to struggle to obtain. Despite her self-confidence, Rose now feels unprepared and frustrated.

Chatting with her new colleagues, Rose has said things like, "Getting around in this country is crazy! Back home, it is so much easier than here;" and "Trying to get connected to the internet in my apartment is impossible." Rose also said that she feels uncomfortable around the local population because the people stare at her a lot.

Rose's colleagues at the mission were initially understanding during her transitional period, but the complaints are starting to annoy some of them. To them, Rose does not seem to be adapting to the mission environment. Some national staff members have started to complain that Rose is insensitive.

# APPENDIX C: SESSION LEADER'S FEEDBACK FORM

We value your feedback! Please complete this evaluation form and return it to the Ethics Office via email, fax, or interoffice mail (see inside back cover). You can send the form from your printed guide, or cut and paste the form from the online version of this guide and email it as an electronic document. Feel free to provide additional comments and questions in addition to this form. However, please note that this is **NOT** a form for your staff members to use to evaluate the session. Thank you!

Date of Session:	
Discussion Leader:	
Department:	
Office/Mission:	
Number of Staff in Session:	

# Please evaluate the Leadership Dialogue materials and your session. Indicate your responses by circling the number representing a low, medium, or high rating.

LEADER'S GUIDE OVERALL:	LOW				HIGH
Relevance of Content	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of Use	1	2	3	4	5

### Which case studies did you use?

1	3	5
2	4	

CASE STUDIES USED:	LOW				HIGH
Quality of Content	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of Use	1	2	3	4	5

+	Please provide feedback in your own words to the following questions.
1.	What went well during your session?
2.	What did not go well during your session?
3.	Were there any questions or issues that you could not answer during the session?
4.	What changes would you recommend for future Leadership Dialogues?
5.	What topics would you recommend for future Leadership Dialogues?



# Leadership Dialogue Contact Information

For more information, or to comment, contact:

United Nations Ethics Office www.un.org/en/ethics (available via iSeek or the public UN site) Email: ethicsoffice@un.org Phone +1-917-367-9858 Fax +1-917-367-9861

Also, please consult these resources, available on the Ethics Office website:

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff The Roadmap: A Staff Member's Guide to Finding the Right Place

# To learn more about conflict resolution, please contact:

### **Ombudsman and Mediation Services**

www.un.org/en/ombudsman

(available via iSeek or the public UN site)

Email: ombudsmediation@un.org

Phone: +1-917-367-5731 (New York)

Fax: +1-917-367-4211 (New York)

(regional office contact information available on the website)

