

Complex Scenario Two

Dana is a PhD who runs a small marketing team for mid-sized company. Dana has two team members who do the greatest share of the work. One is Jackie, one of Dana's marketing specialists and Jaime, an administrative assistant with a gift for getting things done in the sometimes-chaotic atmosphere that is the marketing team's normal. Dana has worked at the organization for nine years and has enjoyed building the team and its reputation over that time. Due to some early successes, Dana has enjoyed a long "honeymoon period" with the leaders of the organization.

Jackie was brought on board a couple of years ago to inject new life into the team and Jackie had done just that! Jackie is a fresh idea factory compared to Jackie's counterparts and people around the company have started to notice Jackie's expertise and positive demeanor – to the point of mentioning it to Dana at least once a week in conversation or email.

Jaime has been with the company over 15 years, 3 years as a receptionist in the executive offices, and the last 12 in the marketing group. Jaime has enjoyed a close relationship with Dana over the years they have worked together and really likes working with Jackie because their styles mesh very well. Jaime has also started to notice little private comments from Dana about Jackie getting a little too "confident" and a little too "familiar" with the leadership team.

Over a period of several months Dana has started to be critical of Jackie's work when talking to the team and Jackie, yet on several occasions Jaime knows Dana took credit for some of Jackie's ideas and in fact has begun criticizing Jackie's work "mildly" to those in their own leadership circles, while presenting all the team's ideas as Dana's own.

As the criticism mounts, Jackie is at a loss to know what has changed and what to do differently. Jackie is still getting praise from some parts of the organization but less and less often with no direct contact with those in leadership. As Jackie's confidence waivers, so does Jackie's attitude and enthusiasm for the work. Jackie is still putting in the time, but the cascade of ideas that used to come so quickly and easily are now difficult and rare.

Jaime has watched this scene play out and finally tells Jackie what Jaime has seen and heard from Dana. Jaime tells Jackie to be careful what is said around Dana as it is being taken out of context and used against Jackie with the leadership. Neither Jackie nor Jaime confront Dana because of concerns about retaliation.

(After the discussion)

Jaime leaves for a new company and about two months later Jackie leaves to take a job out of state. Dana complains to those still in the company about both leaving Dana "high and dry" with no warning.

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In your group, discuss the following questions and be prepared to present your thoughts to the rest of the class:

1. What are the primary pillars that have been damaged in this situation?
2. How did each person influence the damaged trust?
3. What other questions come into play?

4. What one factor is most damaging to Jackie? Jaime?
5. What can the employees do to rebuild trust?
6. How could either employee start a conversation to rebuild trust?
7. Write the opening statement from both Jackie and Jaime's perspectives.

8. What one factor is most damaging to Dana?
9. What could Dana do to rebuild trust?
10. How could Dana start the conversation to rebuild trust with Jackie? With Jaime?
11. Write the opening statement from Dana's perspective.
12. What pillars, if addressed sooner, could have prevented this situation?
13. What impact could a Trust Edge training or coaching program have on this organization and how?