



## Leadership Discussion Guide: Interpersonal Conflicts

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You are a researcher at a lab and a colleague of yours is at odds with the lab chief. The colleague then decides to leave the lab in pursuit of another program. The colleague who left is the only one who can correctly complete the statistical analysis required for your joint project, but after leaving fails to do so. What do you do?

### Decision Making Framework:

- 1) List the issues raised by the 2MC.
- 2) What rules or regulations apply to the situation?
- 3) What questions will help you open up the problem?
- 4) What resources could you use or consult to help you make a decision?
- 5) What are your options and how does each option affect others involved in the situation?
- 6) What would you do after considering all of these and in light of your own values?

### Issues

Butting heads  
Potential problems with unfinished data  
What do you really know?  
Do you have other options for work?

### Resources

Campus and federal regulations  
Research integrity officer on campus  
Mentor  
Colleagues  
National ethics center website

### Rules and Regulations

Federal research integrity regulations  
University's regulations

### Options

Intervene  
Wait and see  
Talk to the lab researchers in question  
Talk to advisers or other trusted mentors



## Questions

Had the visiting faculty member done anything? What? With what results?  
Should you get involved in the first place?  
Is there a side you believe is correct in the situation?  
Do you believe the lab chief has a right to sue your colleague?  
If the lab chief threatens to sue your colleague what would you do?  
How would you get them to talk to each other in a clam state?  
Is the situation past talking?  
What actions could you have taken to prevent this from happening  
How would you prevent this situation from happening again?  
What is the source of funding for this project?  
What does the perfect end to this situation look like?

## Takeaway Lessons:

### 1) Information Gathering

You have an idea of what happened, however, you would need more information before going forward.

### 2) Seeking Resources

You may need advice before you take the next step. Are you on close enough terms with other influential individuals in outside labs to seek confidential advice? Do you know someone that has gone through a similar situation?

### 3) Asking Questions

Once you have gathered the facts so you have a fuller sense of the situation, One option is to talk the colleague and the lab chief. You should rehearse these questions so you can ask them in a low-key, professional affect, without making charges. Depending on how your fact-finding goes, you may want to have someone else present when you ask these questions.

### 4) Follow the Rules for Having a Dispute Professionally

Before you have your conversation with the visiting faculty member you should read and absorb the rules for having a dispute professionally.

## Next Steps:

You are not directly involved with the problem however both people in the problem are people you respect. Your main objective would be to try getting the two individuals to talk in person otherwise the situation will get worse. From the fallout that the lab chief and your colleague had your goal may end up focusing on hiring another researcher that can run the statistical analysis. Talk with your mentor they may be able to helpful advice. The best thing to learn from this is that it could hav been avoided. Being proactive would have saved a lot of trouble and the research.

## What Really happened:

After grievance and counter grievances were filled the Dean had to step in and censure Both sides. The researcher and the lab chief are not talking and the research itself was halted.

