

tunities include helping African Americans to contribute to team innovation and productivity, and marketing more effectively to African American customers and African clients.

How much have you learned about working with African Americans—that's different from what you thought when you completed SAA 7.2? Check it out and see if your answers have changed.

Case Study 7.1 Jason, African American Manager

Jason has applied for an assistant manager's position at Drysdale Corporation. He's looking for opportunities to learn and grow in his career and wants to leave his current job because such opportunities are lacking. His ultimate career goal is to become CEO of a large corporation. With his degree in business administration and plans to complete an MBA, he thinks he has a chance—if he can find the right firm—even though he's an African American. When Jason is escorted around the Drysdale offices, he sees no African Americans, a few Asian Americans, and one Latino American. Nearly everyone is Euro-American, and they mostly seem too busy to pay much attention to Jason or spend time with him. But Jason really believes in the Drysdale Corporation and decides to accept their job offer.

Soon after he begins work, he notices that ethnic jokes and comments are common at Drysdale. Jason doesn't look like a typical African American because his mother is Euro-American. He speaks up several times, saying he doesn't appreciate jokes and comments that belittle people from any ethnic group. Most of the comments stop, but so does the already-sparse friendliness of Jason's coworkers. While the environment is not particularly warm at Drysdale, Jason still believes he can achieve career success here because he loves the work itself.

Jason knows he's a rapid learner and a responsible person, one who works effectively and efficiently. His performance evaluations during the next year and a half are all excellent and his manager *Ken* seems to be encouraging.

In fact, Jason believes he is one of the most productive workers in the company. He meets his time targets and maintains high work quality. But Jason is getting restless. His work is becoming routine to him and therefore boring. He has asked Ken several times about a promotion and expanded job responsibilities. Ken has been vague, telling Jason to "hang in there and I'll keep an eye out for job opportunities for you." In the meantime, several management positions have opened up at Drysdale and been filled by others.

1. What surface problems do you notice?
2. What root problem(s) might underlie the surface problems?
3. If you were Jason, what would you do?

Case Study 7.2 Karla, African American Salesperson

Karla is a salesperson at Ellison's Furniture, the only African American on the small sales force of 20 persons. She has been very successful in selling furniture, makes a good salary plus commission, and during the year she has been at Ellison's has made top salesperson of the month three times. Karla enjoys her work but feels isolated from most of her coworkers. Most of them are Euro-American men, and five are Euro-American women. The manager *Daniel* is Euro-American and has been very supportive of Karla's training, development, and sales work. He often praises her work and encourages her to "keep it up."

Rachel is the only salesperson who has seemed willing to spend much time with Karla during coffee breaks or at lunch. While Karla doesn't think of Rachel as a close personal friend, she does view her as more than just a business colleague. She's also a friend.