

(Continued)

At 9 a.m. on his 10th day on the job, his secretary, Meg, came into the office and said,

"Mr. Andraseli, there are five park employees here waiting to see you. They seem angry." Andraseli had a busy schedule, and besides, he was six organizational levels removed from the park employees. But he reconsidered, as he had interviewed on the notion that he had an "open door" policy. He asked Meg to send them in.

Parks and recreation workers were among the lowest paid and least skilled workers on the county's payroll. Their occupation most of the time involved working outdoors. These five workers, all of whom were older employees, wished to complain that their supervisor, who was much younger, always assigned them to the worst parks in the county. The younger employees, who also were "friends" with the supervisor, were able to choose the parks in which they worked. The older employees never were given any say on their assignments, and they wanted this changed.

Andraseli obviously was in a tough position. The grievance had clear overtones of discrimination and had the potential to escalate. Yet he did not want to undermine the authority of the managers and supervisors that stood between him and the five angry men seated across from him. He had not met the supervisor and had only had a limited introduction to the department director.

The union that represented the parks and recreation workers also was a possibility for these employees, but Andraseli did not want the union to represent these workers if he could solve the problem. These workers obviously had not gone through the chain of command, but what could he do to keep this from escalating?

You are Andraseli. What will you do next?

Bayshore Child Development Center

Tanya R. Li has been promoted to director of the Bayshore Child Development Center. The children serviced by the center are racially and ethnically diverse and from low-income families. The white teachers are in the minority and feel isolated. The teachers of color feel that the white teachers do not understand the children. In addition, James, a veteran teacher, has been discovered to have had a criminal record prior to employment at the center. The state that funds the nonprofit center does not allow anyone with a criminal record to work in direct contact with children, but he was employed prior to the law going into effect.

Tanya has identified three problems: (1) How can she make the teachers gain better understanding of each other's cultures? (2) How can she help

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the teachers gain better understanding of the children's culture? (3) How does she deal with James, whose performance has been stellar since he joined the center 15 years ago? She also understands the shortage of preschool teachers in her area and is interested in creating a more satisfying work environment.

How would you advise Tanya to prioritize the problems that need to be addressed?

What do you believe is at the root of the problem?

How would you address the problems that make up the situation?

What methods would you find most useful in trying to deal with the conflict?

Conflict in an Emergency Situation

You are the director of Public Health Preparedness in the state of New Jersey. In 2011, the Northeast was hit by Hurricane Irene. The Northeast has had very little experience with hurricanes, and this one promised to hit the most highly populated areas. In order to evacuate nursing homes on the beaches, state public health was coordinating with the National Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and local governments. They had planned and scheduled all nursing home evacuation to occur before the storm hit on Saturday evening. On Saturday morning, a head nurse calls you to inform that one of the nursing home clients, along with his family, has decided that he would not be evacuated. The nursing staff knew that if this client, Mr. Ortega, stayed behind he would be alone and his family was willing to take him to their home on the Jersey shore (also under evacuation orders). The governor of New Jersey had stated the evening before that if anyone stayed behind in the areas under evacuation, they would not be receiving services. The nurse encouraged the family to let him go with the group since they would continue medical care and this client was in need of 24-hour care. The family refused. The nurse had called on the state social worker to speak with the family. The family was infuriated that the state would impose their values on their family. This family had weathered many storms as they had moved to the northeast from Puerto Rico. Their feeling was that they should be together as a family and protect their property. If Irene was to take them, at least they would be together. As the director of Public Health Preparedness, The National Guard calls you later in the morning and tells you that they are not wasting their time with Mr. Ortega and the family can do with him what they choose. The head nurse is terribly upset, as she believes that his life is being placed at risk and refuses to let the National Guard go without Mr. Ortega. Identify the sources for this conflict? How will you, as director of Public Health Preparedness, resolve this situation?