

Points to Ponder: Diane and John



After the meeting, as Diane reflected on how the conversation had gone and planned for the second meeting, several thoughts and questions occurred to her. Take a moment to think about them before proceeding to the quiz:

- Putting herself “in John’s shoes,” Diane wondered how he felt after their meeting. Did he feel that she understood he was understandably upset by his mother’s illness and that she wanted to be supportive in helping him deal with it? Did he understand how serious his behavioral outburst was, and that he must correct it?
- Diane had been surprised to learn of John’s mother’s illness, and not fully prepared to discuss it in a single meeting. She wondered if she should have encouraged him to talk more about his feelings. Do you think she should have? What would have been the advantages or disadvantages of doing so?
- What more, if anything, does Diane need to know about John’s situation and his mother’s health in order to know what university policies, practices and resources might be helpful to him?
- What University resources, policies or practices should Diane be prepared to discuss with John to help him deal with his work and family responsibilities?
- What can Diane do or say in the next meeting that will emphasize her desire to provide support and assistance to John?
- Under the circumstances, should Diane proceed with disciplinary steps for John? What are the “pros” and “cons” of doing so?
- Diane has become aware of the negative consequences of John’s isolation from other staff. What can she do to improve the climate of the work environment?
- Diane thought about the differences between herself and John, and between John and the other staff. What potential diversity issues does she need to be aware of, either in her talks with John or in the relationships among her staff?

- Does Diane need to talk with Bonita and Mary about their role in the incident? If so, how should she deal with them?
- Diane wonders if she gave enough consideration to the issue of workplace safety. Did John's behavior rise to the level of a safety issue, necessitating a Fitness for Duty? How should Diane deal with staff who might now say they are "afraid" to be around John because of unpredictable, potentially violent behavior?
- What does Diane need to do or think about to be prepared for the next meeting? What does she need to accomplish at that meeting?
- Diane indicates that she first talked with John about his slipping performance about a month ago, but she doesn't seem to have spoken with him again prior to this incident. What should she have done after that first meeting that might have kept John focused on improvement and encouraged him to disclose his problems earlier?

What do you think Diane did well? What, if anything, would you have done differently? Why?