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PREFACE TO PART TWO

Part Two contains all the slides (text for overhead transparencies) utilized by instructors in the Basic Mediation Training. The lectures are NOT continuous slide presentations but consist primarily of discussion and exercises. The slides are used at intervals to reinforce key points, and to alternate between aural and visual instruction techniques.

Part Two also contains the instructions to parties in all role plays or simulations. The General Instructions are the same for both parties, the material they both know and know that the other knows. The Private Instructions contain material known only to that party, which may or may not be revealed during the course of the mediation, including information about motivation and personal style of the character.

Permission is hereby given for creation of not more than twenty-four copies of each set of role play instructions, with attribution.
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ROLE PLAY SCENARIOS

Demonstration: Lisa & Henry

Formal:
#1 Delta Delta & The Sisters
#2 Lee & Ricky
#3 Sherron & Taiwo
#4 Annie & Janet
#5 Carl & Louis

Informal:
#6A Terry & Yuen
#6B Walker & Quick
#7A Linda & Bob
#7B Claudia & Sunil
CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

• Avoid
• Accommodate
• Compete
• Compromise
• Collaborate
Listening Skills

Overview & objectives:
– Good listening in general
– What we mean by “active listening”
– Demo and exercises -- clarify some skills
– Listening Skills Self-Assessment -- work on skills during roleplays

Role of listening in mediation
Listening is Important and Powerful

- Good listening is helpful in and of itself—if you do nothing else in mediation…
- Builds trust and rapport
- Deescalates/calms
- Creates clarity
- Listening is a precursor to problem-solving
- Feels like a “gift”—everyone wants to be heard
What’s “Active” About It?

- Requires work and concentration
- Two-way
Three ways of looking at Active Listening

– Set of skills (e.g. open-ended questions)
– Ability to focus/concentrate -- focused on all aspects of speaker’s communication, setting aside my own issues for the moment.
– Attitudes (ideally):
  • I care what this person has to say
  • I’m sincerely curious about how this person sees things
  • I’m willing to withhold judgment and accept this person’s reactions, perceptions, feelings as legitimate.
Active Listening Skills

- Get the Story
- Probe / Clarify Meanings
- Listen for Emotions
- Summarize
- Value Silence
Get the Story

- Encourage the speaker
- Ask open-ended questions
- Draw out background/context
- Clarify and check understanding
Probe / Clarify Meanings

• Use questions that take the speaker’s understanding a step deeper, or bring out the meaning or significance of the situation for the speaker.

• **Examples:**
  - “What is your concern about that?”
  - “What do you mean by ‘disrespect’? What about that felt disrespectful?”
  - “Why do you think she did that?”
  - “How do you think he sees this issue?”
  - Are you more upset about money, or sentimental value?
Listen for (and Respond to) Emotions

• Be aware of non-verbal cues  
  – Hesitation, change in tone, body language
• Name the emotion, in a way that validates it.  
  – When in doubt, stay general (“upset”, “frustrated”)
• Allow venting
• Use with Probing
Summarize

- Make a “story” out of what you’ve heard
- Capture what’s most important to the speaker
- Include main facts, issues, concerns, feelings, perception
- Check accuracy
  - “You’ve said a lot. Let me see if I understand…”
  - “So the issues you’re concerned about are X, Y, Z, and it sounds like the biggest one for you is Z. Is that right?”
Value Silence

• Shows concern, empathy, respect

• Allows people to hear themselves, and each other
  • Watch non-verbal cues

• Let people answer questions
Uses of Active Listening in Mediation

• Getting information
• Building trust
• Modeling constructive communication
• Helping people hear themselves
• Defusing emotions, de-escalating
• Increasing clarity about issues, feelings, goals
• Bringing out underlying interests and concerns (positions → interests)
• Translating, building bridges
Elaborate on the facts here and make up additional information as needed.

A. You are working on a major group project for a physics lab. You feel that one of your team members is really not pulling his weight. He does not seem to take it very seriously. At a meeting last week, you thought the piece he was working was really sub-standard. You made what you thought was a subtle comment about the quality of the work (but maybe it came off as snide). He got defensive and the subject got dropped, though tension remained. You are angry with him, but think perhaps you could have approached it differently. You talk with your GRT about the situation.
Elaborate on the facts here and make up additional information as needed.

B. Your boss gave you a dressing down because there were some errors in a major report you worked on that just went out. You were incensed, because you had worked tremendously hard, long hours to get the report done. You would have caught most of the problems if the boss hadn’t thrown so many last minute changes and additions at you. After your boss finished her tirade, you shot back “You’re impossible! I’m not going to deal with this!” and left the room. You have come to [mediator] to vent and figure out what to do.
REFRAMING
Using the Language of Diplomacy

Reframing means choosing your words carefully in order to
• De-escalate hostility and calm emotions,
• Move from positions to interests,
• Describe issues as solvable problems, and
• Develop *shared* goals, when possible, or trade-offs.
REFRAMING STRATEGIES
1. De-escalate and calm.

• Let the speaker feel heard, by reflecting back facts and emotions.
• Use neutral language.
• Describe the speaker’s feelings, not the other person’s character.
REFRAMING STRATEGIES
2. Move from positions to interests

• Ask, gently what the critical elements are in the speaker’s position.
• Explore what the speaker wants to avoid.
• Consider alternatives through “What if…” questions.
REFRAMING STRATEGIES
3. Turn concerns into solvable problems.

• Change an attack on a person to a description of a problematic behavior.
• Change a list of past wrongs into future goals.
• Divide broad / global demands into components, which can be, approached one at a time.
REFRAMING STRATEGIES
4. Develop shared goals or trade-offs.

• Point out common or joint interests.
• Explore relative priorities of issues, to locate willingness to trade something one considers minor and the other considers important.
REFRAMING BATTING PRACTICE

1. P & Q work in the same office. Each accuses the other of monopolizing the copier. P says to a friend:
How can I try to resolve this when he refuses to talk about it?!

2. A & B are working on a joint lab project. A complains to the TA:
B is so lazy! I've been asking her to finish this for ages. She says she will but never does.

3. A complains to the RA about noise from B's room next door:
Whenever I ask him not to do that, he always yells at me and slams the door.

4. X & Y, grad students, share an apartment and a car:
X says, "She takes the car on Saturday to go hiking, when she knows I have to have it to do the grocery shopping."
Y says, "That's ridiculous. I go hiking when my hiking club goes. He can go shopping any time."
# THE FLOW OF A MEDIATION

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<td>First Joint Session</td>
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<td>Focus on interests under positions -- fantasy outcome</td>
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| Later in Private Sessions | Look for similarities in interests  
|                          | Discuss priorities & trade-offs  
|                          | Brainstorm  
|                          | Discuss effect of not resolving  
|                          | Name areas of agreement  
|                          | Review possible final agreement  
| Final Joint Session      | Write agreement  


### PRONOUNS

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<th>Form of Language</th>
<th>Likely Result</th>
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<td>We</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
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Negotiation Styles

- Competition (A)
- Revenge (A)
- Avoidance
- Accommodation (A)
- Revenge and Self-injury
- Revenge (B)

Compromise
Negotiation Styles

Competition (A)  Collaboration

Avoidance  Accommodation (A)

Compromise
PREPARING FOR DISTRIBUTIVE NEGOTIATION

1. Figure out your own interests and reservation point as well as you can. Keep reviewing these points while you negotiate.

2. Figure out the interests and reservation point of the Other (the other party or parties). Be alert to new data while you negotiate.

3. Seek to move the reservation point of the Other to widen the bargaining range especially if there is a negative range. (This process is often begun by “sowing doubt.”) However, if necessary for a settlement that you must’ achieve, move your own reservation point.

4. Seek a settlement as close as possible to the reservation point of the Other so that you win the maximum profit.

5. Do you what you can to see that both you and the Other come to see this settlement as the best possible one under the circumstances.
PREPARING FOR INTEGRATIVE NEGOTIATION

1. Figure out your own interests and reservation point as well as you can. Keep reviewing these points while you negotiate.

2. Figure out the interests and reservation point of the Other. Be alert to new data while you negotiate.

3. Through judiciously shared information and brainstorming, seek to expand the pie so that each side may get as much as possible of what it would like. Explore moving the reservation points of each side.

4. Decide on fair principles to determine how to divide the pie.

5. Do you what you can to see that both you and the Other come to see this settlement as the best possible one under the circumstances.
PREPARING FOR MEDIATION

1. Figure out the real interests — not the “positions” — and reservation point for each side as well as you can. Privately review these points with each side. If appropriate, keep reviewing these points during the mediation. Stay alert for new data.

2. Through acquiring information and brainstorming, seek to expand the pie so that each side might get as much as possible of what it would like. Explore moving the reservation points of each.

3. Help the parties decide on fair principles to determine how to decide the issues at hand.

4. Do you what you can to see that all parties come to see the settlement — any — as the best possible one under the circumstances.
SOURCES OF POWER IN NEGOTIATION

- Positional power or the power of legitimate authority
- Rewards
- Sanctions
- Force
- Expertise
- Information
- An elegant solution
- Commitment
- Charisma — referent authority — moral authority
- BATNA — the best alternative to a negotiated agreement
- Relationship — power gained or power lost
GROUND RULES --AVOIDING PITFALLS

Walking the tightrope:
Becoming the “police” ----------- Losing trust and credibility

Avoiding a fall:
• Get parties to “own” the ground rules
• Share responsibility with the parties
• Avoid “heavy-handed” responses

No applicable ground rule
• Use observation of effects
• Acknowledge emotion behind “violation”, express concern

Existing ground rule
• Check violations with the parties
• Revisit buy-in to ground rule
Types of Agreement

- Agreeing to participate in the discussion
- Agreeing on agenda & ground rules
- Agreeing on a process for continuing
- Agreeing on how to collect more data
- Agreeing on shared values or principles
- Agreeing on shared goals or interests
- Agreeing on criteria or constraints
- Agreeing to disagree on specific issues
- Agreeing on a process for handling future disputes
- Agreeing on specific behavior or actions

more general

more specific
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE

What it is NOT:
- to be a detective - get information and stop
- to be an arbitrator - decide the best outcome

The Mediator structures the process to
• separate out emotions,
• move from positions to interests,
• channel communication between the parties,
• provide a reality check,
• initiate brainstorming & generation of options,
• create opportunities to see the other side, and
• identify the signposts of agreement.
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE
Channeling Communication

- in joint session, reflecting back one party’s issues / concerns when the other party can hear it

- choosing neutral language, especially phrasing unwelcome information in terms the party can hear

- asking “What if…?” questions

- asking one party what the other party’s view is
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE
Reality Check

- Pay attention to the little voice inside your head saying there’s something not right here.
- Then ask a question to elucidate.
- Reflect back extreme statements.
- Challenge gently, “My experience has been different …”
- Allow time for party to consider and re-visit it.
- Use with moving from positions to interests & discussion of the other person’s views.
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE
Brainstorming & Generating Options

In joint session, if possible, initiate a process:

• List all conceivable options, even if they seem impossible;
• Review the list & eliminate real impossibilities;
• Rank the remaining options in order of preference;
• Add new options and rank again;
• Discuss strategies for achieving #1 option and ability to live with #2.
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE
Creating Opportunities for Understanding

Ask:
- What do you think he wants?
- How do you think she feels?
- What do you think is causing him to feel that way?
- How do you feel about [the way he feels]?

Timing is critical. Do not try this too early. Be aware of where you are in the process.
THE MEDIATOR’S ROLE
Noticing the Signposts

Ask, “What can I work with here?” and look for
• Misunderstanding due to different meanings for the same word or to just not talking at all
• Positives in the relationship in the past, to build on
• Shared or parallel interests
• Desire / need to maintain the relationship
• Multiple issues and potential trade-offs
• Readiness to consider alternatives
• Contrition
• Acknowledging the other’s view
Turning a Conflict Style into a Strategy

In Your Dispute
Neither the outcome nor the relationship is important to you
The relationship is much more important that the outcome
Both the relationship and the outcome are important to you
The outcome outweighs the relationship
The outcome and the relationship are both somewhat important (or external forces impinge)

Then
Avoid
Accommodate
Collaborate
Compete
Compromise

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<td>VALUES: Satisfaction of parties’ interests</td>
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<td>Discuss past as a way to encourage recognition of others</td>
<td>Focus on future, as talking about the past focuses on blame</td>
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<td>“There are facts in the feelings” that lead to opportunities for empowerment and recognition</td>
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Mediator Training
Role Play

Demonstration Role Play

LISA AND HENRY

General Instructions

Lisa and Henry know a lot of the same people, and have often found themselves in the same group activities during the past two years. Lisa moved this year to the same residence hall where Henry lives, on the same floor, and they often see each other around.

About 3 or 4 weeks ago Henry said to Lisa, “How about dinner tomorrow at the Royal East?” and she agreed. They left the residences hall together, and no one else met them at Royal East. When Lisa commented, "The others couldn't make it?" Henry replied that no one else had been invited. Lisa didn't say anything. Henry tried once to hold her hand, but she pulled away. He hugged her when they parted at the door to her room.

After that Henry started emailing her 3-4 times a week. At first she didn't answer at all. She received a box of candy from "A Friend." About 2 weeks ago Henry called Lisa and again asked her to dinner. She refused and said, "I don't think we’d make a good couple." After that, the next time she received email from him, she wrote asking him not to send her any more email, because she did not want to be “close.” Since then Henry has sent her 3 messages (nothing personal: jokes, gossip, and a reminder of Add Date), and called and left 2 voicemail requests for her to call him back.

Lisa thought about filing a harassment complaint, but decided to request mediation.
Secret Instructions for Lisa

You’d heard about clueless males but never experienced it firsthand before. Henry just doesn’t seem to understand “NO.” You told him on the phone and in your last email that you don’t want to be close to him. You begin the mediation insisting that Henry has been harassing you and should apologize for pursuing you relentlessly.

It’s not that you don’t like Henry -- he’s been a good friend and is otherwise a nice guy -- you just don’t want to go out with any men right now. You have other things to think about. You would never have agreed to go out with him and assumed before the dinner at the Royal East that it would be a group event, as in the past. You don’t want to talk about why you do not want to date now.

You feel in a particularly uncomfortable spot because the mutual friends you hang around with, especially Marcia and Juan, seem to be on Henry’s side. Marcia even commented on what a good couple the two of you make. Marcia just doesn’t get it either. She is a good friend, but you do not want to discuss dating with her. That’s why you told her you had a good time at dinner with Henry, because you thought she’d drop the subject. That strategy backfired. You need the companionship of this group of friends and so don’t want to make an enemy of Henry. But you want him to keep his distance.

So you hope this will be resolved in mediation.
Secret Instructions for Henry

You were very surprised to receive a call from the mediation coordinator saying Lisa had requested mediation in the hope of avoiding a harassment complaint. All you did was ask her out and send some email. People do this all the time. When did that become harassment?

You left the voicemail messages so you could talk to Lisa. You want to know what’s wrong.

You had a great time when you and Lisa went out to dinner and thought she did too. In fact a couple of your mutual friends, Juan and Marcia, said you should go out with her and the two of you make a good couple. Marcia talked to Lisa after that dinner and said Lisa had a good time, and Marcia thinks she doesn’t answer email because she’s just busy.

When you got her email saying she was getting too much mail from you and didn’t want to get close, you stopped sending her personal things and just sent a few jokes or such, the kind of stuff you send other friends. If Lisa doesn’t want to go out on with you right now, that’s too bad, but you still want to be her friend. You still have some hope that Lisa will change her mind some day.

The group of friends you both belong to is very important to you, and you don’t want that group to be divided. You certainly want this misunderstanding to be resolved without any ill will between you.
DELTA DELTA AND THE SISTERS

General Instructions

A couple of months ago Delta Delta and The Sisters jointly sponsored a ball. The men of Delta Delta wanted to have the ball at The Sisters' house because it is very attractive, and the women agreed. DD and TS are next door to each other. Before the ball the two Presidents, Michael and Rose, agreed that the bills would be split 60:40, with Delta Delta paying more because the event was at the sorority. No maximum was set on party expenses by either house. The party was open to members of the two organizations and their guests from outside, but not the general public.

The alcohol at the party was monitored, but several men and women arrived already very drunk. Several people were quite rowdy, threw up on the carpet, and broke things. There were people at the party not from DD or TS. There was no agreement before the party about paying for damage.

Delta Delta has paid all the bills, and now there is disagreement about The Sisters paying part. Michael, president of DD, sent Rose, president of TS, a bill for $800 for TS's share of the expenses. Rose called him and said that because of what happened at the ball and the expenses of repair and clean-up, TS did not feel they should pay anything. Michael said that he was stunned by her response and felt it violated their agreement. They did not meet to discuss the disagreement.

DD went to the IFC to complain that TS should have to pay up. The IFC recommended mediation. Michael requested mediation, and Rose agreed. They are representing their organizations with authority to settle the disagreement.
Secret Instructions for Michael

You are quite concerned about the finances of that party. You are incensed by the bills coming in. Your house has paid $2,000 for this ball which is more than you expected. You asked Rose to pay $800, and she refused. You expected to pay for some modest decorations, but The Sisters claim they spent hundreds of dollars (was it $500 or $600?) on painting and rug cleaning and carpentry for repairs. That is really a capital improvement to their house and not just for a party. You are also amazed at the amount of beverages that were consumed and wonder if the sorority maybe kept some of the extra cases of soda.

You also just cannot believe that TS is now refusing to pay anything for the party, and you are really worried about this. At least a dozen of your brothers are now going out with women living there. Obviously you cannot afford to break off relations with them. Besides, they throw the best parties at MIT, and the men of DD will want to continue these balls each fall.

To you it seemed like a good dance. Maybe a bit raucous -- and of course, there were one or two miserable messes when the brothers drank too much pre-party -- but that is not unusual. Was there some nick or hole in someone's door? But that was supposed to have been made by an interloper from another frat. So what could have persuaded Rose into reneging completely on $800? She is the new president of a relatively new sorority -- is it inexperience? She must have expected to do some clean-up. Why did she think they were only paying 40%, not 50%, of the bills?

Come to think of it, maybe you and she should talk about a few other things also, since the whole subject of responsibility has come up. For example, a couple of the TS women eat at DD almost every night, and there is a lot of discussion, whether jovial or not, among the brothers about eating bills going up. A number of women are taking up a lot of time on the brothers' computers. About a dozen women come over to use the house bibles, to prepare for exams, because TS has not been in existence long enough to have good bibles, and they sometimes monopolize those resources before exams. You need to straighten a few things out with Rose and get $800.

Michael: Remember that you personally want to settle this, but you think the brothers are expecting you to be tough. You are sad and confused about why this dispute arose. You try to avoid conflict and want this one to go away. Come to a settlement only if you really would under the circumstances.
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Mediator Training
Role Play #1

Secret Instructions for Rose

Your whole house is really angry with Delta Delta. The ball was superficially a great success from the point of view of other students, but it was a mess for the Sisters. It is a real pain in the neck for you as the new President of a two-year-old sorority which is next door to these jerks. Six of your friends are dating DD men. DD men sleep over all the time. Come to think of the THAT is a pain also. Men in the bathrooms, men in the halls, men eating our breakfast. Of course, it is a mixed blessing. The DD men are good about sharing their course bibles with some of the first-year women before exams, since TS does not have many bibles yet, and they organize some fun activities.

The ball was fun for a while. But several DD men got very drunk. Somebody you do not even know put his fist through a bedroom door -- who WAS that clod? Several men seemed to really go after a couple of the freshmen women. Many of The Sisters are angry about the way they behaved. One sister drank too much pre-party and took a DD brother up to a room that was not even hers. They both threw up. The DD guy somehow tipped coke onto a little rug that the owner of the room really prized and then came back down banging into the stairwell and splashing more coke onto carpets and wall paper. There must have been few others who joined in some of the crashing about. Really it was a bad night. It has cost you many, many hours to deal with all this, and it cost $435 -- to pay for cleaning the rug, buy paint, get a brand new door, scrape and repair the damage to the stairwell, clean the wallpaper, etc., etc. That was the cost with Sisters doing all the work. It would have served DD right if you had contracted with outside carpenters and painters to do the work and sent them those bills. Of course, a little painting needed to be done anyway, but not all this work.

Now that TS has paid the $435 for cleaning and repairs, Michael is demanding another $800. The Sisters are short of money and cannot afford another $800. You budgeted $500 for this party and have no extra money now, though you may have some, maybe $200, in a month or two. It does not seem fair for TS to pay more than the $435 they have paid so far. The men drank most of the beverages and ate most of the food anyway, and so much disappeared that you think some of them must have taken bottles home.

Rose: You are embarrassed both because the ball, which you urged other Sisters to agree to, turned out badly and because DD filed a complaint with IFC, making TS look like cheapskates who do not pay their bills. You want to show you will not knuckle under to DD, but are under pressure from several Sisters who want the dispute settled because they date DD men.
LEE AND RICKY

General Instructions

Lee and Ricky, both Sophomores, have known each other and lived on the same floor since Freshman year. They have many of the same friends on the floor but have never liked each other. Lee is a 6.1 major, very active in IM sports, enjoys social activities, and describes Ricky as a nerd. Ricky is double majoring in 8 and 6.1, plays violin in the String Sinfonietta and in a professional quartet in Boston, is more quiet, and describes Lee as a goof-off.

At first their mutual dislike did not matter -- they just ignored each other and went their separate ways, but recently their paths have been crossing more and more often. Last term they happened to take the same politics seminar and engaged in some very heated discussions in class. Last term also Lee left a UROP, and Ricky happened to get a UROP in the same lab just at that time. Each was making derogatory comments about the other to mutual friends. About six weeks ago Ricky and a serious boyfriend, Wen*, broke up, and in the last two weeks Lee has started showing up with Wen. Lee says it is a casual dating acquaintance. Ricky publicly accused Lee of trying to cause the break-up and of treating Wen badly (Wen lives in a different house). This week Lee became furious on learning that Ricky had succeeded in getting a very desirable room in the room assignment process for next year, a room Lee also wanted. Lee accused Ricky of cheating in the process. Departing students “will” their rooms to friends. Because the senior who willed his room to Ricky was not a particular friend of Ricky’s (nor of Lee’s), Lee accused Ricky of breaking the rules by paying money to him for the room. People on the floor are starting to take sides. Life on this floor promises to be very uncomfortable next fall. The Graduate Resident Tutor suggested mediation, and Lee called mediation@mit.

* If Lee and Ricky are male, Wen is female.
Private Instructions for Lee

Ricky is pathetic! Ricky has only three or four friends on the floor, studies most of the time and is making your life miserable. You have loads of friends and plan to run for a house office next year. You do not want this poor worm to go around bad-mouthing you and screw up your chances.

What’s more you think Ricky may have been responsible for you being asked to leave your UROP. You thought you would be able to continue it this term and didn’t understand the professor’s rather brief comments about changing the direction of the project. But you do know that somehow Ricky seemed to have a UROP there within a few days.

You started dating Wen after Wen and Ricky broke up and don’t see what business that is of Ricky’s. You and Wen don’t talk about Ricky. But Ricky is talking about you!

Now Ricky has somehow come up with the best room on the floor for next year, a room that you really wanted and hoped to get. Admittedly, there was no certainty that you would get it, but you don’t see any way Ricky could have gotten it honestly.

At the beginning you announce that what you want out of mediation is for Ricky to move off the floor and leave you and Wen alone. As the mediation progresses, you consider other options. What is most important to you is to come out of this looking like a “good guy” to others on the floor.
Private Instructions for Ricky

Lee has had it in for you since the beginning! Lee is jealous of your grades and of your UROP. (The gossip in the lab is that Lee got fired from it because for not doing much.) Lee is shallow, has many acquaintances and few friends and always seems to be angling for an advantage.

You regret now accusing Lee of causing the break up with Wen. You know that isn’t true. You just lost it when you saw them together.

Now Lee is jealous of the room you’re getting next fall. You got the room fair-and-square, by being nice to the departing senior but not by any payment of money. But Lee just doesn’t want to believe that.

You hate all this hostility but are skeptical that mediation will work. You aren’t going to give up your room for next year just because Lee wants it and don’t see what else would make Lee stop the war. You don’t actively encourage your friends to take sides but feel caught up in the storm that seems to be building between factions on the floor and expect to find yourself in the minority, because Lee has more friends. You begin the mediation blaming Lee for the trouble but, as the mediation continues, are willing to forego assigning blame to work for a plan for the future which will let you co-exist without open warfare.
SHERRON AND TAIWO

General Instructions

Sherron and Taiwo, both Course 9 grad students, have known each other for five years and have been living together intimately for two years. They had thought it would be a life-long arrangement, but now they have decided to split up, because Taiwo is moving to Baltimore next month.

Eighteen months ago they jointly bought a powerful computer. They were going to divide the cost equally, but Sherron did not have enough money to pay half at the time. Taiwo charged the $3,200 cost on a credit card, and Sherron has been making sporadic payments, which total about $900 so far. Sherron uses the computer the most. When they bought it, they never considered what would happen if they broke up.

It has been common in their relationship for Taiwo to contribute more than half of the expenses, like rent and utilities, and for Sherron to do most of the chores.

Taiwo wants to take the computer to Baltimore. Sherron objects that it is necessary for work here, and Sherron cannot afford to buy another one alone.

They own some small items of furniture and kitchen equipment jointly, too. Taiwo does not want to take them to Baltimore.

They knew Taiwo would finish first but had never discussed what they would do when that happened, both assuming they knew the answer.

Both are "out." Sherron is active in gay organizations and wears a pink triangle. Taiwo does not, but friends know Taiwo is gay (though Taiwo's parents have not been told).

Taiwo requested mediation.
Secret Instructions For Sherron

Very much in love, you were devastated at Taiwo's decision to break off your relationship. Taiwo just announced one day (about two weeks ago) about accepting the post-doc at Hopkins, all the way in Baltimore, without ever discussing it with you. Taiwo's desire to leave you came as a shock. You thought Taiwo would wait until an opportunity came for a post-doc in the Boston area, so the two of you could stay together.

You need a good computer but do not know what to do about the one you both now own. There is no way you could pay Taiwo $3,200 for it -- in fact it would be cheaper to buy a new one. An equally powerful machine could be purchased now for $1,950. You have very little money to spare, no TA, no help from parents.

You want to keep the furniture and kitchen equipment you own jointly, partly because of the expense of replacing them and partly because it is too much trouble to replace them while working hard to finish up a thesis project. You expect to finish and have Ph.D. in hand in about one and one-half years.

You are the more quiet and compliant person in this relationship. You usually fall in with what Taiwo wants. You don’t, for example, mind that Taiwo is not out with the whole world as you are, because that’s Taiwo’s choice. It did not occur to you to argue with Taiwo's decision to move -- you just accepted it.
Secret Instructions For Taiwo

You were really sad at Sherron's decision to break off their relationship just because you got a great post-doc at Hopkins. You feel there is no reason not to keep it going -- maybe Sherron could find a place in the Baltimore-DC area after finishing up, probably in one or one and a half years. But, two weeks ago when you decided to accept the Hopkins position, Sherron just said, "Well, I guess that's it for us. Just like that, we're through. Just go!" There was no further discussion.

You feel Sherron must not really be in love, or else Sherron would share your excitement at getting a post-doc at Hopkins, the best place in the world in your field, and would be planning to move down soon.

You will not really need this powerful computer but know Sherron cannot afford to pay the whole $3,200 and do not want to give it to someone you will never see again. You would be willing to keep it and refund Sherron's $900 (You have enough money). That would, however, leave Sherron without a computer.

You are the more domineering person in this relationship. Sherron usually falls in with what you want -- which has so far worked out well for both -- and you expected Sherron to be ready to move to be with you as soon as possible. It never occurred to you that any other arrangement was possible.

You also feel a little uncomfortable about not having told your parents about your relationship with Sherron (or about your sexual orientation at all) and wish sometimes that you could be out with the whole world like Sherron. You have not, for example, told the people at Hopkins and gave them a very quick answer when they offered you the position to make it appear that there was no one else for you to consult, to avoid the question of whether you would like to confer with your spouse (!) before deciding.
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Role Play #4

JANET (JAMAL) & ANNIE (ARNIE)

General Instructions

Janet and Annie work in the same six-person office. Janet’s title is senior office assistant, and she has been in this office seven years. She does a lot of typing and telephoning and making appointments but also performs some of the functions of an office manager, such as ordering supplies, arranging the annual office party, and calling the payroll service when the checks don’t arrive on time. When there is a vacancy, Janet is the one who puts the ad in the paper and collects applications, though her boss does the interviewing and hiring.

Annie has been here two years. She handles all the computer data entry and other record keeping. She backs up everyone’s computer weekly and can sometimes help with problems others experience with their machines. She also fills in for the receptionist while she is at lunch. When Annie first came, she thought Janet was an equal, though somewhat more familiar with the office. She now knows that Janet thinks she is loftier, and Annie resents that.

Both have complained to their boss. Annie says Janet is constantly telling her what to do, interrupting her demanding work by insisting that she do some other task, and criticizing her in front of others. Janet says Annie is uncooperative, is always bothering other people by stopping at their desks to chat, and destroys the smooth operation of the office by coming back from lunch very late, so that the receptionist is always complaining to Janet about having to go late. Yesterday afternoon they had a very loud argument, screaming insults at each other. Their boss threatened to fire them both unless they resolved their differences. A co-worker suggested mediation. Annie called to request mediation, and Janet agreed.
Secret Instructions For Janet

You aren’t really sure this mediation is a good idea. You agreed out of fear -- when your boss told you and Annie to shut up and threatened to fire you both, you really thought you might lose your job. On reflection now you think your boss is not going to fire you. You make this office run. Without you it would come to a halt, and your boss knows that.

All you did yesterday was criticize Annie for being late from lunch. She was 25 minutes late! She totally flew off the handle and started calling you ignorant and pushy and bitchy! She is the one who should be fired. She has never worked smoothly with you (or the others, though they don’t complain), and the office would be better off without her.

You especially resent her remarks about your grammar. She is always correcting what you say and implying she knows so much more. She is just a computer operator, and they are a dime a dozen. Any criticism you make of her is related to work, like her extremely messy desk and always being late. You believe you get paid much more than she does (though you don’t actually know how much she makes).

You expect to be in this office many years and do not want any black marks on your record because of her.
Mediation@mit
Mediator Training
Role Play #4

Secret Instructions For Annie

You know you shouldn’t have lost your temper yesterday, but Janet had been particularly nasty the past few days, and you had had it. You often skip lunch or work late and don’t feel you have done anything wrong by taking a few extra minutes for lunch once in a while. Where does she get off telling you what to do anyway! You don’t work for her.

You once heard her tell someone (she makes a lot of personal phone calls) that she is the office manager, but she isn’t. Your checked with your boss. She bosses everybody around, though, and the others just take it. You tried to make friends with her at first, but she acted so superior that you gave up. She is not actually very smart. Her English grammar is terrible, and she doesn’t know the first thing about computers.

You probably won’t stay in this office very long, but you don’t want to be fired now. You want to have time to find another good job -- there are plenty out there -- and want a good recommendation from your boss.
CARL AND LOUIS / CARLA AND LOUISA

General Instructions

Carl and Louis live in Quad House, in the same suite in separate singles. The six residents of the suite are all juniors and have known each other since their first year.

Carl, president this year of the African-American students organization, has been holding executive committee meetings, with refreshments, in his room for the eight members of the committee, once a month for the last seven months. Louis, a leading member of the Rugby Club, a team with no players of color this year, has been holding pre-match strategy sessions for the team in his room for over a year.

One Friday evening two weeks ago Carl and Louis invited their organizations to the suite for separate meetings. (This happens to be the first time the two groups have met there at exactly the same time.) As they assembled, words were exchanged between members of Carl's group and Louis's teammates over the last parking space in the lot. It seems there was a race for the space and the rugby player won. When voices were raised in the hallway, Carl and Louis tried to quiet the groups, but a fight started. Eventually, Carl and Louis threw punches at each other. Racially derogatory terms were exchanged between the two, just as the Housemaster entered the suite to quell the commotion.

When asked what happened, Carl said that a rugby player started calling his friends names based on their race and color, and that he, Carl, tried to stop the fight that the rugby player had started. Louis said that the situation started with Carl began bringing his friends over for a party every month. Louis and his friends had become tired of the suite being taken over by Carl's friends. Actually neither one knows how the fight started because neither saw it happen.

Their Housemaster talked to them separately and urged both to settle their differences in mediation to avoid disciplinary action in the house. Louis requested mediation, and Carl agreed. Both are attending as individuals, not representing their groups.
Secret Instructions for Carl

Carl has had very bad experiences with white people. He is from a working class black neighborhood and came to MIT very distrustful of whites because of his lifetime of negative experience with them. The only time he feels comfortable and at ease is when he is with other blacks. He does not feel like he could ever trust or let his guard down with a white person. He thinks MIT is a hard place to be, and the only way he has survived is through his association with other blacks in his organization, who are his main support group.

His freshman year Carl found himself rooming with five white suitemates, because he did not understand the room assignment process. He did not want to request a change because that would put him in the spotlight and because he wanted to prove he could get along with white people. By the time of this incident, he still did not fully trust his suitemates but was starting to like them. He thinks that the incident is the first overt act that justifies his distrust of Louis.

Carl feels he never excluded Louis from any party. When his black friends came over, that was for a meeting of their Executive Committee. They hold all the other African American organization meetings in their room in the Student Center. At the Executive Committee meetings they did have a little food and, on occasion, beer. Carl does not expect Louis to invite him to rugby team strategy sessions and does not invite Louis to his meetings.

Carl is furious about the incident, because his African American friends blame him for having a racist roommate and because he feels his trust in Louis was betrayed. However, Carl's religion, Christian American Methodist Episcopal (historically black Methodist church in U.S.), means a lot to him. He truly tries to live it. Deep in his heart, he wishes that he could find reason to be more trusting of all people, including white people, and live in a world where there is more true brotherhood. As a good Christian, he knows he should resolve this dispute with Louis but does not see how to.

Neither he nor his friends (as far as he knows) plan to bring formal charges against the rugby players over this incident.
Secret Instructions for Louis

Louis is upset with Carl because Carl "takes over the suite" and has parties where Louis does not feel welcome. Louis feels that if one suitemates is going to have a party, with food and drink, then all suitemates should be invited. He thinks Carl's obvious exclusion of white suitemates from his social occasions is the racist behavior. The African American organization events could take place in their space in the Student Center. The rugby team, however, has no official space in which to hold their meetings and have always had strategy sessions in someone's room.

He has not had that much experience with blacks and feels uncomfortable around people who are so different from him (he is middle class, white, Protestant). He considers himself a liberal, however, and tries to be fair and open-minded. He does not want to be a racist or to be considered a racist. In fact, at first he thought he would like to get to know Louis better, before he got so angry at him for taking over the suite all the time with his own exclusive friends, all black people who seemed unfriendly.

Louis wants to settle this dispute because he is embarrassed about the incident and afraid the black students will bring harassment charges against him and the other rugby players, which would be even more embarrassing.
INSTRUCTIONS TO MEDIATOR

The dispute is between two roommates, Carl/a, who is black, and Louis/a, who is white. All you know is that they (and several other people) got into a fight.
TERRY V. YUEN

General Instructions to the Mediator (and Parties)

It's February. You are the president of the fifteen-member Happy Dance Group. They gather weekly to practice and perform on campus every spring. Most of the people have belonged for years, but Terry and two of Terry's friends joined just four or five months ago. They have brought new energy and new ideas, which have generally been welcomed, but also want to make changes which the old-timers don't see the need for. For example, they are insisting that everybody has to get involved in a fundraising project, selling candy, to raise money for a Group trip, to a dance competition in New Jersey. The Group has never gone on an overnight trip before, and some members are very enthusiastic, while some think it's a bad idea. Other members, led by Yuen (who was president last year), have objected to the candy sales as "dumb" and refuse to participate. The whole project, going to the competition in New Jersey and raising money for the trip, was voted down at the last meeting; people seemed to have made up their minds in advance and had very little discussion. Now Terry & co. refuse to do anything with the Group. As people start choosing sides, the Group is in danger of splitting up or stagnating, doing nothing but bicker. Both Terry and Yuen have asked you to talk the other person into being reasonable.
Secret Instructions for Terry

You first heard of the Happy Dance Group from a friend about six months ago, came to one meeting, and then joined. You convinced two of your friends to join about the same time. It seemed like a fun group, and you didn't know then that they hadn't had a new member in eons. You enjoyed making suggestions about choreographing several dances. At first most people seemed to welcome your input and suggestions, except Yuen, who has never liked you. Yuen always puts down your ideas. Gradually others seemed to be listening more to Yuen, and your ideas never go anywhere now.

You particularly can't understand why Yuen (and others) are against raising some money. No matter what activities they want to do, even if they don't like your idea of going to the competition in New Jersey, the Group will still need money. Selling candy is sooo easy. (The candy co. ships it here, with the signs you need for the display and everything, and will take back any not sold, so there's no risk.) Yuen and his buddies refuse even to discuss the idea! They voted it down with no discussion at the last meeting.

There are some open-minded people, about five or six, who want to consider the candy sale, though, and you're thinking of splitting off with them and forming your own Group.

When pressed, you'd admit that you have never liked Yuen and really enjoy convincing the rest of the Group to do things Yuen objects to. You'd also admit you don't want to split up the Group.
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Mediator Training
Role Play 6A

Secret Instructions for Yuen

As past president of the Happy Dance Group and a member for three and a half years, you expect other members to pay attention to what you have to say. You have shown how much you care about the Group. Terry has not and, in fact, cares only about his/her own schemes.

Terry's schemes are not well thought out. Going to a dance competition might be OK. This overnight trip to New Jersey that Terry proposes would, however, cost a lot more than they're projecting or can raise by selling candy, which would mean that people would have to pay part of the cost themselves. You know there are two or three members of the Group who just couldn't manage that and don't want to embarrass them. Besides, selling candy is demeaning -- kids do it to raise money for their Little League uniforms! This is not a commercial organization, and you want nothing to do with fundraising. Terry has a habit of telling the five or six people he hangs out with about his ideas ahead of time, so they are already gung-ho and don't listen to any other point of view when he brings the ideas up in the larger group. He tries to railroad his ideas through, and there never seems to be real discussion. That strategy backfired last time, when Terry’s idea was voted down.

You don't worry about Terry's threat to split the organization -- Terry's two friends would be the only others to leave if Terry leaves, and they would all be good riddance. But if they don't leave, you want them to stop making trouble in the Group, to discuss ideas (everybody's ideas, not just Terry's) openly, and mostly just to dance and enjoy it.
Walker is a student interested in literature. Quick is a student interested in politics. Both are juniors and have known each other slightly since freshman year.

They are taking a Russian History class together and are working together on a final project. They have been studying together occasionally for this class, and about two weeks ago Quick suggested, and Walker agreed, that they work on the final project together. It is supposed to be a creative, joint project. It is due in ten days.

They have reach an impasse, disagreeing on how to proceed on that project. Quick proposed, and Walker reluctantly agreed to do a debate between Lenin and Tsar Nicholas. The debate would be held in the midst of their election campaign: The issue would be whether to continue the monarchy vs. adopting a new Communist constitution. They would each take one side and present the debate to the class. Now both feel they cannot go ahead with the idea as they discussed two weeks ago.

Neither can do a joint project with anyone else in the class, because they all paired up two weeks ago. If Walker and Quick do not reach agreement on a joint project, they will have to do individual projects, though the prof. said she would look more favorably on joint projects.

Walker discussed the situation with the course TA, whom both of them like. The TA offered to mediate informally, and Walker agreed to ask Quick about it.
Secret Instructions for Quick

You were happy to see Walker take this course. You have liked him/her since you were freshmen two years ago, but have never become friends. You offered to study with Walker at the start of the course, and have enjoyed it, though you have been helping Walker more than the other way around. You are clearly the better student.

For the final project, the professor encourages students to work together on a team project. Students may work individually, but their grades will suffer. She also grades on creativity--she has said in class that the last thing she wants is dry presentations or boring papers. You asked Walker to be your partner, and Walker agreed. Walker's idea was to write a paper about Tolstoy, but you think he's boring. You resisted that idea firmly, suggesting a different one sure to catch the professor's attention: a hypothetical debate between Lenin and Tsar Nicholas staged in Moscow, 1917, as if they were in the midst of an election campaign in which the Russian people would decide whether to keep the monarchy or adopt a new Communist constitution.

Walker finally agreed, and you let her/him choose which side to play in the debate. Walker chose Nicholas, without much enthusiasm, you thought. In the last two weeks you have thrown yourself into the project, and are excited about doing well. Since then, you have worried about Walker's commitment. When you have asked how things are coming, Walker has said just, "OK, I guess," and has put off your offers of help.

Three days ago was the last straw. When you offered to give Walker your 15 pages of notes for Lenin in exchange for Walker's notes, you found that s/he had hardly any notes at all! You lost your temper, and said, "Walker, you're being lazy! This is going to be a really dumb project if you don't get busy. Why won't you even let me help you out?!" Walker walked out.

You now think maybe you should drop the joint project and work alone. You don't think your grade will suffer much if you do, because you think this joint project will be awful. You still like the idea of a debate, but it won't work unless Walker does her/his part right. You consider handing in a debate script as a written project, and letting Walker do a boring Tolstoy paper on her/his own. You haven't spoken with Walker since your argument three days ago. But you left a voice mail message saying you were planning to work alone.

You think Walker was being irresponsible, foolish, and petty to walk out instead of discussing things rationally, and to ignore your offers to help.Walker asked you discuss the situation with the course TA. You agreed to try because you like the TA, but don't have much hope for salvaging the project.
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Mediator Training
Role Play 6B

Secret Instructions for Walker

You are an excellent student, and work hard to get good grades. You want to go to law school and need a good grade in this class to keep your high GPA. You have also been quite interested in the class and motivated by the material; you are a literature major, and Russian literature is one of your favorites.

Quick is a nice person, someone you've liked for the two years since you were freshmen. But you've never been close friends. S/He seems quite bright and contributes a lot to class discussions. Every now and then, however, Quick's arrogant ways have irritated you.

Your idea for the project was to analyze the writings of Tolstoy (a hero of yours) in their social and political context. You would be the literary critic, and Quick could provide the political context (since Quick likes politics so much).

You were sure the project would be excellent. You were ready to pour yourself into this idea. BUT, as soon as you brought it up, Quick put it down as boring and insisted on the debate idea. You hate this idea, having no desire to study either Lenin or Nicholas, and having a terrible fear of speaking in public. But Quick insisted, and you felt you should go along because s/he had always been willing to help when you studied together. You thought you could get over your aversion to speaking in public, but the more you think about it the more you loathe the idea. You don't want to admit your fear to Quick now.

Since you agreed to Quick's idea two weeks ago, your motivation has been low. This hasn't been helped by Quick's nagging about how much material you have. Three days ago Quick asked to see your notes. You had done a lot of research condensed into 4 pages of dense notes that seemed to you quite adequate. Quick had a fit. He called you lazy and dumb. You countered, saying you had done as much as s/he, but that the project was flawed and should be redesigned. You then rushed off to class (you were late). You haven't talked with Quick since then, but received a voice mail message saying Quick intended to work alone.

Right now, you see Quick as arrogant, pushy and insensitive. S/He is hyper-rational, ignores feelings, and never seems to listen to you!

You decide to talk with the course TA, and explain your predicament: "This is impossible! The final project is due in 10 days, and I need to work as part of a group or I'll get a lousy grade. Even if I start an individual project now, all my work so far will be wasted!" The TA suggests that s/he could discuss the matter with both of you and try to find a solution. You agree to have the situation mediated by the TA because Quick will not listen to anything you say.
LINDA AND BOB

General Instructions

Linda and Bob are graduate students who share a large office along with two other students, Millie and Raj. Bob has been in the department for four years, while the others have all been around for just two years. Bob and Raj are good friends, and socialize a lot. Raj, Millie and Linda are also on good terms, having taken several classes and worked on projects together. Within their office, each has a desk and file space (one person on each wall), but there are no dividers or visual barriers.

Bob has had a swimsuit calendar above his desk since the others moved into the office. It bothered Linda at first, but she didn't say anything to Bob or anyone else. Bob has just recently put up a new calendar, which Linda feels goes over the line. The models are in extremely suggestive poses, and some are topless. Linda feels that this new calendar crosses the line.

She confronted Bob yesterday, but it did not go well. She said, "Bob, that calendar is tasteless and disgusting! Why don't you take it down?" Bob replied that he didn't feel it was offensive—they were just pictures of beautiful women. When Linda repeated her request, he said "This is my desk—I don't think you have the right to tell me to do that," and shrugged her off.

Linda decided to go to one of the student mediators for the department. The mediator offered to talk with Bob, and see where things went from there.

THE ROLEPLAY STARTS WITH THE MEDIATOR'S PRIVATE MEETING WITH BOB
Private Instructions for Linda

You can't just sit back and let Bob do this! You are not willing to have women depicted as sex objects in degrading poses in the place where you have to work every day. It's extremely awkward, to say the least. You don't want to bring anyone else into the office for fear they'll be offended, or wonder why you put up with it.

Bob is a funny and likable guy in some ways, but has an arrogant and sarcastic streak that has always bothered you. He also tells jokes and makes wisecracks that are filled with innuendo and don't seem appropriate to you for a working environment. You thought that he wouldn't put up a fight about taking the calendar down, since he ought to know that it would be offensive, and may even be sexual harassment. You didn't want to threaten him with any kind of formal action when you talked with him—it would cause a huge mess among your mutual friends and in the rest of the department. But you are willing to go there if that's what it takes.

You talked with Millie about the calendar, and Millie also feels uncomfortable, but doesn't seem willing to confront Bob with you. You decide to go talk with the student mediator, who is supportive, and says s/he will talk with Bob. You tell the mediator that if Bob doesn't agree to mediate, you will file a formal complaint for harassment.
Private Instructions for Bob

Linda has always gotten on your nerves a little bit. She doesn't have much of a sense of humor, and is kind of self-righteous when she's upset about something.

When she got on your case about the poster the other day, she really came on like a member of the Moral Majority, with The Truth about what's Right and Wrong. You think Linda should apologize for coming on so strong! That calendar just happens to be the only one you have, and you have a right to make your space the way you want it. It's not as if it's hung on the front door or anything—she doesn't have to look at it if she doesn't want to.

You agreed to the mediation reluctantly. When the mediator begins to talk about the calendar, you say "There's nothing to talk about—it's my own desk, my own space, and I can do what I want with it." You think the mediator is going to take Linda's side, and you're going to be "the bad guy."

You have conflicting feelings, not wanting to give in and wanting to avoid a big hassle. You are damned if you're going to back down and get rid of the calendar! You might be willing to move it, if pressed. You do wonder if Linda might file a complaint against you -- that would be bad. You doubt that you would lose, but it would be a lot of trouble. You need to stay in this office one more year.
Private Instructions for the Student Mediator

When Linda first came to you, it seemed pretty clear that Bob was in the wrong and could get in trouble. Having that kind of material displayed openly, and refusing to take it down, would constitute evidence of a "hostile environment" in a harassment hearing. Linda told you that if Bob does not agree to mediate, then she will file a formal harassment complaint.

You meet privately with Bob, to get his view on the situation, then ask him if he'd be willing to meet with Linda and have you informally mediate.
CLAUDIA AND SUNIL

General Instructions for Claudia, Sunil, and Supervisor

Claudia and Sunil are both low-level administrative staff in the Finance Office, at the same level and close in age and experience. Claudia joined the Finance Office three years ago, and Sunil came seven months ago, from Pakistan. Sunil speaks excellent English. Since Sunil's arrival, the two have worked on more and more joint projects. This is the first time Claudia has complained to Supervisor about Sunil.
Private Instructions for Supervisor

Claudia has come to you complaining that Sunil is not pulling his weight, not a team player, and getting in her way. You are somewhat surprised, because you thought the two of them worked well together. The project they finished last month went well, and you had put the rumors of discontent down to office gossip. Yesterday you became aware of an argument between them. You heard his voice raised but didn't quite catch what he said to Claudia. You can find out specifics from her.

You have not observed Sunil slacking off. He seems to be catching up on some bits of work that had been put off during their last big project, and you are satisfied with him spending his time that way now. The next big project, the computerized analysis, is not due for three or four weeks. You have been satisfied with his work and gave him a good six-month evaluation. Sunil has seemed a little quiet, maybe a little less cheerful than usual, lately, but nothing serious. The argument with Claudia yesterday was not typical.

You approach your conversation with Sunil in a positive light. You like him. You also want to enable your employees to work out their own differences and approach resolution of the issues involving Sunil and Claudia initially as a mediator. You will switch hats and become the decision-making supervisor only as a last resort.
Private Instructions for Claudia

It looks as though Sunil just isn't going to make it here. For a while he seemed to be working hard, and the joint project you completed last month went well. But lately -- was it, maybe, just after his six-month evaluation? -- he has been doing much less work and has become very short-tempered. You have seen him snap at others in the office, and yesterday he chewed you out over a trivial point, whether to put the new fax machine where the old one was or in a new place. You had suggested the new place, which happens to be closer to your desk, because that would make room for a scanner you hope to get. He said that there was no reason to move the fax, because it was working fine where it was, and that you were not thinking of others and were too lazy to walk a few extra steps to the old location. What a jerk!

He also has done NOTHING on his part of the new computerized analysis project. It's due in 3.5 weeks, and he hasn't started. You have your part about half done but can't really go much further until you see what he has, because the two parts have to fit together. You told him he is holding you up, but he was evasive and just said that there's enough time. In your first conversation with Supervisor you insist that it will take over 2 weeks to fit the two halves together and finish it, but if pressed on that point, you conclude that one week would probably be enough. You are the kind of person who likes to have everything done ahead of time and want to go full-steam-ahead on this project now even though it could probably wait a week or two.

You complain to Supervisor that Sunil is not pulling his weight, not a team player, and getting in your way. You want Supervisor to take him off the computerized analysis project and assign someone else to work with you.
Private Instructions for Sunil

This is a tough month for you because it's Ramadan, the month of fasting for Moslems, and you cannot eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. You are always edgy during Ramadan, but this year it's worse than usual, because you're in a new country and new job. You have not been able to adjust your work load as you'd like.

Work is going all right. Supervisor gave you a good evaluation last month. In the past working with Claudia seemed pretty smooth, and the joint project you finished last month went well. But lately she has been pestering you to start the computerized analysis project, and yesterday she just went too far. Without consulting anyone, as far as you know, she told the administrative assistant to put the fax machine in a new location. It was typical of the way Claudia just takes over sometimes and ignores other people, and you were not going to stand for it. You are tired of her giving orders. You were pretty hard on her, though.

No one would start a big project in Ramadan -- it's a time for straightening out and cleaning up loose-ends. Supervisor seems to be satisfied with you doing that now, but Claudia has been giving you a lot of grief about starting the new computerized analysis project. Ramadan will be over in 2 weeks, and you think that you will have enough time to work on the project then and still make the deadline. You cannot see any reason why Claudia is pressing so hard on this now. Even waiting 2 more weeks, you can get your part done several days before the deadline (3.5 weeks from now) and have time to work with Claudia on putting the two parts together and finalizing it.

You do NOT like to talk about your religion to Americans. They don't understand it and either treat you as strange or ask a lot of questions you don't want to answer. So, you haven't told anyone at work that it is Ramadan, and you're pretty sure they have no idea. It will NOT be easy for you to talk about this. You do have a good relationship with Supervisor, though, and if put at ease, you might give some limited explanation.