

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Talking The Walk

Conversations for Ethics
& Compliance Teams



CASE #29

Is It Just Me?

If you see something, say something. It couldn't be more important, and it seems easy enough. But what if you're not sure it's as bad as you think? And if everyone else thinks things are great? And if you don't want to be a spoilsport? Or a bother? Or a snitch? What if you're the only one who can't sleep at night, and the rest of your team is enjoying their sweet dreams? Find out in this month's Talking the Walk.





The Case

“What’s wrong, babe?” Jett asks, knowing that I still haven’t fallen asleep. “Work again? It’s good to be dedicated, and I’m proud of how hard you work. I love how much you care—about everything. But you need to put it away. You need rest, and whatever it is, you’re not going to solve it tonight, and maybe not ever.”

I turn over, thinking that he’s right. But also knowing that sleep isn’t coming any time soon. I feel too twitchy. Things just don’t sit right. And I can’t get over what I didn’t say earlier today at the office, and on other days. And how worried it makes me.

Kinsley is probably right. No one else is questioning her behavior. Maybe people do this kind of thing all the time; she’s worked in more firms, so she’s seen more than I have.

I don’t always know how to take her certainty. Some days I admire her confidence. Other times, I look back and just feel steamrolled.

Lately, I’m just tired. Tired of the corners we seem to be cutting. Tired of being the only one who ever asks questions. Tired of the rolled eyes and unsubtle sighs. Tired of feeling like a squeaky wheel on a pushcart that everyone wants to be a quiet, self-driving, electric car. Tired of being over the top – “OTT” as my friend Charlotte texts when I spiral (again) about work.

The next morning, I am highly caffeinated, but still weary.

Meet the Characters

Emma—Just turned 31; dedicated and conscientious but hasn’t advanced as quickly as some of her cohort because she’s more risk-adverse by nature.

Kinsley—33 years old; a rising star recruited to the firm by a partner who worked the other side of a merger with her and was impressed by her creativity and ambition.

Clint—36 years old; directs the department that houses Emma and Kinsley; had been under pressure to increase billable hours but has been doing better since Kinsley joined the team.

Clint drops by my office. “Hey Emma, just wanted to pop in and say kudos on the end-of-year billing for the Rosenstern account. I don’t know how you and Kinsley pulled it off – and maybe I don’t want to know, haha – but you’re quite a team.” He pauses.

“You OK this morning? You look a little tired,” he asks. I shrug noncommittally.

“Guess I know why,” he chuckles with approval. “Thanks for giving your all. You’re a true team player.”

Yeah, but at what cost? I wonder to myself. But on the outside, I nod to Clint, smile and say, “Thank you.”

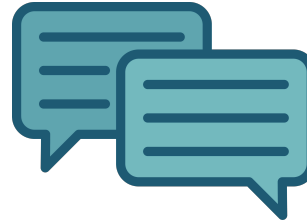
To be continued...

FROM THE ECI DATABANK

Data Points

▶ **72%**

Most top managers take the time to talk to employees about workplace risks and how to address them. Seventy-two percent of US workers say this happens regularly.



Nonetheless, many employees see management focusing on results, even at the expense of standards.

Forty-three percent of US employees state that high achievers who use questionable means are rewarded by their organization for their success. Furthermore, more than one-third of employees (34%) believe that their supervisor prioritizes meeting goals ahead of considering how those goals are met.



▶ **80%**

Four in five employees in the US have faced work situations where they were unsure of the appropriate legal or ethical action to take.

▶ **13%**

More than one in every eight employees who experience uncertainty in the US rarely or never seeks guidance in dealing with the concern.



Among employees who observed misconduct and chose not to report it, one in five (20%) cited their belief that what they observed wasn't significant enough to report and more than one in eight (13%) stated that "the behavior is acceptable in the organization."

▶ **One in Five** employees globally believed their observation was not significant enough to report.