

**Mid-Level Leadership Protocol: E5-E6, O3-O4**

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**INTRODUCTION [5 minutes]**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am accompanied by [INTRODUCE OTHERS IN THE ROOM AND THEIR ROLES]. We are from RAND, a non-profit, nonpartisan research organization that does public policy research. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. We are here to understand soldier and leader perspectives on gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the Army. We are particularly interested in the climate and culture that either fosters or prevents gender discrimination and sexual harassment from occurring. This discussion is designed to last no longer than 60 minutes.

This discussion is part of a study funded by the Army G-1 to develop a greater understanding of the factors that contribute to gender discrimination and sexual harassment, leadership response to these incidents, use of (and barriers to use of) existing programs and services, gender integration and the general climate and culture in your unit. The findings from this study are intended to help the Army develop more effective training, a key component of prevention efforts for gender discrimination and sexual harassment.

**CONSENT (to be read aloud to the group)**

We will be taking notes during all discussions, but we will not record the name of anyone present or mentioned in this session. We will not use the names of individuals or units in any reports. There should be no discussion of open cases or investigations so as to respect the privacy of individuals involved.

Participating in this discussion is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any (or even all) of the questions. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you have questions about your rights as a participant or need to report a participation-related injury or concern, you can contact RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee using the contact information provided to you in the read ahead. [HAND THEM/REFER TO THE INFORMATION SHEET PROVIDED]

We are each walking into this room with different histories and life experiences. Given the topic of our discussion today, it is possible that our discussion could bring up difficult

feelings for some of us. Please remember that you can step out of the room [or take breaks] at any time.

Please do not discuss anyone else's comments after the group is over. Although we are asking everyone in the group to keep each other's answers confidential, we cannot guarantee that the other participants here will do so. Please do NOT answer any questions in the discussion that you do not feel comfortable sharing in front of the group. You will have an opportunity to provide written comments after the group discussion.

Additionally, we also want to emphasize to you that this is not an official channel for reporting abuse, discrimination, or misconduct. If you would like to talk to someone about any abuse, discrimination, or misconduct in order to get help or file an official report, you should contact one of the following directly: someone in your chain of command, a chaplain, a medical provider, the Equal Opportunity (EO) Counselor, the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), or Victim Advocate [*included on handout*].

**Do you have any questions before we begin?**

**Do you agree to participate in this discussion?**

[SHOULD PARTICIPANTS ASK ABOUT SELECTION INTO THE STUDY: We used data from prior Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys (WGRA) and data from the Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS) to select installations and units (usually at the battalion level) to include in our study. These installations include those that fell above and below the overall Army average rate of sexual harassment and units that fell in the top and bottom quartiles in terms of various climate measures.]

### **A. Introductions [5 minutes]**

*[Objective of this section: The goal of this section is to learn about leadership background/experience and to elicit general information about the unit.]*

We'd like to begin by learning about your background and your experience in the military.

1. Please tell us a little about your military career/experience. How long have you been in the military?

- a. How long have you been in this position?
- b. How long have you been at this particular brigade or battalion/installation?

### **B. Understanding Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment [10-15 minutes]**

*[Objective for this section: The purpose of this section is to explore leadership perceptions of gender discrimination and sexual harassment and to understand to what extent gender discrimination and sexual harassment may occur in their unit and more broadly in the installation and Army.]*

We would now like to focus specifically on gender discrimination and sexual harassment that may take place in the Army. We want to assure you that this is not in any way an evaluation of you or your particular unit or command, but rather we would like to understand the general factors that may contribute to sexual harassment and gender discrimination in various kinds of Army units.

To ensure we're all on the same page, we note that AR 600-20 defines **gender discrimination** as "the act, policy, or procedure that arbitrarily denies EO or EEO because of sex, including gender identity...to an individual or group of individuals."<sup>1</sup> Please also refer to the full definition provided on the handout. *[Definition will also be included on a handout]*

2. To what extent do you feel **gender discrimination** is happening in your unit? (When we say "unit" we are generally referring to a small group of soldiers who work together, probably a squad, though it could be larger like a platoon or company.)?
  - a. (If applicable) How do you think this compares to your prior unit(s)?

AR 600-20 defines **sexual harassment** as "conduct that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and deliberate or repeated offensive comments of a general nature".<sup>2</sup> Please also refer to the full definition provided on the handout. *[Definition will also be included on a handout]*

3. To what extent do you feel **sexual harassment** is happening in your unit?
  - a. (If applicable) How do you think this compares to your prior unit(s)?

### **C. Discussion of Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Behaviors [30 minutes maximum]**

*[Objectives for this section: The purpose of this section is to show participants a list of gender discrimination and sexual harassment behaviors from the UCMJ and to ask them to what extent these behaviors are occurring, the role and response of leadership, and likeliness of reporting. Note that the questions are structured so that we do not use the terms gender discrimination or sexual harassment purposefully in order to understand whether the responses in this section are different from in Section B.]*

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<sup>1</sup> Army Command Policy AR 600-20, 24 July 2020, p. 202:  
[https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB\\_ID=1020451](https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=1020451).

<sup>2</sup> Army Command Policy AR 600-20, 24 July 2020, p. 208:  
[https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB\\_ID=1020451](https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=1020451)

We would now like to show you a list of behaviors and then we will ask you a series of questions to understand how often these behaviors are happening in your unit and why you think they may be occurring.

[Refer to first set of behaviors—*gender discrimination*—on handout].

- Mistreated, ignored, excluded, or insulted you because you are a [man][woman]
  - Said that [men][women] are not as good as [men][women] at your particular job, or that [men][women] should be prevented from having your job
4. Thinking about these behaviors [*gender discrimination behaviors listed above*], which behaviors do you feel are occurring in your unit?
- a. Probe for: which of the above behaviors are occurring most frequently
  - b. Probe for: extent to which these behaviors are happening at this installation, Army in general

[Refer to list of second set of behaviors—*sexual harassment*—on handout]

*Group A: Sexual Harassment Verbal Actions*

- Repeatedly told sexual “jokes” that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Repeatedly made sexual gestures or sexual body movements that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Repeatedly told you about their sexual activities in a way that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Repeatedly asked you questions about your sex life or sexual interests that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Made repeated sexual comments about your appearance or body that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Embarrassed, angered, or upset you by repeatedly suggesting that you do not act like a [man][woman] is supposed to

*Group B: Sexual Harassment Other Actions*

- Made repeated attempts to establish an unwanted romantic or sexual relationship with you that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Intentionally touched you in a sexual way when you did not want them to
  - Repeatedly touched you in any other way that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Displayed, showed, or sent sexually explicit materials like pictures or videos that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Took or shared sexually suggestive pictures or videos of you when you did not want them to that made you uncomfortable, angry, or upset
- Sexual Quid Pro Quo Behaviors
  - Made you feel as if you would get some workplace benefit in exchange for doing something sexual

- Made you feel like you would get punished or treated unfairly in the workplace if you did not do something sexual
5. Thinking about these behaviors [*first ask Group A: Sexual Harassment Verbal Actions and then ask for Group B: Sexual Harassment Other Actions*], which behaviors do you feel are occurring in your unit?
- a. Probe for: which of the above behaviors are occurring most frequently
  - b. Probe for: extent to which these behaviors are happening at this installation, Army in general
6. **[For behaviors that ARE identified in the above questions]** Thinking about [*gender discrimination and sexual harassment behaviors respondents noted in above questions as happening in the unit—facilitator restates these behaviors*], what factors do you think contribute to these types of behaviors occurring in your unit?
- a. Are there unique factors of your unit that make these behaviors more likely to occur relative to other units? If so, what are they?
  - b. [*Can probe if not mentioned above*] How, if at all, does the *gender composition* of your unit factor into why these behaviors may be occurring?
  - c. How, if at all, does *rank* factor into why these behaviors may be occurring?
  - d. [*Can probe if not mentioned above*] How, if at all, does *working closely with civilians* (in addition to active-duty members) factor into why these behaviors may be occurring?
7. **[For behaviors that are identified as NOT happening in the above questions]** Why do you think these behaviors [*behaviors not identified as happening*] are not occurring in your unit?
- a. From your perspective, what are some of the reasons these behaviors are not occurring?
  - b. [*Can probe if not mentioned above*] Are there unique factors of your unit that make these behaviors less likely to occur relative to other units? If so, what are they?
  - c. [*Can probe if not mentioned above*] How, if at all, does leadership factor into why these behaviors may not be occurring? (e.g., What does leadership do to prevent gender discrimination and harassment from occurring?)
8. If someone in your unit **saw or became aware any of these behaviors**, what would they do?
- a. How do you expect them to respond?
    - i. Probe: (how) do you communicate those expectations?
  - b. How likely do you think they may be to intervene? Why or why not?
    - i. If not likely, how could leadership encourage intervention?
  - c. How likely do you think they would be to report it? Why or why not?
    - i. If not likely, how could leadership encourage reporting?

9. If someone in your unit **experienced** any of these behaviors themselves, how likely do you think they would be to report it? Why or why not?
  - a. If not likely, how could leadership encourage unit members to report these experiences?

#### **D. Training/Conclusion [5-10 minutes]**

*[Objective of this section: The goal of this section is to understand current training content and delivery modes and to elicit perspectives on what would be most effective for future training on gender discrimination and sexual harassment.]*

Before we close, we would like to gather your feedback and suggestions on how training around sexual harassment and gender discrimination can be improved.

10. What information is important to highlight as part of training and preventing gender discrimination and sexual harassment?
11. What could the Army do to better support your efforts to prevent and respond to gender discrimination and sexual harassment in your unit? (e.g., leadership messaging, SHARP staff, and/or training personnel, specific materials, 'knowledge checks')
12. Lastly, we know that gender discrimination and sexual harassment have been well-known problems in the Army for many years, and there have been many efforts to prevent these behaviors from occurring. Why do you think these behaviors are still happening (i.e., why do you think gender discrimination and sexual harassment are still a problem in the Army?)
13. Before we close today's discussion, is there anything else that we did not discuss that you would like to share?

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. We are very appreciative of your responses and your time.

If you would like to provide us with additional feedback directly and privately, please feel free to send us any additional comments at our email which can be found on the information sheet at [XXXX@rand.org](mailto:XXXX@rand.org). This information will not be shared outside the research team. Research team members will monitor this email and will incorporate your feedback in our project notes without your name or unit name attached.