

Senior-Level Leadership Protocol: E7-E9, 05-06

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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 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 Army units. 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 and experience.]

We'd like to begin by learning about yourself, 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?
 - c. Have you previously held official command orders?

2. Please tell us a little about the demographics of the soldiers under your command.

- a. What is the gender composition?
- b. What is the breakdown by rank?
- c. Do soldiers in your brigade/battalion work alongside (closely with) civilians?
- d. How do the demographic characteristics of the soldiers under your command compare to those in other brigades/battalions at this installation?

B. Understanding Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment [40-45 minutes]

[Objective for this section: The purpose of this section is to explore leadership perceptions of gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the Army and to understand what factors may contribute to both.]

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 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, as well as across the Army, more generally.

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."¹ Please also refer to the full definition. *[Definition will also be included on a handout]*

2. What factors do you think contribute most to **gender discrimination**?
 - a. How, if at all, does the *gender composition* of a unit factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur? (When we say "unit" we are generally referring to a small group of soldiers that work together, probably a squad, though it could be larger like a platoon or company.)
 - b. How, if at all, does *rank* factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur?
 - c. How, if at all, does *working closely with civilians* (in addition to active-duty members) factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur?

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".² Please also refer to the full definition. *[Definition will also be included on a handout]*

¹ Army Command Policy AR 600-20, 24 July 2020, p. 202:
https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=1020451.

² Army Command Policy AR 600-20, 24 July 2020, p. 208:
https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=1020451

3. What factors do you think contribute most to **sexual harassment**?
 - a. How, if at all, does the *gender composition* of a unit factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur?
 - b. How, if at all, does *rank* factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur?
 - c. How, if at all, does *working closely with civilians* (in addition to active-duty members) factor into whether or not these behaviors may occur?
4. What factors do you think contribute to these types of behaviors **not** occurring?
 - a. Are there unique factors of a particular unit that make gender discrimination or sexual harassment less likely to occur as opposed to in other units?
5. How much of a problem do you think **gender discrimination** is for the soldiers under your command?
 - a. That is, how common is it?
 - b. If it is a problem, what does it look like? That is, what types of behaviors occur?
 - c. How much of a problem do you think **gender discrimination** is for the **leaders** under your command?
6. How much of a problem do you think **sexual harassment** is for the soldiers under your command?
 - a. That is, how common is it?
 - b. If it is a problem, what does it look like? That is, what types of behaviors occur?
 - c. How much of a problem do you think **sexual harassment** is for the **leaders** under your command?
7. What do you expect of leaders in terms of *preventing and responding to* gender discrimination and sexual harassment [*beyond regulatory compliance*]?
 - a. Probe: (how) do you communicate those expectations?
 - b. Probe: clarify whether efforts are primarily prevention or response
8. What have you found works well in *preventing* these behaviors, both for gender discrimination and sexual harassment?
 - a. (*If training is raised*) What should prevention training look like in terms of content or information discussed?
 - b. What have you found does *not* work well in preventing these behaviors?
 - c. Thinking specifically about preventing these behaviors from occurring, what (if any) challenges have you encountered?
9. What have you found works well in *responding* to these behaviors?
 - a. What have you found does not work well when responding to these behaviors?

- b. Thinking specifically about responding to these behaviors when they do occur, what (if any) challenges have you encountered?
10. What could the Army do to better support your efforts to prevent and respond to gender discrimination and sexual harassment? (e.g., leadership messaging, SHARP staff, and/or training personnel, specific materials, 'knowledge checks')

C. Conclusion [5-10 minutes]

[Objective of this section: The goal of this section is to understand perceptions around why gender discrimination and sexual harassment are still occurring in the Army despite numerous prevention efforts.]

11. 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?)
12. 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. 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.