

**Listen to a conversation between the Human Resources Manager and Mr Johnson, an employee who is unhappy with the way he is treated by his boss.**

**Optional exercise** Listen to the conversation and decide whether the following statements are true or false

1. Mr Johnson doesn't do any paperwork.
  2. Mr Johnson has tried to approach Tim about the problem.
  3. His boss never listens to his employees.
  4. His boss always asks employees if they can do the work.
  5. The HR officer suggests that if he takes his problem directly to his boss it could be more positive for him.
  6. The HR officer tells him to arrange a meeting by phone.
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HRO Good Morning Mr Johnson, how can I help you?

Mr J Well I'd like to talk to you about Tim Bond, the department manager.

HRO What seems to be the problem?

Mr J Well... ever since Sandra left the department I feel like I've been targeted to do all her work, as well as mine. Tim has made me work overtime; I'm expected to attend too many meetings and I seem to be spending a lot of my time doing unnecessary paperwork.

HRO I'm sorry to hear that....

Mr J And...on top of that, I'd specifically asked if I could leave early last Friday, as I'd done a lot of overtime during the week. But we had a deadline on Friday afternoon and even though I'd finished my specific work I was expected to help other colleagues finish their work too.

HRO But surely that is a positive sign showing that Mr Bond has a lot of trust in you, in getting you to help other colleagues.

Mr J Yes, but I feel like I'm being singled out! Other colleagues get to leave early, and they don't have such a lot of work to do.

HRO So you feel he's been making unrealistic demands on you?

Mr J Yes, absolutely.

HRO Do you think it's because Mr Bond is unaware of what you're doing.

Mr J Well he never seems to ask us to do a job. He just delegates, and that's another thing, he never listens!

HRO Right. [pause] Have you approached Mr Bond about this particular problem?

Mr J I've tried to approach him but whenever I go to his office he is either in meetings, or he is never there. It seems like he just has no time for us.

HRO Well at this stage it would be better if you approached him directly. If nothing else, showing that you've tried to solve the problem yourself, before you take it further, makes it clear that you're not just a complainer and can boost your credibility. Why don't you send an email requesting a meeting with him in private?

Mr J Hmm, I'd be a bit worried about his reaction. I wouldn't know what to say!

HRO Well firstly, you'll need to plan what you are going to talk about before going ahead with a meeting. You can always take notes to which you can refer. This shows that you have considered what you need to discuss.

Mr J Ok.

HRO This is obviously a delicate situation so be very careful not to criticise as this could bring on a defensive reaction. You need to be diplomatic when you speak to him.

If after you have spoken to him in a rational way, you still find he is being unreasonable come and speak to us and we can arrange a meeting between the three of us. But do remember you need to have evidence for us to be able to take further action.

Mr J OK, I'll send him an email now to request a meeting, and we'll see what happens from there. Thanks for your advice.

HRO Good luck and let us know the outcome.

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**Answers:** 1F, 2T, 3T, 4F, 5T, 6F