

## **STRATEGO AERO III**

### **Mediation**

#### **General Instructions**

Dana Idris talked with a number of people in corporate headquarters and again with Sandy King and Chris Harding. As a result Dana took off for the new plant in the southwest to talk with Sandy and Chris together.

As you prepare for the mediation to come, please think about several questions:

- Will Dana be a "neutral" mediator? Do the readings on mediation and caucusing apply to managers as they act as third parties?
- What are the power dynamics here? What kinds of power, if any, does each person have? How should your character use his or her own power and how will your character estimate and react to the power of others?
- What kind of bargaining situation is this? What would your character like it to be?
- How should your character use the analytic tool set forth in Christopher Moore's chart (attached) on Conflicts and Possible Interventions?

You should prepare your character for the mediation, using the readings, the Moore chart, and all your negotiation skills. You will have 30-40 minutes for this mediation. Please be prepared at the end to present briefly what happened at your mediation. In this case you should go where your character leads in any realistic direction (short of violence!). You may, if you like, prepare together with any other student who has the same character; as always, please do not share your private instructions with anyone else.

### **STRATEGO AERO III - DANA IDRIS**

Dana Idris went to talk with Stratego's top AA/EO manager, and with an old, long-term mentor in the top administration. Both of them knew both Dana and Chris. The conclusions of those meetings were:

- Stratego really needs both Sandy and Chris.
- Top management at Stratego genuinely cares about race relations, and Dana will be evaluated in part by the success of the new plant in the Southwest. ("You must show leadership here," "Lots of training programs are available.")
- There is no evidence at all that Stratego products are being sold illegally to any buyer.
- This is not a good time for any negative publicity about the company.

Dana called back, both to Sandy and Chris. Dana in fact had a long conversation with Sandy about options: "Would you in fact rather handle this directly, in person or on paper, with Chris?" Sandy thought quietly. "I now wish I had tried that. Maybe it could have worked, before Chris had that meeting with employees. Perhaps I could have written a note...Chris is such a prickly bastard and never listens...but a note might have worked before. But it's too late now."

Dana had also raised the idea of shuttle diplomacy; Dana could talk first with one and then the other. "I think I would rather be there," Sandy replied. "Besides, Chris never looks at me. You need to see this for yourself."

In the event, Chris also agreed to a three-way meeting. "Sure, come on down. I want to show you what's happening with production. And you and I can help Sandy understand about protecting the image of the company, when employees are complaining."

Dana then confirmed the meeting with Sandy. "Sandy, I want to tell you, I really care about making sure your environment is professional and productive. We are looking at succeeding with diversity in this new century; we should have put racism behind us; I'll do whatever I can to help. Moreover, I'm glad to tell you there is no evidence at all that Stratego products are being smuggled or sold illegally to any buyer. I was relieved to hear this....and I know you are. Oh, also, we need a chance to talk about the image of the company with respect to talking with employees"...

Dana: **Stay with your role; be your character** wherever it leads you; make up realistic facts as you need them if you wish to; however use all the data in the case.

### **STRATEGO AERO III - CHRIS HARDING**

Dana called back Chris to check if it would be helpful to come and meet together with Chris and Sandy. Chris had readily agreed. "Why not? We'll get a chance to go over our progress on production schedules. And you and I can talk with Sandy about protecting the company image when employees raise foolish problems."

Chris hung up, ruminating about safety issues, the Right to Know law, the production snafus successfully handled in a few short months. The whole plant was on schedule, an almost unbelievable achievement. A very important accomplishment for a defense contractor in a very competitive business environment.

About the only thing Chris hadn't gotten to was working with Sandy on taking over. Hard to do. Chris didn't know really how to begin. In fact, Chris was beginning to find it very difficult to talk with Sandy. Sandy was terrific technically but seemed to think that was all that was needed, and kept falling back on technical skills instead of learning how to manage. Touchy person, also. No sense of humor, always stiff, socialized only with blacks and Hispanics (who never invited Chris over on the weekend).

In fact Sandy, who came from around here, had never invited Chris anywhere. And look at this latest incident.. Why the hell hadn't Sandy come in directly with these problems instead of going over one's head to Corporate? End-running your boss....great behavior. It would take months to shape Sandy up. At least Chris would have Dana to help shape up Sandy with respect to protecting the company image. Sandy should protect the company image when employees complained.

Chris sat back wearily. Hopefully it would in fact not take too many months to get Sandy up to speed. It was damned lonely in this Southwestern town. Maybe it was time to think of retirement. What rewards were there in fact, for the long years of service and troubleshooting for the company?

Chris:

**(Stay in role; be your character;** use all the facts you have for the case; invent any other reasonable facts you need; go wherever your character takes you. Do not settle unless you really would settle if you were Chris.)

### **STRATEGO AERO III- SANDY KING**

Dana Idris had just called to set up a three-way meeting: Dana, Chris, and Sandy. Sandy felt a bit relieved. Dana expressed support, spoke firmly about the need for a professional environment free of racism, and said they would take up the subject of protecting the company image. Sandy was very relieved that Dana understood the image problem. People of color throughout the plant were expressing serious tension about racism.

Idris had investigated the smuggling question and had told Sandy that there was no evidence that any Stratego equipment was being sold illegally. Sandy still privately wasn't so sure. "Who really knows? Who can you believe anyway?", thought Sandy. Besides, there was still the perception of some employees that Stratego products were being smuggled to extremists in other countries. The company had an image problem; this problem really needed to be addressed. "I wonder," thought Sandy, "what we can possibly do to sensitize people in this company to show how the black and Latino employees actually feel?"

Sandy still felt angry and tense. When would Chris leave, anyway; when could Sandy take over? As long as the boss went on talking as Chris had, the plant would always be a tinderbox. It was true, Chris was a genius at production schedules, but things were now in good shape; Sandy also felt on top of the problems. When would Chris go?

It was odd, this conversation with Dana. Dana had asked Sandy why Sandy had not gone back directly to Chris. Was it that Dana just didn't want to be bothered? Was Dana blaming the victim? Or was it a compliment? Sandy could almost hear again what Dana had said: "You know, I think you are first-rate, and I believe you can in fact handle this effectively, if you decide you would rather do that." Would that have worked? Maybe not. And in any case the decision was made—Dana was coming. Sandy felt, on balance, it was just as well Dana was coming. Chris never listened to anyone, never asked technical advice, never met your eyes. And the jokes...just thinking about it infuriated Sandy all over again.

Sandy made two calls before Dana came, checking out with friends the possibility of getting another job. One had a lead that could be very interesting. In fact it was a relief just to imagine getting out.... "Who needs it?" thought Sandy exhaustedly.

Sandy:

**(Stay within your role;** use all the data you've been given on this case; invent any other reasonable data you need; be your character wherever it

leads you. Do not "settle" unless you would really settle if you were Sandy.)

## **STRATEGO AERO IV**

### **Adjudication**

Dana Idris went to talk with corporate AA/EO and the general counsel, and with several long-term colleagues in senior management. Their universal advice was that the situation described by Sandy King was intolerable. Dana summarized the conversations in a few quick notes:

- Stratego's commitment to equal opportunity requires immediate, effective management action. If Sandy King has outlined the situation accurately, it must end immediately.
- It's important to the company to have no negative publicity about race, especially right now.
- Dana will be held personally to account if things don't go well.

What will you do first? Please plan your strategy and tactics, as Dana. What are the interests of each of the actors? How will Chris and Sandy each feel about your proposed next actions?

In planning your strategy you may use anything you have learned about these people and this company during the mediation. But you should not assume that any mediation has take place. This adjudication of the matter assumes that Dana just received Sandy's complaint, went to seek advice, and has now decided to handle things directly as an "arbitrator."