**Teaching Notes**

**Does Smudging belong in the workplace?**

By

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**Learning outcomes**

-Students consider how to best resolve workplace conflicts

-Students should be able to identify different values at stake in this case and the perspectives of diverse people

-Students should be able to articulate the reasons to support the use of smudging in the workplace and the arguments against this practice

-Students should take a position on this decision and present a well reasoned argument to support it

- Students should consider whether cultural practices such as smudging should be exempt from laws about smoking in the workplace

**Audience:** This case is appropriate for college classes and especially courses in Native studies, human services, philosophy, political science, public administration, sociology, health, law, religion, and management.

**Teaching Approaches**: Various ways of teaching this case are possible using individual assignment or in class group processes.

**Role playing** is one possible approach with the students divided into different roles and asked to come and enact the next step of this scenario where the various employees present their views to Anna and Anna announces a decision.

The case might also be assigned as the first step in a **research assignment** with the students asked to do research on various aspects of this case including 1) the law, 2) the scientific research around traditional healing practices such as smudging, 3) the use of smudging in different tribes, and 4) literature on conflict resolution.

**Discussion groups**. Dividing the class into small groups is another approach that is suggested. Students read the case in advance and come to class prepared to work the cases in small groups. They are divided into groups of 5-7 people (the optimal number for effective groups) and asked to respond to discussion questions such as those below. They record their conclusions and report out to the whole class after spending about 30 minutes on their questions. Reporting out promotes accountability and the sharing of diverse perspectives. The questions can be divided among the groups. This is a jigsaw approach if the questions each group works are different.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Is it appropriate for an employee of an urban tribal office to perform a traditional smudging ritual and impose her spiritual and cultural beliefs on others? Why or why not?
2. Could cultural revitalization of an urban Indian population be cultivated and maintained by incorporating smudging and other Native rituals and values in the workplace?
3. Do urban Indians have a right to be Indian? What does this mean?
4. What are all the possible approaches to the dilemma in this case and the pros and cons of each approach?
5. Does the supervisor have the authority to tell this employee what personal traditions they can or cannot do in this environment?
6. How are conflicts like this best resolved?
7. What could be the possible ramifications for Anna’s decision in this situation, one way or another?
8. What do you think Anna should do and why?
9. Role Play: Anna has called a meeting with all the staff to discuss this issue. Assign members of the class to play each role.