

Investigation Presentation Hypo

The Office – An Investigation Gone Wrong

The party committee at a mid-sized company's Scranton branch decided to host a fantasy football kickoff party during the workday as a team-building event. "Fantasy Football Fantastico" was scheduled to start on a Friday at 2pm and run through the end of the workday. The party happened at a sports bar half a block from the office. All employees were expected to attend because the branch manager Michael was going to make announcements about quarterly earnings and other company news.

A corporate representative named Fred came from headquarters to attend the event. He was being groomed to take over the territory that included the Scranton branch. Fred's boss had directed him to visit the office and "win over" the employees. Fred was especially taken with the receptionist Pam.

The party happened in a side room that was just next to the bar. It was loud, and the party got rowdy. Pam was sitting just outside the party room chatting with Jim near the bar. (Pam and Jim were just friends, but they talked a lot.) Fred was sitting with Michael, the HR representative Toby, and a couple male employees. Michael noticed that Fred kept staring at Pam, so he asked him teasingly whether "he wanted to kiss her or something." Toby immediately chimed in, "Michael, you know that's not appropriate." Michael protested, "No, I mean it. I really think he wants to kiss her." Toby again protested, "Michael, come on. You can't say things like that." Toby wandered off, obviously frustrated.

The group of guys chatted about things around the office, and Michael kept steering the conversation back to Pam. Finally, he burst out, "Fred, I just don't think you can do it. I know you want to, but I bet you can't kiss Pam by the end of the night. I bet you \$20. Nah, I'm just kidding. But really. . . I bet you can't do it." Fred said, "You're on!" All the other guys laughed nervously, and then everyone started placing bets.

The group went their separate ways. A while later Fred walked up to Pam and started talking. Michael called Jim over to show him something, so the two of them were alone. Pam could tell Fred had had a few drinks. He kept asking her, "Don't you want a boyfriend?" He kept moving closer and closer. Then he leaned into her, apparently for a kiss. She pushed him away. By then it was about 5 o'clock. Nobody was around, so Pam announced she was going home.

Pam went into Toby's office Monday morning and reported that Fred had come on to her. She complained he kept trying to kiss her and made her feel uncomfortable. She felt scared because he was a corporate manager and she might lose her job if Fred was unhappy with her. Toby asked Pam to make a written complaint, so she wrote out what happened and signed her name.

Company policy says that where an employee in a management position engages in unwelcome physical contact, particularly contact of a romantic or sexual nature, with a subordinate, the manager will be terminated. A review of personnel files shows inconsistent and irrelevant nonsense. The only employee who has been written up is Kelly Kapoor for refusing to participate in a project entitled "Develop Jim To Be a Company Man (DJTBACM).