

## SCENARIO

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST - RECRUITMENT

#### Natural selection

A team leader position in a public authority has become vacant and has been advertised. There have been performance problems with this particular team and in-fighting between team members. An up-line director, Phil, is the chair of the panel, together with Lucy, a manager who oversees the whole section and Jo, an employee from another section.

Following interviews there are two preferred candidates – an internal candidate (who is a current employee in the section) and an external candidate.

Phil and Lucy had both disclosed their working relationship with the internal candidate at the first meeting of the panel but this was not discussed any further. Both candidates are ranked closely and Phil and Lucy want to select the external candidate. Jo disagrees and wants to select the internal candidate because the candidate 'has current first-hand experience in the team and knows the work well'.

Phil and Lucy make their case for 'bringing in new blood' but the panel is unable to agree on one candidate. In desperation, Lucy then reveals that the external candidate is her cousin and that she would find it much easier if she managed someone she already knew well who didn't have 'internal baggage'.

Jo asks whether this relationship should have been disclosed earlier. Lucy remarks that 'employing family and friends is quite common' and is 'part of how we do things here.' Jo then agrees to select the external candidate.

**What is the conflict of interest here?**

**Should this conflict of interest be avoided?**





**If this can't be avoided, which management strategy would be most appropriate?**

*Information used in this scenario is not based in fact, but has been created for the purpose of education and discussion. Any likeness to real persons or events is coincidental.*

