

Teaching Notes

Does Smudging Belong in the Workplace?

Learning Objectives:

To explore the complexities of cultural practices in the workplace.

To gain an understanding of smudging rituals.

To examine the balance between cultural identity and health and safety.

To understand potential legal implications of practicing one's culture in the workplace.

To explore strategies for managing conflicting viewpoints and facilitating equitable solutions within the workplace.

Audience:

This case is appropriate for high school classes, college classes, and undergraduate students. It is especially appropriate for courses in public administration, political science, Native American studies, and sociology.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the cultural and spiritual significance of smudging rituals for Native Americans employees and clients?
2. How can workplaces balance cultural practices with health and safety?
3. What legal considerations should be weighed when addressing cultural practices in the workplace?
4. How can supervisors facilitate discussions and resolutions when there are strong competing viewpoints?
5. What strategies might you suggest to Anna for an equitable resolution for all parties?