

### Introduction:

For this activity, you will learn how to define and identify personal agendas, and study how personal agendas can create conflicts in a Case Study. You will engage in group and small group discussion to explore their understanding of personal agendas.

### Activity Instructions:

1. Watch the *Awareness Test* [video](#) or listen to *A Test of Auditory Awareness* [recording](#) with headphones.
2. Whole group discussion (15 minutes). Reflect on and share your answers to the following questions:
  - What happened for you?
  - How was it to watch/listen to this video? If you missed seeing the moonwalking bear ([Awareness Test](#)) / hearing the man saying, "I am a gorilla" ([A Test of Auditory Awareness](#)), why do you think that happened?
  - What is a personal agenda, and how does it connect with this activity?
  - What are examples of a personal agenda?
  - What drives personal agendas?
3. Small group discussion (10 minutes). Once your instructor divides you into small groups, read the following case study and discuss the questions below:

*Case Study: Eric Tran, a graduate student, is seen less and less during the day by his faculty advisor and other members of the laboratory. It becomes apparent to the faculty advisor, Dr. Martinez, that Eric is working very long hours evenings and nights at times when most of the other laboratory workers are not there. This persists for several weeks, and Dr. Martinez does not think the pattern is a good one. Dr. Martinez approaches Eric and requests that he spend more time during "standard working hours" in the lab. Dr. Martinez argues that interaction with her and with other members of the laboratory is important and that it is best for them all to talk about science regularly. Eric argues that he can work much more efficiently when fewer people are around. He cites the fact that a piece of equipment he was using in his research was continually busy throughout the daytime hours and this was not conducive to him performing needed experiments in a timely fashion. Eric discloses that this was the "straw that broke the camel's back," forcing him into working unconventional hours. Both the faculty advisor and the student hold tight to their arguments and over the next several days the situation between them grows tense.*

Adapted from Case studies – NIH office of intramural research (2003)

- What might be personal agendas of the team members involved here: Eric, Dr. Martinez, other team members?
- How do these possible personal agendas lead to the conflict between Eric and Dr. Martinez?
- What are some ways of easing this conflict?

4. Whole group debrief (10 minutes). Reflect on and share your answers to the following questions:
  - What key insights came up about personal agendas and ways of easing conflict?
  - What is a group situation or team project where you had a personal agenda? How might the conflict have been eased, or how was it eased?
  - What do you want to remember from our discussion today to support your work on teams?