

CATEGORY: Addressing suspicion of abuse	Case Study # 13
TITLE: Late/hurried hiring	DATE: 12-28-2014
SUB-TITLE: inadequate response to reports	
LOCATION: Southeast Asia	
<p>Mr. Smith a young ESL teacher was hurriedly hired in October by the Headmaster to cover for a teacher who was leaving. The teacher was teaching on an annex campus.</p> <p>To the Head of this Secondary ESL Department some of Mr. Smith's behaviors were extremely strange and worrisome: 1. he was extremely unkempt, unshaven, unwashed and he stank; 2. many of his personal belongings were kept at school in the teachers' room; 3. he was extremely disorganized with his mailbox overflowing with memos; 4. he was often unprepared for class, often leaving the class unsupervised in order to collect and create information for the lesson or make photocopies; 5. at his first department meeting he stood up and took over the meeting; 6. he publicly denounced the need for department meetings as a waste of his time; 7. at later meetings he would read a novel and not even recognize his students' names when they were cited for progress assessment; 9. when a substitute teacher covered his class she noticed that he hadn't progressed with any material in over 1 month; 11.-He verbally and publicly attacked the HOD when she addressed his behavior; 12. -The Counselor mentioned that some students were 'unhappy' in his classes; 13. He imposed his attentions on many female teachers and secretarial staff.</p> <p>The HOD became suspicious when Mr. Smith volunteered to initiate a modern dance/ballet club as an extra curricular activity after school as part of his contractual obligation. The HOD observed him preparing for his dance class and it was clear to her (who had a background in dance and physical education) that he knew nothing about dance. The Club started with 17 girls; it dwindled to a handful in one month.</p> <p>The HOD had already begun to keep meticulous notes on all events, based on a gnawing intuition. The HOD reported it to the Head of [annex] Campus (HOC) however, the HOC continued to ignore the concerns of the HOS and did not report it to the HOS. Eventually, however, the HOC addressed the issues with Mr. Smith and was verbally attacked by him.</p> <p>The HOD brought her observations to the Headmaster who she told about the unprofessional behavior but also about the suspicion that something was not right between this teacher and his students. The HOD had no proof except the quick decrease in the number of girls in the dance club, the fact that this teacher knew nothing about dance, her gut feelings and her 'nose.' Certainly, this was not enough evidence to expel him from his contract. Nevertheless, the Headmaster called him in and asked for his resignation by bluffing that someone had complained about his behavior with female students. He did not deny it. It was as if he was familiar with this scenario. He simply asked for a letter and he would</p>	

leave.

The proof came ‘ex-post facto’. After his departure, the HOD was told by the Counselor that quite a few of the female students had told her about being harassed by Mr. Smith- AFTER he left. They described how he touched them and brushed up against them as he whispered and breathed into their ears. The majority of the students were Japanese and Korean and would never come forth with complaints against an employed teacher.... until after they learned that he had left the school.

QUESTIONS-COMMENTS-CAVEATS:

See the 30 Guiding Questions
