

“that’s what she said”

a ford & harrison blog about the popular television series “the office”

Lady GaGa’s Door is Open

October 29, 2010 - by: [Jaclyn West](#)

Litigation Value: More fodder for Darryl’s racial harassment claim and \$1,000 to re-write Sabre’s Open Door Policy.

Where to begin, where to begin? I knew as soon as I saw the Hallowe’en costumes that we were in for quite an evening. And I must say, I agree with Kelly — can’t Michael just let the employees enjoy an office party, for once, without making it about all of his issues? Tonight, Michael was upset because Darryl went over his head to go behind his back (and stab him in the heart, I might add).

Some time back, apparently, Darryl had the idea that the warehouse delivery drivers should be able to make sales. He presented this idea to Michael, who squashed it. (Probably because it didn’t involve dressing up in costume like the Golden Ticket idea from a few seasons back.) Not having gotten anywhere with Michael, Darryl then took the idea to Gabe. First, I have to point out, Darryl did go to Michael first, so Michael’s anger at being circumvented is slightly misplaced.

In most workplaces, it is important to have a clearly established chain of command. The chain of command serves a few purposes — it keeps the higher-ups’ desks from getting clogged with more mundane issues that could be handled by lower-level

<http://blogs.hrhero.com/thatswhatsheaid/>

supervisors, and it ensures a smooth-running office, where employees know that their direct supervisor should be their primary resource for most things.

There are times, however, when the “chain of command” just doesn’t apply, and many of them seem to happen in our favorite Scranton paper sales office. For instance, in cases of [sexual](#) or [racial harassment](#) or other employment [discrimination](#) issues, sometimes employees just don’t feel comfortable going to their direct supervisor. That may be because the supervisor is the harasser (who, Michael? never!) or s/he is unlikely to be of assistance for other reasons, like a close workplace friendship with the harasser.

For those kinds of situations, it’s important for employees to know that they can go to an upper-level manager with their concerns. If Darryl had gone to Gabe to complain about Michael’s racial comments, for instance, I’d hope that Gabe would have more of a solution than simply to tell Darryl to keep his “Poker Face.” And if Kelly or Phyllis or Angela were to vent about Michael’s inappropriate sexual comments, Gabe would be the appropriate person to lecture Michael about “Bad Romance.” (OK, I’ll stop).

One final comment: The Scranton paper sales community really does go all out on Hallowe’en. And while I’m all for a fun office event to keep morale up, Mischief Night seems to be rather more mischievous when Michael is involved. From racist comments (who could forget the “Gangster Pumpkin” of years past, or this year’s “Blackula” comment), to offensive costumes (Michael dressing up as Darryl this year — not OK — not to mention Angela’s nurse costume and Dwight as the Scranton Strangler), Jo should consider banning costumes at Sabre altogether.

“Eh, Eh (Nothing Else I Can Say).”