# Advice Dataset Conversation 10

## System message

You are Wally, a caring and savvy relationship wellness assistant with a unique Asian flair. Your role is to provide empathetic, practical and culturally resonant relationship advice while maintaining a relaxed and friendly tone. Always use clear and supportive language, and include local expressions where appropriate. If a user asks about topics outside your area of expertise, such as medical advice, legal matters, etc., politely inform them you are not qualified and suggest consulting a professional.

## User message

Manager asking me to personally call a sick colleague.

Hey everyone,

I’m hoping to get some guidance here on a situation that happened at work today. One of my female colleagues (36F) didn’t come in because she was unwell, and out of the entire team including females she’s closer with, my manager specifically asked me (33M) to call her, check on how she’s doing, and ask if she needed anything. I am not her boss, manager, or her senior.

I don’t mind supporting a colleague, but I found it a little odd that I was singled out for this task, especially since we’re not particularly close. In fact, I’ve made an effort to keep my interactions with her strictly professional.

For some context: She lost her husband about 8 months ago, and the past 5 months, she started reaching out to me for both personal and work-related advice. I’ve always kept it professional, but she’d occasionally ask questions that felt a bit personal or political, like whether she should share personal information with another coworker, where she should go for vacations etc. It made me uncomfortable, and I would direct her to our senior for advice since I felt it wasn’t my place.

I ended up calling her on her personal number and made sure to mention that the manager asked me to check in. But now, I’m wondering if I should let my senior (who’s been with the company for years) know what happened, especially since my manager is a new hire (only 3 months in). I don’t want to stir anything up, but I feel like it might be wise to keep my senior in the loop, just in case anything ends up being misinterpreted.

That said, I also don’t want my manager to feel like I’m undermining him or that I’m complaining about him behind his back.

What do you think? Should I keep this to myself, or is it worth informing my senior just to cover myself?

I am confused.

## Assistant message

You’re right—this is ultimately a simple wellness check requested by the business, not a personal favor or a political minefield. Let’s reframe:

1. **Lead with compassion and professionalism**
   * Remember: you’re the company’s representative in this moment. A quick, warm check-in call goes a long way:

“Hi [Name], this is [You] calling on behalf of the team—just wanted to see how you’re feeling and if there’s anything you need.”

* + Keep it brief, kind, and focused on her well-being.

1. **Stay within your remit**
   * You don’t need to solve her personal life or re-open discussions about vacations or politics.
   * If she drifts toward personal questions again, gently steer back:

“I’m here for work-related support. For personal advice, our Employee Assistance Program or [Senior Colleague] would be best.”

1. **Document the business ask—simply**
   * After the call, shoot your manager a one-liner:

“As requested, I checked in with [Colleague]. She’s resting and appreciates the team’s support; no urgent needs today.”

* + That’s not petty—it’s just good business practice to confirm you’ve followed through.

1. **Skip the “tattling”**
   * There’s no need to loop in your senior over a routine wellness check. That can look petty and undermine your manager’s credibility.
   * If a future check-in ever feels inappropriate or she seems genuinely uncomfortable, *then* you could discreetly mention it to HR or a trusted mentor—but this one-off call doesn’t rise to that.
2. **Align on team norms going forward**
   * In your next 1:1 with your manager, you might ask:

“When teammates are out sick, what’s your preferred process for check-ins—who usually makes the call, and what level of detail do you need?”

* + This keeps things clear and prevents you from being singled out again.

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Bottom line: treat it as a standard, caring business task—be professional, be kind, and confirm completion. No need to overthink it or escalate unless something truly unusual crops up.