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## Question of the Week

February 14, 2024

### Question

An employee says their manager told them to lose their accent if they ever want to be promoted. Could this be considered discrimination?

### ANSWER

Yes. Discrimination based on national origin is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and includes treating applicants or employees unfavorably because they are from a particular country or region of the world, speak with an accent, or appear to be of a certain ethnic background. Even if the manager didn't follow through on the lack of promotion, ongoing comments from the manager about the employee's accent could also be considered harassment. We recommend that you take this situation seriously and investigate it immediately.

While there are some limited circumstances where an employee's accent might be legitimately and legally career-limiting, these are few and far between. Usually customers, coworkers, and managers just need to exercise patience and seek clarification.

For more information about national origin discrimination, see the [national origin discrimination page](#) on the platform.

*This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.*