

***Jump the Gun* — Study & Discussion Guide**

Single-Viewing Format

Film length: 7 minutes

Recommended session time: 30–60 minutes

Audience: Corporate leadership, managers, teams, educators

Purpose: To examine how perception, incomplete information, and cultural narratives shape assumptions—and how pausing and choosing more generous interpretations can change outcomes.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize how assumptions form in real time with limited information
- Identify how framing, witnesses, and repetition shape belief
- Reflect on how media and social incentives reward quick conclusions
- Practice slowing down reactions and considering alternative explanations
- Apply these insights to leadership, conflict, and decision-making

How the Film Works (Context for Facilitators)

Jump the Gun tells the **same story three times without interruption**.

The events do not change—only the amount of **information** does.

- **First pass:** Minimal context, high ambiguity
- **Second pass:** Added witnesses and social framing
- **Third pass:** Full dialogue and complete context

This structure mirrors how information often reaches us in the real world: first as a fragment, then as a narrative, and—rarely—as a full picture.

Post-Viewing Discussion Framework

1. First Impressions (Immediate Reactions)

Goal: Surface instinctive responses formed during the early passes of the film.

Discussion Starters:

- What did you *initially* think was happening?
- At what point did you feel most certain about the story?
- What emotions came up for you while watching?
- Did your interpretation change gradually, or all at once?

Facilitator Note:

Encourage participants to reflect on their *earliest* assumptions, even if they now know they were incorrect.

2. Assumptions & Missing Information

Goal: Examine how conclusions were drawn before the full story was known.

Discussion Starters:

- What information did you assume—but weren’t actually shown?
- Which details did you give the most weight to?
- How did race, authority, or setting influence your interpretation?
- What did the film *never change*, even though your understanding changed?

Key Insight Prompt:

The facts stayed the same. Only the information changed.

3. The Role of Witnesses, Media, and Framing

Goal: Explore how external perspectives shape belief and judgment.

Discussion Starters:

- How did the presence of people filming affect your perception?
- Whose reaction in the film felt most convincing or trustworthy—and why?
- How might this story be told if seen only through a phone video?
- What version of this story would spread fastest online?

Connection to Culture:

- How do media, politics, or internal workplace narratives reward partial stories?
- Where do clicks, outrage, or speed replace understanding?

4. The Reveal: Full Context & Re-Evaluation

Goal: Reflect on humility, misjudgment, and learning.

Discussion Starters:

- What shifted once the full context was revealed?
- Which assumptions were most clearly wrong?
- How did it feel to realize your certainty had been misplaced?
- What conclusions felt justified in the moment—but weren’t?

Core Question:

- What are the consequences when we don’t get the third version of the story?

Core Themes to Highlight

1. Perception Is Not Neutral

- Our brains fill gaps automatically
- Certainty often comes before accuracy

2. Speed vs. Wisdom

- We are trained to react, not reflect
- Pausing can feel risky—but rushing is often worse

3. Incentives Shape Narratives

- Outrage spreads faster than nuance
- Partial information is often treated as truth

4. Generous Assumptions as a Leadership Skill

- What is the most generous explanation available right now?
- What changes when we lead with curiosity instead of suspicion?

Workplace Application

Reflection Questions:

- Where have we “jumped the gun” in workplace conflicts or decisions?
- When have we relied on incomplete narratives about people or situations?
- How do power, role, or identity affect whose story we believe?

Practical Prompt:

Ask participants to complete:

“Before I react, I will pause and ask _____.”

Examples:

- “What might I be missing?”
- “Who hasn’t been heard yet?”
- “What else could be true?”

Closing Reflection

Jump the Gun isn’t about one incident or one group of people. It’s about how quickly perception hardens into belief—and how rarely we slow down long enough to question it.

Leadership, culture, and trust are shaped in that pause between reaction and response.

The challenge is not to eliminate judgment—but to delay it long enough to understand.