

ENG 3004 Society and the engineer
Assignment 1

1) Enhance workers' sense on preservation of confidential information.

For making certain that privileged information is handled properly by the employee, one of the best ways is to set up clear and strict guidelines for workers to follow.

Even though as mentioned by the reference, "Employees are supposed to maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to them not only by the Company, but also by suppliers, customers and others related to the business", some workers may not be very clear about it and does not even have the basic idea.

As a reference in the ICAC publication, a worker shared the restricted information to his brother for idea. However, his brother decided to use the information to gain benefit and disclose it to one of the middlemen. Even though asking for help was a good initiative, it was not the case when it comes to confidential information. The worker did not intend to share any interest or advantage to a third party. However, his action, by sharing the confidential information, he already offended the engineers' ethic.

Therefore, to avoid similar mistake to happen ever again, it is suggested to solve it by enhancing workers' sense on preservation of confidential information. In detail, the company should make publication and publish rules about handling confidential information to engineers in all levels. To ensure that they get the idea, the company can also make tests and revising courses for workers every several months.

2) Setting up internal punishment system against leaking confidential information.

The first method aims to deal with the problem with a preventive measure by educating. However, other than education, punishment can be a way to threaten engineer from leaking confidential information either.

In view of the case mentioned in ICAC scenario 3.2, The assistant engineer helped the corruption by secretly giving out the confidential information of the price bid from the highest tender.

In this case, it clearly offends the engineers' ethic, as tenders for a specific project should be chosen by quality over price only. Also, the assistant engineer may get benefit in the form of monetary as return of sharing the secret information to the third party.

Engineers are also human and might get attracted by benefits to perform the act of leaking confidential information. The company may not be able to control any attempts from other third parties, but they can restrict their workers not to do so. By introducing an internal punishment system, the company can set up and list out punishment for any engineer who leak the confidential information. With such method, engineers may be tempted by the benefit from third party, but will also be afraid of the risk behind, like losing the qualification as an engineer forever or fine.

3) Building up engineers' design resume within the company.

Other than directly disclosing the confidential information, engineer using his former design in other company in other company is deemed as mishandling of privileged information.

As a reference from the ICAC publication, an engineer made a design in his former company, which he then tries to modify the design and publish it as a new design in his new company.

This act already offended the Rules of Conduct. The engineer has the "moral obligation to honor confidential and proprietary information" from his previous company. The engineer tries to change the design does not make it a completely new design, as it is based on the previous design.

To cope with the dilemma, the company can contact the engineers' previous company to know what projects the engineer was involved in previously. When the new company receives design from that engineer in a similar project, the design should be handled with care.

4) Ensure the information is acknowledged by related personnel.

To deal with the problem of properly handling privileged information, the most basic method is to keep the number of acknowledged personnel to the minimum. As the number is kept to the minimum, the chance of the privileged information being leaked will be the lowest.