

Case Studies

Configuração e Gestão de Sistemas

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This document presents a number of fictional cases aiming to foster discussion on ethics related problems.

Case 1: Accidental Discovery Alice is the system administrator of some company. In this scope, she was asked to repair a personal computer whose performance has been progressively degrading. Alice quickly diagnosed the problem. An instant messaging (IM) service clogged the hard drive with a record of the chats. IM is not strictly forbidden in the company policies but it is not required by the employee to perform her role.

In the record, Alice found a number of personal chats by the employee to whom the computer was assigned. The records clearly expose the personal opinion of the employee against the company administration (even some insults could be found). Before deleting the records, Alice was questioned by the board about the reason for the computer malfunction. What should Alice reply?

Case 2: Alice's Hidden Raise Alice has been feeling that her nice work on the company hasn't received the proper (monetary) acknowledgement. Annual raises will be announced in two weeks. As a system administrator, Alice can easily access the spreadsheet that has been used by the director boards to agree on the next year raises.

Until today, Alice has been fighting against her curiosity and didn't investigate if she was on the list. However, an employment proposal she received today and that must be replied tomorrow is making her think twice...

Case 3: Bob's Dilemma Alice peeked the spreadsheet and an access record was accidentally found by Bob. Bob is an intern junior system administrator under Alice's supervision. The decision of renewing Bob's contract will be taken by the board next month and will depend on Alice's recommendation. However, it is quite easy for Bob to address directly the board and blow the whistle on Alice. What should Bob do?