

DISCUSSION 1

You are a database/system administrator for a large medical database company. Some DNA is found at the scene where a child was kidnapped. There is good evidence that time is limited. You know that you could run the sample against the database which may provide valuable leads - but it violates the reasonable search and seizure clause established by the courts; will open up private medical data for others to see during the search, violate company policy and possibly destroy customer faith in the company. What do you do?

No, searching without a warrant would likely cause a mistrial or similar setbacks to the case. It would be alright to contact the authorities and inform them you could search if there was a valid warrant. Your abilities could help with the search, but it needs to be backed by legal standing.

DISCUSSION 3

You suspect that a particular line of questions on the tech support blog is being used by developers at another company to reverse engineer your product. Your boss asks you to post misleading information to slow them down. What do you do?

Argue against providing incorrect information as it could hurt relations with the public who actually is needing help. Better options would be to remove the question and don't answer it or rewrite the question into a more benign one to avoid revealing information if you have to answer. If the boss still wants to provide incorrect information, make sure it gets recorded that you disagreed with their decision and get that documented somewhere.

DISCUSSION 6

If you strongly suspect that a particular device or software from company Y violates the patent rights of Company X, what should your recommendation to your manager be about purchasing it for your own company even if there is significant cost savings?

First, make sure that company Y is actually violating a patent and could be taken to court over it. If your suspicions are correct, then go with the more expensive product to make sure we have the future support and are ethically clear. If your suspicions are incorrect, then go with the cheaper product. Buying the cheaper one to save costs will become much more expensive if the company goes down.

DISCUSSION 7

You win a design contest sponsored by a supplier for your company. The award is a vacation trip for your family. How should you handle this and why? Does your answer to (2) change if the award is a collection of promotional items (mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc. with logos on them)? How can you distinguish gifts from bribes?

Assuming you won the contest fairly and your position within the company had no influence on the contest, we say you should just take the prize. If there was something like a bribe in exchange, then you are definitely in a questionable area. When you are given a bribe, there is an expectation of something in exchange, such as buying from them or giving someone else a free product or promotion. A gift is given freely, with no intention of something being given in return.