

Ethics Essay

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Abstract

This essay is to mimic a response to the ethical dilemma mentioned in the given context. The author would write as a EHS (Environment, Health and Safety) manager who find some unethical behaviors of his predecessor, and try to inform the management and the remaining employees with the STSs (Standard Threshold Shift), even though they might claim that their STSs are not work related, with further discussion on the ethical dilemma in engineering practices based on the ABIH code and relating materials.

Keywords: Ethic Dilemma, EHS Manager, ABIH code

Ethics Essay

Dear Colleagues

I am Xinyu Liu, the new EHS manager at this local food processing plant in place of our former EHS manager who just retired about one year ago. I am more than glad to see say, the work done by Frank was wonderful, with few number of accident and seldom lost time incidents. I have to say that Frank had contributed a lot to the overall safety performance of our plant, and he is kind of my role model in my career.

However, great might Frank's work be done, there is still things that should have been done. I have to share with you a ethical dilemma that Frank had to face about three years ago, discuss its outcomes and how I should do to prevent similar things as an EHS manager.

It was about three years ago, when Frank, who decided to retire in several years, found that there was 6 confirmed OSHA recordable standard threshold shifts in hearing loss, and 5 of them were in the same band with Frank. For the benefits of their bands, Frank persuaded his teammates and somehow hush these things up, as extra bonus, which might be used on their band, might be given to Frank if they chose to do these. Though Frank and his band mates might argue that their hearing loss were resulted from other resources such as the bands performance and practices, it is by no mean properly to just bury all the recordable down.

According to American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) Code of Ethics, each industrial hygiene should hold his or her responsibilities to clients, employers, employees and the public [Trim \(2007\)](#). It is said in the ethic code that EHS managers should be responsible in the following three aspects, the first is education, experience, competency, and performance of professional services, the second one is conflict of interest and appearance of impropriety, the last one being public health and safety.

Concerning the responsibilities to employees and employers, Frank, to some degree, did not deliver competent service with objective and independent professional judgement in decision making, as he did not report the hearing loss accidents for the bonus he wanted to get. As for the conflict of interest and appearance of impropriety, he did not disclose to clients or employers, he

also did not obey the rule stated in B.3 that, conflict should not compromise legal interest and should not influence or interfere with professional judgement. For the public health and safety, what Frank and his mates had done might be regarded as as a violation of the rule to protect clients, employers, employees and the public from conditions where injury and damage are reasonably foreseeable.

What has done is done. What is of vital importance now is how to solve this problem and prevent the recurrence of such things in the future. According to David et al, The HSP (Health and safety professionals) should be viewed as a non-partisan provider of safety and health services at the workplace [Koh, Muah, and Jeyaratnam \(1995\)](#). It is a good idea to set up bonus for not only the low incident rate but also the improvement on the workplace or the protection for the workers [Martha Godoy \(2021\)](#). As a result, the EHS managers might not pursue solely the incident rate but also the overall safety levels. Besides, it is also a good idea to hire more than one EHS manager in from different background in order that the recordable accidents might not be so easily buried by a person only [Forquesato \(2016\)](#). Finally, why not try to introduce some regularly external scrutinizing.

As for those workers who deemed that their STSs are not due to the workplace noise, clear evidence are not found and might be meaningless to be found for in this case. After all, the previous hearing loss conditions for each member might not be available to the company or too costly, and it is hard to identify and distinguish the real cause for the hearing loss, whether it is the noise on the factories, noise from the band, or just simply noise from somewhere else. Not to mention that someone might deliberately hide the real cause of the hearing loss for money or reputation, just like what Frank and his friends had done in this case.

However, no matter what the true cause of the hearing loss is, it is of vital importance for all the workers to protect themselves well. I mean, please do take care of your own health, like wearing personal protection equipment, and reporting to the EHS managers or relating people that your are uncomfortable with the current environment.

Meanwhile, everyone should keep in mind that, all the employees and employers are

regarded as a whole. The company love each members and are always willing to help everyone out. We treasure everyone's idea on whatever aspects, and your kindly suggestion or reminder might be a great help for us to build a better working environment.

I, together with all my colleagues, have to say apology to everyone for Frank's covering up. But if you find any other questions or any others things you want to say, please DO NOT HESITATE to talk to us. I am always willing to hear from you.

All the best,

Xinyu

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