
✓ Participation W8

✓ **Exercise 1:**

Discuss the possible choices and consequences of each choice in the following scenarios:

1. A top software designer suddenly refused to use the company's e-mail system. He explained that, as a Christian, he could not use a product built by a company that provided benefits to the partners of homosexual employees. He'd basically cut himself off from the team, creating a major obstacle to our product development. You are the team leader. What should you do?
2. A fellow employee told you that he plans to quit the company in two months and start a new job that has been guaranteed to him. Meanwhile, your boss told you that he wasn't going to give you a new opportunity in your company because he was going to give it to your fellow employee now. What should you do?

Do you have an obligation or duty to make a certain choice or to report the situation? Why?

Sample Answer

1.

In this situation, as a team leader, you have several choices, each with its own set of potential consequences:

1. Accommodating the Employee's Beliefs:
 - Choice: Adjusting team processes to accommodate the employee's refusal to use the company's email system.
 - Consequences: This might set a precedent that personal beliefs can override company policies and necessary job functions, leading to potential inefficiencies and disparities in how employees are expected to perform their duties. It could also create a divide within the team and foster an environment where discriminatory beliefs are indirectly supported.
2. Firmly Upholding Company Policy:
 - Choice: Insisting that the employee adheres to the standard communication tools as part of their job responsibilities.
 - Consequences: This approach may lead to the employee feeling that their beliefs are not respected, potentially resulting in decreased job satisfaction or even legal action if the

employee feels they are being discriminated against for their religious beliefs. However, it upholds the principle of consistent policy application across the company.

3. Seeking a Compromise:

- Choice: Finding a middle ground, perhaps by providing alternative tools or methods of communication.
- Consequences: This may help in retaining the employee and respecting their beliefs while trying to maintain team efficiency. However, it might be challenging to find a viable alternative that doesn't disrupt the team's workflow. It also risks setting a precedent for other employees to request special accommodations for personal beliefs.

4. Counseling or Mediation:

- Choice: Offering the employee counseling services or arranging a mediation session to discuss the issue more deeply.
- Consequences: This can lead to a better understanding between the employee and the company, potentially resolving the conflict. However, it might not result in a change in the employee's stance, and the issue could remain unresolved.

5. Involving Human Resources:

- Choice: Escalating the matter to the Human Resources department for a formal resolution.
- Consequences: HR involvement ensures that the issue is dealt with professionally and in line with company policy and legal standards. However, formal HR processes can sometimes escalate tensions or lead to outcomes like the employee's resignation or termination.

6. Terminating the Employee:

- Choice: If all else fails and the employee's refusal to use the email system severely impacts their job performance, termination might be considered.
- Consequences: This would resolve the immediate issue of the communication breakdown but could have legal ramifications if the employee claims religious discrimination. It could also affect team morale and the company's reputation.

2.

In the scenario where you're aware of a colleague planning to leave the company but your boss plans to give them a new opportunity that you're interested in, you have several choices to consider:

1. Tell Your Boss About Your Colleague's Plans:

- Choice: Inform your boss about your colleague's intention to leave.
- Consequences: This could potentially put you in a favorable position for the opportunity. However, it might damage your relationship with your colleague and could be seen as

unprofessional or a breach of trust. Additionally, if your colleague changes their mind and stays, it could create tension in the workplace.

2. Discuss Your Career Goals with Your Boss Without Revealing the Information:

- **Choice:** Talk to your boss about your interest and qualifications for the new opportunity without mentioning your colleague's plans.
- **Consequences:** This maintains professional integrity and confidentiality. It focuses on your merits rather than potentially undermining your colleague. However, there's a risk that your boss might still prefer to give the opportunity to your colleague.

3. Have a Conversation with Your Colleague:

- **Choice:** Discuss the situation with your colleague, expressing your interest in the opportunity and the dilemma you face.
- **Consequences:** This could lead to your colleague voluntarily discussing their plans with the boss, or they might ask you to keep the information confidential. There's also a risk that this could strain your relationship with the colleague.

4. Do Nothing and Wait:

- **Choice:** Decide not to act on the information and see how the situation unfolds.
- **Consequences:** This avoids any potential conflict but might result in a missed opportunity for you if your boss goes ahead with the plan to give the opportunity to your colleague.

5. Seek Advice from HR:

- **Choice:** Consult with the Human Resources department for guidance.
- **Consequences:** HR might offer a neutral perspective and suggest a course of action. However, involving HR could escalate the situation to a more formal level, which might not be necessary or beneficial.

6. Look for Other Opportunities:

- **Choice:** Start exploring other opportunities within or outside the company.
- **Consequences:** This could lead to new career advancements. However, it might also mean leaving your current position or company, which could be a significant change.

3.

In the context of a workplace scenario where you are aware of a colleague's intention to leave but are also being considered for a new opportunity, the obligation or duty to report the situation is nuanced and depends on various factors, including company policy, professional ethics, and the nature of your role and relationship with both your colleague and your boss.

1. Company Policy and Professional Ethics:

- Many companies have policies and ethical guidelines that address confidentiality and communication within the workplace. If your company's policy explicitly requires employees to report information that could significantly affect team or company operations, then you might have an obligation to disclose what you know. However, if there's no clear policy, the decision becomes more subjective.
- Professional ethics often emphasize honesty, integrity, and the welfare of the company and its employees. If withholding the information could harm the company or its employees, then reporting it might be considered the right ethical choice.

2. Nature of Your Role:

- If your role involves managerial or supervisory responsibilities, you might have a greater duty to report the information, as it directly impacts team dynamics and productivity.
- For non-managerial roles, the obligation may be less clear-cut, as the primary responsibility is often to one's own tasks and direct team interactions.

3. Relationship with Your Colleague and Boss:

- The nature of your relationship with your colleague and boss can also influence your decision. If you have a close relationship with your colleague, you might feel a stronger duty to respect their confidentiality.
- On the other hand, if you have a relationship with your boss that is built on trust and open communication, you might feel compelled to share the information for the betterment of the team or project.

4. Potential Consequences:

- Consider the potential consequences of reporting or not reporting the information. Reporting it could lead to trust issues or tension with your colleague, but not reporting it could mean missing out on a career opportunity or being perceived as withholding crucial information.

5. Legal Considerations:

- In some cases, there may be legal considerations, especially if the information pertains to something that could harm the company or is legally required to be disclosed.

In summary, whether or not you have an obligation to report the situation depends on the specific circumstances, including your company's policies, your role, your professional ethics, and the potential impact of the information. It's a decision that should be made carefully, considering all these factors.

✓ Exercise 2:

Discuss the possible choices and consequences of each choice in the following scenarios:

1. A customer asked for a product (or service) from your company today. After telling him the price, he said he couldn't afford it. You know he could get it cheaper from a competitor. Should you tell him about the competitor, or let him go without getting what he needs? What should you do?
2. An information security manager routinely monitored web surfing among her company's employees. She discovered that many employees were visiting- porn websites, adult chatting, and personal social media websites. She reported these to senior management and some of the employees were disciplined. However, some of the employees, in turn, objected to the monitoring claiming that they have a right to privacy. You are an employee of this company. What should you do?

Do you have an obligation or duty to make a certain choice or to report the situation? Why?

Sample Answer

1.

In the scenario where a customer cannot afford your company's product or service and you know a competitor offers it at a lower price, you have a few choices to consider:

1. Inform the Customer About the Competitor:

- Choice: Tell the customer about the cheaper option available from your competitor.
- Consequences: This choice can build trust and goodwill with the customer, showing that you prioritize their needs over immediate sales. While you might lose this particular sale, you potentially gain customer loyalty and a positive reputation, which can be beneficial in the long term. However, it could also be seen as undermining your company's interests and might not be well-received by your superiors.

2. Offer Alternatives Within Your Company:

- Choice: Instead of directing the customer to a competitor, offer alternative solutions that your company provides. This could include more affordable products or services, payment plans, or upcoming promotions.
- Consequences: This approach keeps the business within your company and provides the customer with options that might suit their budget. It also demonstrates your commitment to customer service without directly aiding a competitor. However, there's a chance that none of the alternatives will be suitable for the customer, and they might leave without a solution.

3. Let the Customer Go Without a Referral:

- Choice: Choose not to mention the competitor and let the customer decide on their own.

- **Consequences:** This choice avoids any potential conflict of interest with your company and maintains a neutral stance. However, it might result in a missed opportunity to build a lasting relationship with the customer. The customer might feel less supported and may not return in the future.

4. Seek Approval or Guidance from a Superior:

- **Choice:** Consult with a manager or superior about the situation before making a decision.
- **Consequences:** This ensures that your actions align with company policy and may provide a solution that you hadn't considered. However, it could delay the response to the customer, potentially leading to frustration on their part.

2.

As an employee in a company where web surfing is monitored and some colleagues have been disciplined for inappropriate use while others are raising privacy concerns, you have several options to consider:

1. Comply with Company Policy:

- **Choice:** Adhere strictly to company policy regarding internet use.
- **Consequences:** This ensures that you stay within the guidelines set by your employer and avoid any disciplinary action. However, it may not address the broader concerns about privacy and monitoring within the workplace.

2. Raise Concerns with HR or Management:

- **Choice:** If you have concerns about privacy or the way the monitoring policy is implemented, you could raise these with Human Resources or management.
- **Consequences:** This could lead to a review of the monitoring policies and possibly more transparent and fair practices. However, there's a risk of being perceived as opposing company policies, which could impact your standing in the company.

3. Seek Clarification on Monitoring Policies:

- **Choice:** Ask for more detailed information about what is monitored, how the data is used, and the company's policies regarding employee privacy.
- **Consequences:** This can lead to a better understanding of your rights and obligations as an employee. It can also inform you of the legalities and limitations of workplace monitoring.

4. Discuss with Colleagues:

- **Choice:** Engage in discussions with your colleagues about the monitoring and the concerns raised.
- **Consequences:** This could lead to a collective approach to addressing concerns with management. However, it might also create tension or conflict within the workplace,

especially if opinions differ.

5. Review and Understand Legal Rights:

- Choice: Research and understand your legal rights regarding privacy in the workplace.
- Consequences: You'll be better informed about your rights and the legality of the company's actions. However, this might not change the company's policies or practices.

6. Seek Legal Counsel:

- Choice: If you believe your privacy rights are being violated, consult with a legal professional.
- Consequences: This could provide you with a definitive understanding of your rights and any potential actions you can take. However, taking legal action or even consulting a lawyer could strain your relationship with your employer.

7. Adapt to the Monitoring:

- Choice: Accept that monitoring is part of the workplace and adjust your behavior accordingly.
- Consequences: This approach avoids confrontation and maintains compliance with company policies. However, it may not be satisfactory if you have strong concerns about privacy.

3.

In the situation where your company's information security manager is monitoring employee web surfing and disciplinary action has been taken against some employees, while others object on privacy grounds, the question of whether you have an obligation or duty to act in a certain way depends on several factors:

1. Company Policies and Contractual Obligations:

- If your company has clear policies regarding internet usage and employee monitoring, and these policies are part of the terms of your employment (often acknowledged during the hiring process or through an employee handbook), then there is an obligation to adhere to these policies.
- If the policy explicitly requires you to report any breaches of these rules, then you would have an obligation to do so.

2. Legal and Ethical Considerations:

- Legally, private companies generally have the right to monitor their employees' computer and internet usage, especially when using company equipment and networks. However, there are limits to this, especially regarding personal communications and off-duty conduct.

- Ethically, the decision to report or not can be complex. If the behavior of your colleagues is clearly harmful or illegal (such as accessing illegal content), reporting it could be seen as a moral obligation. If the behavior is less clear-cut, or the monitoring feels excessively invasive, the ethical decision becomes more subjective.

3. Workplace Culture and Personal Judgment:

- The culture of your workplace might influence your decision. In a culture that values open communication and transparency, discussing these issues with HR or management might be encouraged.
- Personal judgment also plays a role. You have to balance your own ethical standards, your loyalty to your colleagues, and your duty to your employer.

4. Potential Consequences:

- Reporting could lead to further disciplinary actions against colleagues and might affect your relationships with them.
- Not reporting could potentially put you in a difficult position if it's later discovered that you were aware of policy violations and did not report them, especially if the violations are severe.

In summary, whether you have an obligation or duty to report the situation or act in a particular way depends on the specifics of your company's policies, legal considerations, and your personal ethical judgment. It's important to carefully consider the potential implications of any action you take and balance your responsibilities to your employer with your ethical standards and the rights of your colleagues.