



Four Problems of Workplace Ethics for Discussion

1. Justin Major is the present holder of a part-time job that has been in your gift for a decade now, a wonderful job compared to the usual fast-food placement. Justin must work two hours each evening painting industrial steel to be used the following morning for construction. His hours are flexible. He can start anytime after 3:30 so long as he finishes by 7:00. His job is important. The paint requires almost eight hours to dry. If Justin fails to do his job on any day, the construction gang will not be able to do its job the next day.

You thought Justin understood all this. But that was last fall. Justin's boss called you a few minutes ago to tell you that Justin didn't show up last night. When you asked Justin why he had not, he said that he didn't think he was getting paid enough for the job he was doing. So, he took off a little time. Is there anything you can say to Justin that might change his mind. If he misses work again, he will be fired, but he is just six weeks from graduation. [Ask your class for advice.]

2. Most of your co-workers at Fishy-Wishy's are drug-free. But some are, you think, on one sort of drug or another. You know for sure one of them is, because you have seen him sniffing cocaine in the kitchen during a quiet moment. While he was once pretty good in the kitchen, he is increasingly prone to confusing orders. That makes your job up front harder. So far you and the other staff have covered for him. But you're getting tired of that. The manager doesn't seem to have noticed anything wrong. You are tempted to tell him. Should you? What if he asks?

3. When my friends come to King Fries, I like to show them that I appreciate them. So, when they order a large fries, I give them what they ask for but charge them for the small. Since there is no way to check the order sheets against the cash for the day, no one is the wiser. I save each friend a quarter or so; but the fries really only cost the company two cents and my friends probably would only order small fries if they couldn't get the extra fries free. Really, my friends wouldn't come in at all if I weren't there. So, where's the harm? You can't call that stealing.

4. The first rule we were taught during orientation was that you should never leave the cash register without locking your cash box. Never. Never. Never. If you come up short, you will be fired. No excuses.

a. One day my manager says to me, "Please, go into the backroom and get me four boxes of #2 rolls." So, I say, "Sure, as soon as I lock my cash box." But he says, "No time. Just do it. I'll watch the register." What should I do?

b. Suppose I did what the manager said, leaving him with the unlocked cashbox. Suppose too that that evening my cash comes up \$20 short, that I don't have \$20 to slip in, and that he says, "You're fired." What should I do then?