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ETHICAL ANALYSIS OF A SECURITY-RELATED SCENARIO

1. Identify the main ethical question or questions faced by the main character ("you") in the scenario. This will certainly include "what should you do?", but there may be other interesting questions to consider.

I've accepted a position at this startup under the impression that they place a strong emphasis on user privacy, discarding user data after its initial use. After the meeting with the CEO, however, it seems that perhaps the true priority of user privacy within the company was overstated by the CTO (who may have just been speaking of her own vision of company practices). I'm left wondering whether I should stick up for what I believe in and work to further the CTO's (and my own) ethical agenda by opposing the CEO's proposition to sell anonymized data, or whether I should reconsider whether my intervention is even appropriate to begin with and just go along with the ideas of the CEO. At the heart of this matter is that user's are being promised one thing but Beerz would do something else with the data, essentially lying to the users.

As the one to have proposed these new ideas, surely I must be in the position to oppose, or at least counter, such ideas as the selling of anonymized user data. If I were to somehow communicate my distaste for such surveillance capitalism, it would probably be best to reach out to the CTO directly, as she is most likely well acquainted with the CEO and knows what would/ wouldn't be appropriate to bring up. It would also be worthwhile to have a conversation with her about the exact expectations I should have regarding the company's ethical stance on data collection, as I was led to believe that Beerz is very strict in its ethical proceedings when it comes to user privacy. Additionally, she and I could potentially work to educate the rest of the team members on the ethical implications of data collection if we face strong opposition, however that may also serve to alienate us from the group.

2. For each stakeholder (or category of stakeholders) in the scenario, identify the stakeholder's relevant rights.

    End users. They have a right to privacy and dignity. Morally, they should own their own data and know if its being used/collected.

    Me: I have a right to earn a living and to feed my family. I was just doing what I was told.

Investors: have a right (want) to make money in addition to a return on their initial investment.

CEO: Has to make sure the stakeholders get their money. Otherwise he is fired.

3. List any information missing from the scenario that you would like to have to help you make better choices.

   What ethical values does the company actually stand for?

   What exact expectations are placed upon me, and does pushing back on an idea fall within what would be considered appropriate for my role?

   How much influence does the CTO have within the company?

   What legal rights are afforded to me, whether I continue to work at the company or become a whistleblower?

   What job opportunities/financial situation am I in?

4. Describe your possible actions, and discuss the likely consequences of those actions.
   - Approach the CEO directly with my concerns.
     - They get mad at me and FIRE ME
       - I am out of job but I have my dignity
     - The CEO is receptive to my ideas and agrees to proceed with my proposal in the most ethically sound direction
       - I keep my job and the company remains morally correct
   - Speak with the CTO
     - He agrees with you and you are able to confront the CEO
       - You now have an ally that has more leverage than you and thus are more likely to persuade the CEO.
     - He agrees with you but doesn't want to do anything about it
       - You have to now act alone towards the CEO
     - He does not agree with you
       - You have to act alone and the CTO may even be on the CEO's side.
   - Do nothing and see what happens.
5. Discuss whether the [ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) offers any relevant guidance.

In this example, we are violating the ACM code of conduct in three unique locations, 1.3 "Be honest and trustworthy", 1.6 "Respect privacy", and 3.2 "Articulate, encourage acceptance of, and evaluate fulfillment of social responsibilities by members of the organization or group".

The ACM writes, "Therefore, a computing professional should become conversant in the various definitions and forms of privacy and should understand the rights and responsibilities associated with the collection and use of personal information." We are violating these principles by using data that we have collected without their knowledge or consent.

3.2 Articulate, encourage acceptance of, and evaluate fulfillment of social responsibilities by members of the organization or group."Leaders should encourage full participation of computing professionals in meeting relevant social responsibilities and discourage tendencies to do otherwise." The CEO, by suggesting that Beerz sell and profit off of anonymized data, is condoning the invasion of its users' privacy. This actively contradicts the above passage.

6. Describe and justify your recommended action, as well as your answers to any other questions you presented in part A.

   I think the right thing to do is to talk with the CTO, draw up plans, and then go to the CEO and explain why this is not a good approach. From there, I can work with the CEO to either change course, or to gather the data with the consent of the users. If they happen to fire me, I can retaliate by being a whistleblower, bringing to light the unethical practices that are being used by companies to make quick and easy money.