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# Ethics You Decide

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This is a classical case of ethics by perception. Ethics is a very tricky topic, because there is no law for it or against it. It is how purely people perceive it. There are companies that hold ethics to a high standard and there are companies that hold it not so high. Ethics also entails how one approaches a problem. It is only unethical if one party is benefiting and the other is not or there are advantages that are being taken of. In our case, Kimberly went and talks to Anwar about the account. She comes to states and me that she feels that based on her conversation with Anwar there are unethical behavior that were taken when Anwar was doing business with Brian. She is obviously an amateur sales person, because in sales we never want to make any assumptions of what people are saying. Anwar has mentioned Brian and him are close peers and that the account has been doing very well for the past few years. Business has been good and in the past years neither my company nor Anwar's has complained about any profitability or shipment or anything of such. I do not know what Brian has done in the past and today is not relevant anymore because he has passed away.

So far everything I'm basing my judgment based on what has Kimberly told me. I would suggest going to meet Anwar with Kimberly at the time that he has requested and hear him out and have him describe me what this *special* relationship entailed. After all, this is a big account and my company has been profitable from it.

We have to realize that in business, incentivizing products happen frequently. Clients send gifts to suppliers and vice versa during holiday season or they cut each other breaks. Is this unethical? Based on my conversation with Anwar, I would obviously have to come up with a strategy that makes both parties happy. I have a few things I can work with and can help sway the situation. First, Anwar's company obviously needs us as much as we need them. They need our products. Secondly, if they cut us out for any case, they will also take a hit. Third, I have to be completely honest with Anwar and build a new relationship with him.

If after my conversation with Anwar, it seems that Brian was just incentivizing the deals a bit such has giving him a percentage discount or not charging him as much, then I would obviously continue to do the same in order to keep the account as long as we both stay profitable.

However, If it turns out the be the case were there were kickbacks or under the table shipments or anything of such then, I would have to be honest with Anwar and say that these actions will no longer be allowed as we are both respectable companies. Any respectable businessman would agree to that and would not be phase by it. If Anwar does not agree, then would my company want to work with an unethical company in the first place? Probably not as it can give my company, my staff and me a bad reputation.

Following up, Kimberly should report to me all the deals and communications she has with Anwar until I am confident the work is going according to plan.

In conclusion, ethical behavior is something that has to be taken into account case by case. Each problem needs to represented as a opportunity and instead of preventing or setting laws that prevent certain behavior, to prevent unethical behavior, one should set positive standards as it can motivate people to want to associate themselves with positive behavior.