

CASE STUDY ETHICS

Lee has been with XYZ Property Casualty Company for twelve years, all in a large regional office in the Midwest. He established an impressive track record of getting results, and was well respected by his staff and senior field management alike. Anxious to further his career, he applied for and was hired into a Strategic Business Consultant position at the company's headquarters. This is a developmental role intended for potential employees such as Lee, intended to engage employees with insurance field experience to work on long-term strategic issues facing the company.

A critical capability for success in this position is the creation of clear, concise reports and presentation of issues and recommendations. Lee attended a class and received coaching in these areas as a part of his early training for the job. After a recent presentation, he received the feedback that although his analysis was good, his report and presentation materials were rambling and confusing. The clear message from his boss was “.. fix this problem, for future success depends upon your capability to communicate clearly and convincingly.”

Another presentation is scheduled for next week. Lee feels helpless to improve in such a short time, so he hires his neighbour Lisa to write the report and presentation for him. He uses company funds to pay Lisa, calling the expense “Skill Development”.

Was Lee doing something unethical? Why or why not?

Lee is doing something unethical. His work is being done by Lisa who has no clue about the importance of the work. Lee is making the company think that he is taking the steps to improve his capability to communicate clearly and convincingly. He even uses company funds as his funds to pay Lisa thinking that he will be paid more for his future success. Lee is not following the loyalty of professional ethics over here.

Which of Lee's values might be at odds with one another?

In personal ethics, Lee might fail to acquire the Honesty, Integrity and Truthfulness values. These values of Lee might be at odds with one another.

What was the risk to his reputation by hiring Lisa to do the work?

The risk to his reputation will be not being honest, truthful and loyal to the people. Later in the future, he might not learn the skills of communicating clearly and convincingly. If Lee takes

help from Lisa by paying her company funds, then this habit will continue later and will use his money to prepare presentations or reports. This will make him unethical and the next company might not hire him.

What should he have done ideally in this situation?

Lee should have taken his time and done the presentation on his own so that he will learn the skills of communication and will use it properly next time other than continuously approaching others for his own work. Once Lee gets a catch of doing his work on his own, he can continue being successful and not being dependent on someone else. As said in ethics and integrity,

“Choosing the right thing, doing the right thing, when no one is watching”