

VG496 Case Study Homework 1

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1 List as many ethical issues as possible

1. Should Wang take care of his parents or pay more attention on work?
2. Should Wang report the heating issue to the supervisor Lu?
3. Should Lu give Wang more time on the heating issue?
4. Should Lu follow the advice of the management of Kitten to make the heater available before all issues solved?
5. Should Kitten keep the information of financial difficulties from the employees?
6. Should Lu release the products with heating issue and recall them later?
7. Should Wang follow the advice of Lu to ignore this issue now?

2 Choose the most important one

The most important one is “Should Wang follow the advice of Lu to ignore this issue now?”. I think it is the final question in this case, Wang should consider many other things, like family, supervisor, the company and etc., except from engineering ethics before making the decision.

3 List facts that would help to resolve the most important issue/answer the question as well as identifying any relevant missing facts

Facts:

- Wang’s parents are not able to work and his work is the only financial source of the family.
- The products Wang is working on is for people in situation similar to him, he wants to ensure their safety.
- The company is in financial difficulties and a rival company will release similar products after a month scheduled by Kitten so that Kitten needs to sell products as soon as possible.
- The heating issue is rare and is found when the product works for a long time.
- Wang’s supervisor Lu wants him to skip the issue and recall the products if problems found later.

Missing Facts:

- Whether the promise of Lu's recall correction can be realized.
- Whether Wang will lose his job if he doesn't take Lu's advice.
- Whether the company will bankrupt if the products can't be sold soon, and Wang, Lu and many others will all lose job because of that.

4 Make reasonable assumptions regarding missing facts

Since Lu seems lacking of engineering ethics, if the products sells very well and profits a lot, he may refused to recall them later.

If Wang refused Lu's suggestions, Lu may substitute him with someone else to deal with the problem and release the product on time

If finally they don't release the product on time, the financial problem of Kitten will become worse. So it is very likely that all of them will lose job.

5 Clarify the use of any potentially ambiguous terminology you've used so far

Rare: about one out of one thousand.

A long time: 2000 hours.