



Reflective Essay Assignment

Topic: Personal Reflection Paper

Class: 2020S_PHL1253_4

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Submission Date: 24 November 2020

Content

1. Executive

Summary.....

2. Introduction.....

3. Discussion.....

a) Ethical Problem.....

b) Solution.....

**c) Course
Relation.....**

4. Conclusion.....

5. References.....

Executive Summary

Ethical decision-making refers to the process in which one choose and evaluate different alternatives that is in a manner, consistent with the ethical principles. Practicing ethical decision making can help us maintain an honest, supportive, and fair workplace culture, but it is also necessary to ensure that the company you are working in doesn't get into legal trouble. In making ethical decisions, it is important to recognize and eliminate unethical options and select the best alternative that is ethically sound. The idea of ethical decision making is majorly based on three hypotheses of Ethics which includes Utilitarian, Deontological and Virtue Ethics. The other thing that we have to consider is to "Voice Our Values". This means we have to act upon values that we hold. Values are the core beliefs that really matters to us. It shows that what we believe in is the most important thing and how we should react in broad range of situations. Knowing what is important to us and having self awareness helps us to have clarity to stand for it in the difficult situations. Voicing is all about analyzing, deciding upon and communicating with others. In this reflection paper, you can see how I made ethical decision in a scenario where I was in the dilemma whether I should voice my values or not. But, finally considering all the outcomes and the values I hold, I decided to raise my voice for the welfare of the society. In short, I can tell you that I am working in the company as a Customer Service Representative (CSR) agent and there we get 3 breaks in between of our 10-hour shift. One is lunch break that is usually of 30 minutes and the other two breaks are of shorter time duration(i.e. 15 minutes). So the main ethical issue here was, I was always getting 10 min less time (i.e. 20 minutes) for my lunch break even if they mentioned that I should get 30 minutes. The policy of the company is, you can only take a break when the other CSR agent replace you for your break. So my colleague(CSR agent) ,who used to replace me for my break was always 10 min late. This was a big ethical issue that I faced and I have explained in this paper how I solved this issue by reaching to the higher authorities by raising my voice.

Introduction

Ethics is a complex system in which we have to maintain good standards. It is the branch of study managing what is the best possible course of action for man/women. It is the investigation of what is right or wrong in the human endeavor. At the more advance level, it is the technique by which we classify our values and chase them. Being ethical doesn't mean the same as following any law. The law often integrate ethical standards which most people follow. Ethics is the basic necessity for the human life and without it, our actions would be aimless and unpredictable. Any flaw in our ethics will reduce our capacity to be successful in our plan.

I truly believe that we all should follow the ethics and indulge those ethical activities in our day to day life. Back in India, I was a kind of person who was silent and calm. I rarely interact with my friends with open mind and was cornered somewhere alone. I usually don't use to share my ideas and thoughts what I believed in, as I was shy. But as I came here in Canada as an student or immigrant, it was totally new environment for me. I found it really difficult in the beginning to interact openly with people but to my surprise I learned a lot of new things as I started interacting with the people and friends in the casual manner. My total personality was changed from being shy and fearful to bold and interactive.

After coming here in Canada, I dealt with many ethical dilemmas but I was still not sure about raising my voice in this new country. The culture and ethics followed by people and the education system was totally different for me. I struggled a lot in the beginning but I managed to get with the flow. Now, I am pretty confident about voicing my values if something is not right or unethical according to me. Here I am going to discuss in detail the recent real-life situation that I faced as a Customer Service Representative and how I tried to overcome it ethically using whistle blow policy.

Discussion

Once I entered here in Canada, it was like a new life for me. I started adapting to this new environment and different challenges. New beginning came up with new changes for me. I started learning more and more about the Canadian culture and how the education system works here. However, being an international student, study is first and foremost thing but on the other hand we have to manage our own expenses in order to survive here. Getting a part time job was equally important to me as studies so that I don't run away from my daily expenses. I have to struggle a lot in order to a basic part time job as I was not having any experience back in India neither was getting reference from someone for a job here in Canada. I started my job as a sandwich artist in Subway and then I switched to be a cashier at Dollarama. I left these jobs as I was not getting 20 hours/week (This was because I was only available on weekends and the rest of the days I had classes). After a little bit of struggle, I found a stable job at TTC (Toronto Transit Commission) as a Customer Service Representative (CSR). They were so helpful that they provided me enough hours of work on the weekends so that I can cope up with my expenses. I am ethically sound person and if something unethical is going on in front of me, I can't resist it. Here I am going to explain the ethical problem that I recently faces at my workplace and I will try to provide a proper solution for that .

Ethical Problem

I am working as Customer Service Representative (CSR) at the different allocated stations in Toronto. My work is to guide the people if they are lost or to solve any queries or questions they have regarding the TTC buses, routes or trains. We are the group of 12 CSRs who are divided at the different places of a particular station. Every CSR is given a sheet in which company has mentioned the break timings and which person (CSR) they should replace for the breaks. The breaks and replacement are so tightly arranged that even if one CSR is late from his/her break, other 11 CSR will suffer with the shorter breaks than usual. In the beginning, one month

went smoothly without any ethical issues. But later on, recently, one day I noticed that some people(experienced CSRs) working over there are taking longer breaks than use to be. Doing so, other 11 CSRs including me suffered due to that , as we were getting shorter breaks than the assigned duration. Usually the policy of the company is that, if you are working for more than 8 hours(in my case it was 10-hours) you should get two shorter breaks of 15 minutes and one long break of half an hour. The second policy of company is that CSR cannot take his/her allocated breaks until some other CSR is there to replace them . So here, some of my seniors(experienced CSRs) use to take more than 40 minutes of long break (but the time assigned was only 30 minutes).They always came 10-12 minutes late to replace the CSR. According to me, what I learned in my training was we should never be late to replace a CSR for their breaks(as it can lead to reduction in the break duration of other CSRs and any complaint regarding that can lead to termination of his/her job).

It was totally unethical that was happening in front of me. To my surprise, no one complained about this unethical behavior as most of us were newly hired by that company. I even tried to ignore these things for a week but still they were indulged in doing the same thing the next week, which was unbearable. I talked to my seniors(experienced CSRs) about this unethical behavior in personal, but they started to show seniority upon me and they even tried to ignore on what I was saying. As I am new and they are my seniors, I am not supposed to question them. Even more,if I complain about this ongoing activity to my team lead, it might create a problem to me as we have to work together.

Solution

The next week I talked to my team lead in personal and confirmed about the rules and regulation of the company. And the very next day, I noticed that the same thing was happening and 2 of the senior CSRs came 10 minutes late. I tried to convince them to not involve in these kind of unethical activities very politely. During my ongoing conversation, they even tried to offer me to do the same thing as they were doing. I warned them that I am going to report the team lead, but they ignored me and went back to their work. I am a kind of bold person and I never hesitate to speak the truth if something is going wrong in front of me. Hence, I reported to the my Team Lead about these fraudulent activities. To my shock, Team Lead advised me to keep these activities secret and not to inform anyone. Now, I was in the major dilemma and this was the most difficult situation I ever imagined. I thought that I should talk to my family about this circumstance. After having a big discussion with my family member regarding this issue, I decided to blow the whistle and reach out to the upper authorities/officials about this case. Finally, I explained this whole scenario to the supervisor after giving enough chances and warnings to the senior CSRs and Team Lead. I believe that everyone should be given one chance to rectify their mistakes but if they still do not correct themselves, they should get the punishment for that. Team Lead and the 2 senior CSRs got fired as soon as the report reached the main branch of the company. I know that, how hard it is for one to find a new job during this pandemic. The reason why I reported this activity because they were encouraging other fellow mates to indulge in this unethical path. This kind of behavior will impact the public, management, company . I believe that everyone deserves second chance because sometime, sometimes second chance works more better than the first as you learn from your mistakes.

Course Relation

This incident taught me when and where to make the right choice and how to be ethical. I should also mention that the subject : Ethical Leadership and Critical Decision-Making helped me and guided me a lot to make these kind of effective ethical decisions. Since this activity happened recently, few weeks back, this subject influenced me a lot in a way how I should approach any difficult situation ethically.

I would like to relate this scenario with the “Whistle Blow Policy”. This policy states that we should first approach the manager/Team Lead. If we are not satisfied with response then we should discuss with the family and then take it to the next level. In my case, I reached out to the Team lead but as I was not satisfied with his response, I discussed with my family and took this case to the next level and informed the Supervisor.

This case also refers to “Deontological Theory”(decisions are made according to the clear set of rules). I made this decision thinking about the long term consequences . I believed that no other CSR or Lead should follow the unethical path. As a Customer Service Representative(CSR), I rejected the offer to join them to take long breaks than usual. I always felt that society is more important than thinking for an individual.

Conclusion

To sum up, I can say that real-life experiences teach us a lot of things. We should always try to learn from it and be ethical in any kind of situation we are dealing with. Ethical development is a lifetime learning process. The subject of Ethical Leadership and Critical Decision Making taught me a lot of new things and it also taught me how to deal with a situation if any ethical dilemma comes in front of me. It improved my decision making capabilities to much far extent. Moreover, now I feel confident enough to speak up and raise my voice (as I did in the case using whistle blow policy) and make the decisions ethically if something is unethical in my surroundings.

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