

IPRO332 :Ethical Dilemma

Fall 2008

Scenario One



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In a presentation to the executive committee your supervisor, Harry, takes credit for some excellent work done by a colleague who is absent and receives considerable praise for his efforts. As you leave the room you hear the president quietly mention to the HR VP that “we should do something special for Harry.” What should you do?



Part I

1. What are the pressures? What are the corresponding risks?

Pressures:

- Whether or not should I tell my superior about Harry's behavior?
- What should I do about Harry's behavior?
- Do I know all the information about this situation?

1. What are the pressures? What are the corresponding risks?

Risks:

- If I do nothing, Harry will be mistakenly rewarded
- My decision might cause conflict between me and Harry
- My decision might put Harry in a difficult position
- I might be taken as a big mouth
- I will be questioning the authority of my supervisor(Harry)

2. Identify and define the ethical problem

- Should I tell the truth or not
- Against the Professional Obligations: Relationships and Values (Harry unethically took advantage of the work he did not do)
- My decision on this issue can be unethical (do not tell anything about the unrecognized colleague/ carelessly accuse Harry)
- I might not have all the information about this issue (Harry and the absent colleague might have the agreement)

3. Who may be affected by this decision and what's at stake with each of them?

- Harry will seem like a liar and his career will be in jeopardy
- The absent colleague will not get the recognition
- Conflict between Harry and myself
- Conflict between Harry and the absent colleague

4. What values are at stake in the decision? What layer's integrity apply?

- Personal Relationships (between colleagues)
- Moral Values (for Harry and for myself)
- Professional Codes (for Harry)

5a. List all possible options (good or bad) to resolve this dilemma

- Keep it to myself
- Suggest Harry to tell the superior about the absent colleague
- Talk to Harry's boss
- Talk to the absent colleague
- Ask other colleagues for their opinions about this issue

5b. Which options are the most compelling? Why?

Option1

- Talk to Harry - Harry can take care of the situation by himself/ the personal relationships will be less effected

Option2

- Talk to Harry's superior – I can avoid the difficult conversation with Harry

6a. How exactly would you resolve the dilemma?

Main resolution

- Tell Harry to correct the situation or I will talk to Harry's superior

Supporting resolution

- Ask colleagues what they would do for this dilemma

Alternative resolution

- Leave the situation as it is

6b. What values did you rely on to make your decision?

- Personal and professional values
- Moral values

7. What consequence does your decision have on the others involved?

- Harry's career and reputation will be in jeopardy
- Relationship between Harry and myself
- Relationship between Harry and the absent colleague



8. Is your decision legal? Is it fair to everyone involved? How does this make you feel about yourself?

- It is legal
- It is fair to Harry, the absent colleague, myself and the whole committee
- I feel uncertain how my decision does to the relationship in the work place



Part II

1. Have your answers to #6 changed? Why or why not? Is there anything you would like to change or add?

Main resolution

- Tell Harry to correct the situation or I will talk to Harry's superior



- Ask Harry to explain the situation - Harry might be considering to fix the situation himself

1. Have your answers to #6 changed?
Why or why not? Is there anything you
would like to change or add?

Supporting resolution

- Ask colleagues what they would do for this dilemma



- Talk to the absent colleague - there might be more story I do not know

2. List one value that you feel was reinforced by this dilemma

- Moral value:

I decided what to do for this dilemma based on the moral value.

3. List one value that you feel you gained from this discussion

- Moral value:

Even though everyone thinks that the moral value is the most important part of this dilemma, what is morally correct is different for each point of view.