

IPRO 332 Ethical Dilemma

Fall 2008

Ethics Exercise-Scenario Two

- **Problem:**

You work in production control. You plan to add a porch to your house and you visit a lumberyard to get some design ideas and an estimate of the costs. During the discussion the sales manager says “Oh you work at the XYZ Company. They buy a lot from us, so I’m going to give you a special discount.” What should you do?

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

- Avoid offending salesman by rejecting offer
- Reluctant to take discount for fear of getting in trouble with your company
- Sales manager wants to defraud client
- Sales manager wants to secure client by using a discount

2. Identify and define ethical problem

- Sales manager offers discount to client because he works for a particular company
- Sales manager does not give the discount to all employees of the company

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

- The sales manager and client are both affected and could be sanctioned by their superiors if they do not agree with their actions.
- The store might lose customers who did not get a discount and knew the client was preferentially treated.
- The discount might be crafted by the sales manager such that the client does not even benefit.

4. What values are at stake in the decision? What levels of integrity apply?

- **Personal relations:**
 - friction between sales manager and store owner
- **Professional codes:**
 - sales manager is not supposed to be giving the discount
- **Moral Values:**
 - Unethical to accept something which does not belong to you

5a. List all possible options to resolve the problem

- Take discount hoping your company does not mind you using it.
- Do not take the discount, telling sales manager you cannot take a discount that does not belong to you.
- Leave the store after the offer without saying anything.

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

- The second option since the sales manager knows why you left and will not be spiteful.
- The last option since you are free from trouble with your supervisors.

6a. How exactly would you resolve the dilemma?

- Go to my boss and ask if I could use the discount.
- Tell sales manager to find out from the owner if he is allowed to give the discount.

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

- **Moral Values:**
 - Knowing I was not supposed to take the discount, accepting the offer will have been morally wrong.

7. What consequences (if any) does your decision have on the others involved?

- Sales manager will be insulted if third option was used.



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

- Choice is legal and fair since I will not be accepting a discount which is not mine.
- The choice is morally right and will make me feel better about myself.

Part II-Follow-up Questions

- 1. Have your answers to #6 changed? Why or why not? Is there anything you would like to add or change? If so, list those changes below.**
 - No, simply because they present a fair approach to solve the problem.

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

- Always be fair in the way you treat people.

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

- Never take something you know does not belong to you.