

# Affirmative action vs



In this case, Jennifer works at XYZ Advertising Agency as a junior Account Executive Trainee. Sharon works with Jennifer. Sharon is the Account Executive in XYZ Advertising Agency. Sharon has just completed a major sales presentation for the ABC client company account. After having lost two of the major XYZ accounts, the top management feels that if the ABC account is not secured; XYZ Advertising Agency might have to lay off half of its employees (George, 2010).

Since Mr. Bohlen has informed the XYZ Advertising Agency what he expects of the advertisement, then, Sharon and Jennifer must realize that should comply with the requirements of Mr. Bohlen. If Sharon agrees to recast the advertisement, she will be able to keep her job. Mr. Bohlen will be happy because he will be able to reach his customers without offending anyone. This will help XYZ Advertising Agency to secure the ABC account. ABC will be a happy client; this will promote the status of the XYZ at the moment. The XYZ will have no need lay off some employees. ABC has the potential of bringing more business to the XYZ advertising Agency in the future. This can only happen if Mr. Bohlen is satisfied with the current job performed by XYZ Advertising Agency. It will be beneficial to everyone if the film is recast as instructed by Mr. Bohlen.

Becoming an Account Executive has been Jennifer's dream since her freshman year in college. Jennifer finds herself in a dilemma; her situation is complicated because she has a strong belief in affirmative action. She is aware that there is a general scarcity of jobs due to a poor economy. She also realizes that Account Executive positions are rarely available.

Furthermore, she is quite behind in her student loan repayment. Jennifer is

being asked to choose whether to follow her belief in affirmative action, or to seize the opportunity of getting her dream job. Sharon and Jennifer are both affected by the situation. Sharon is losing her job due to her believe that black actors should be involved more in television advertisement. Sharon should understand that the main aim of any advertisement is to appeal the consumers. If including Africa-American actors in the advertsement will do the contrary, then, it is only sensible to exclude them. There are many other scenarios where the African-Americans would be more useful. To achieve the main objective of the advertisement, then the advertisement should be recast as appropriate (George, 2010).

This situation is morally problematic in that it has put Sharon and Jennifer in a position where they need to make a decision whether to stand by their principles or to follow the decisions of Mr. Hurn and forget their principles. Jennifer is faced with the moral responsibility of ensuring that her workmate Sharon does not lose her job unfairly. It would not be morally right for Jennifer to accept the job offer from Mr. Hurn. Jennifer's belief in the affirmative action makes her have the same view as Sharon regarding the recasting of the advertisement. However, the interests of Mr. Bohlen and his company should come first ahead of personal interests and beliefs. Mr. Bohlen is paying for the advertisement and so the advertisement should be recast as he requires (George, 2010).

It may not be morally right to replace African-Americans actors in the advertisement with white actors. Mr. Hurn and Mr. Bohlen disagrees with Sharon's views. It is in the interest of Mr. Hurn to secure the ABC account. Securing the ABC account will ensure that XYZ Advertising Agency will not

need to lay off half of its employees. It is also in the best interest of Mr. Bohlen to reach his customers and hopefully gain more new customers. Mr. Bohlen knows that the current advertisement might end up offending his customers. This is most likely going to lead to reduced sales. Jennifer and Sharon should realize that ethics is what makes a business succeed. It is not ethical to offend the customer intentionally.

It is evident that Mr. Hurn is also in a dilemma. If Mr. Hurn acts ethically and does not force Sharon and Jennifer to recast the advertisement, he faces the risk of losing ABC account. This will have an overall deteriorating effect on the XYZ Advertising Agency. The XYZ Advertising Agency might be forced to lay off about half of its employees. Richard and De George in their book argue that people in business should strive to solve issues internally. Firing Sharon is not a lasting solution. In order to come up with a lasting solution, Mr. Hurn should try to understand why Sharon has this opinion. Sharon was quite competent in her job. If Mr. Hurn fires her because of her principles, it is most likely that he will employ someone else with the same characters. It is better for the organization to nurture her talent and competency rather than firing her and employing someone else. This is because; the new person employed might still have the same opinion or even worse. Since there is proof that the African-American actors will offend Mr. Bohlen's client; Jennifer and Sharon must consider recasting the advertisement so as to appeal to the clients (George, 2010).

Though the African-American actors will not be able to work in this advertisement they should not feel discriminated against. They should understand requirement and expectations of target consumers. Also, if they

are professional actors they obviously know that advertisement is not meant to please the actor but the customer. If the target group was offended by white actors, the white actors would be dropped and more black actors hired.

According to " Business Ethics" by Richard and De George, all the parties involved should apply ethical analysis and moral reasoning techniques. They should apply those techniques in handling the problem at hand. Since Jennifer is the one left with Mr. Hurn, she should wait when he is calm and discuss with him ethical business behaviors. She should convince Mr. Hurn that the best thing to do is not recasting the actors in the commercial advertising. Jennifer should also act ethically and not accept the position offer at the expense of Sharon's job. Jennifer and Sharon share the same moral reasoning characteristics. However, they should both realize that the interest of the company come first. They should work to fulfill the requirements of ABC Client Company. Therefore, if the client company feels that excluding the African-American actors from the advertisement will help the ABC Client Company get more clients, then they should just drop them and recast the advertisement.