

Natural cereals case questions essay sample

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



After strongly reviewing this situation over and over again, I have realized how difficult and important this decision really is to our company. I believe my co-workers Sally Thompson and Joe Bradley have done an exceptional job so far, and have definitely pointed our marketing department in the right direction. After our company implemented Sally's proposal, our market share increased three points, which she definitely deserves credit for. However, her proposal has led to some active criticism from the public which has left our group manager Tom Miller displeased because of how valuable this proposal is to our Natural Cereals division. Sally's proposal included a limited health message to the high fiber content in our bran cereals. She indicated in a very cautious way that food high in fiber has been associated with studies to lower rates of some forms of cancer; however, she did not go about saying that our bran cereals had more bran than other competing bran cereals.

She also went about featuring our new " Re-sealable Pack," which allows the inside bag to be resealed for freshness, and included a 35 cent coupon toward the next purchase of a product of Natural Cereal. Although she believed her proposal avoided deception to our consumers, one key criticism we have received for Sally's efforts is that we jumped on the company bandwagon that makes often misleading or incomplete health claims. Tom believes we cannot afford criticism, so he asked me to step in and provide my own proposal. I support many of the ideas Sally and Joe have proposed, however, I feel there are still a few mishaps and missing pieces in the proposal. I believe these mistakes and missing pieces ultimately led to the difference in whether the public would have supported Sally's proposal or not. For my proposal, I truly feel that if we approach this with a more truthful

label, our consumers will trust us more and stay loyal to our products. In the textbook *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, author John Boatright points out President John F. Kennedy's proclamations in the Bill of Rights in 1962. One of the points President Kennedy made was that consumers have the right to be provided with adequate information about products.

I believe that instead of telling the public to eat our product because it has great health results, we should suggest to our consumers to start their day off with a healthy breakfast by eating a bowl of our cereal. I'm convinced that if we do this, the public cannot criticize our company by saying that if they eat our cereal, their chances of being diagnosed with cancer will be lowered. Our defense now would be that we are just suggesting that if people include our product in a healthy diet, it will help them (Boatright 217). In John Boatright's textbook, he says " With respect to customers, the main moral obligation of a salesperson is to facilitate the conditions for a fair transaction, which, we have noted, are that the customer act freely and with adequate knowledge" (Boatright 218). Like Boatright says, I believe consumers have the right for a fair transaction.

Instead of telling our customers that eating our high fiber product " could" lead to cancer prevention, we should inform them of other healthy foods to eat along with our product. Eating an immense amount of our product will not help people out health-wise unless they have a well-balanced diet along with our cereal. If we offer advice on the back of cereal boxes for other healthy products to eat with our cereal, such as low fat milk and fruit, then I believe our consumers will be experiencing a fair and just transaction.

Therefore, these two ideas would be the main basis of my proposal and I am extremely confident it will strongly help our marketing department, and more importantly our company overall.

Question 2:

In Robert Hoyk and Paul Hersey's book, *The Ethical Executive*, the two authors discuss an important term known as social-psychological traps. The reason traps exist is because at any given moment in time, people have impulses that motivate them to act. These impulses are reactions to stimuli, either internal or external. Sometimes a stimulus is so substantial or triggers such automatic behavior that we act on it without being aware of the other options that exist. At other times, we are aware of the other choices but the effect of the stimuli overrides these potential actions. There are three main categories of traps: primary, defensive, and personality.

Joe and Sally are wrestling with various traps from Hoyk and Hersey's very informative book. Many of these traps strongly relate to their thinking in the construction of their marketing campaign proposal. One trap that heavily relates to Joe and Sally's thinking is the obedience to authority trap, which is under the primary trap category. This trap revolves around two key issues: career advancement and being considered a team player. Joe and Sally relate to this trap because they both know that if their proposal flops and ends up costing the company a ton of money, they may lose their jobs. Sally is fairly new to the company so she also wants to earn a positive reputation, so she can be counted on in the future. Joe understands that he one day may take over Tom's position, so any setbacks could really affect his chances.

Another key trap that relates to Joe and Sally is the lost in the group trap, which is also a primary trap. Being involved in a group often diminishes our concerns of being held personally accountable when the group as a whole acts unethically. Individuals usually feel less important and less at fault in situations like these. Joe and Sally are in a group with Tom supervising them, but they all seem to know their roles extremely well. They do a great job avoiding this trap by all keeping up with what they are responsible for. If one of them is at fault for something, they know the fault is on them. A third trap that Joe and Sally find themselves wrestling with is the competition trap, which, again, is a primary trap. In general, competition between companies fosters creativity, hard work, and greater wealth. Within Joe and Sally's proposal, a lot of their ideas are based off competitors' recent ideas and past products. They both recognize their competitors are on the right track with their ideas, so they follow in their footsteps and take those companies' ideas even further.

Justification, a primary trap, is another important trap that Joe and Sally find themselves battling with. Moral justification has been used to sanction acts of evil in companies worldwide. Although many people chose to ignore ethics in their work, Sally does an excellent job combining an effective competitive strategy with a high level of business ethics. She makes it one of her highest priorities to make sure she is doing the right thing, and deceiving no one.

The last trap Joe and Sally find themselves involved with is another primary trap, tyranny of goals. People are inspired by goals to succeed, to climb the corporate ladder, to achieve a good reputation, but our goals can also drive us. Sally's goal was to let the public know about Natural Cereals' health

benefits, and she did just that. Without this goal, she would have no idea what to aim for. This applies to job positioning as well. Both Sally and Joe know that if they can do a good job on this campaign, they will be trusted more in the future and eventually move up in the company. Goals are what drive them to accomplish more and do their jobs to the best of their ability. Therefore, the traps spoken about in *The Ethical Executive* are very relevant to Joe and Sally's thinking for the construction of their marketing campaign.