

Vignette

[Business, Management](#)



Application of ethical theory to a case study vignette Instructions: • Choose ONE of the following four cases • Identify key stakeholders in this case. Identify and discuss main (ethical) issues of this case in relation to the stakeholders. • Evaluate the case using TWO ethical theories (you must use the theories that were taught in the lectures apart from Ethical Egoism). • Explain how you would act / you would have acted in this situation, and why. Your word limit must not exceed 1,700 words. Do not forget to include your word count in Your essay.

The essay will be marked using the following criteria: • Identification of stakeholders and issues • Outlining of main features of ethical theories and application of theories to case • Style and Presentation (including authenticity and accurate referencing) Submission deadline is Friday, 25 January, 2013, 9pm. Failure to submit on time will result in a fail grade. You are required to submit your coursework both electronically through TurnItIn (see instructions in module handbook), and as hard copy to the UniHelpdesk in the Sheppard Library.

Please ensure that you submit exactly the same versions of your work as hard copy and electronic copy. The electronic copy is the one that will be marked. You should also be aware that students may be asked to attend a viva should there be any doubts regarding the authenticity of their work.

Case 1 Safia, having completed her Business Management degree at Middlesex University, has found a job as executive assistant in a medium-sized city law firm. She very much enjoys her job and, although she has only been working for the firm for a few months, has already become a valuable and trusted employee.

She has been asked by Jamal, the partner in the firm for whom she works, to organise the event that the firm hosts every year for its corporate clients. Her brief includes organising the catering (fingerfood and drinks) and because they are expecting up to 200 guests, she is required to follow the company guidelines, which state that she has to get quotes from four catering firms and then give the contract to the firm that offers best value for money. Meera, a close friend of Safia's, has recently taken over her father's struggling catering business.

Meera's father has been suffering from a long-standing and severe illness, which forced him to retire from the business. Safia knows that a large catering contract would provide a much needed boost to Meera's business, and therefore includes it in the list of firms who she will ask to produce a quote for her. Even though the food and service offered in each quote is not exactly identical, Meera's quote is not quite the best value for money. Safia asks Meera to revise her quote so that she can give her the business.

Has Safia done the right thing? Case 2 Tom works for a small firm specialising in textile print designs. The firm has recently landed a contract with a large supermarket chain. Among other things, they have been asked to produce a print design for a sweatshirt, to be sold to young adult females. Tom is given the brief. He drafts various designs but is not very happy with them, neither is the managing director, who occasionally asks how Tom is getting on with his work. Tom is also busy working on a range of other projects.

As the deadline approaches, Tom gets slightly desperate, but then while browsing the internet during his lunch break he comes across a girl called

Nina's internet blog. Nina is a fashion student and uses pictures of herself on her blog to advertise her own fashion designs. One of the photos depicts her in a dreamy-looking pose, and Tom thinks that with some flower pattern placed around the photo, that would make the perfect print design for the sweatshirt. Nina has a statement on her blog that says that all the content featured on her site belongs to her and permission for use any of her photos is required.

He emails her to ask her permission to use her photo but does not hear back from her. The deadline arrives, he still hasn't heard from Nina but he does not want to ask for an extension of deadline, knowing that the supermarket chain would not be pleased about it and also because he has been in trouble before for not meeting deadlines. He passes his design on to the managing director, who likes it. The managing director usually trusts that his employees work within copyright rules and therefore does not ask Tom any questions regarding the photo.

The designs the company has produced find the supermarket's approval and shortly afterwards clothes with the new print designs are going on sale in all their large stores across the country. Did Tom do the right thing? Case 3 Dr Victoria Patel is a non-executive board director at SuperSoftware, a FTSE 250 company. The company had been struggling for some time to retain its market share. As a result, SuperSoftware hired a new CEO called Richard Smart, with the aim to turn the company's fortune around.

Victoria is a member of the company's nomination committee and as such was responsible, together with the other committee members, for the hiring of the new CEO. What impressed her and her fellow board directors was not

only the experience Richard brought from his previous work roles but also his qualifications, which include a computersciencedegree fromHarvardUniversity and an MBA from the University of Chicago. One year on, SuperSoftware’s board directors are very happy with Richard Smart’s work.

Following the implementation of his new strategic plan, the company has been gaining significant ground on its competitors. Furthermore, the CEO has been playing a vital role in the development of SuperSoftware’s CSR policy, which now includes a workplace scheme that the company offers to disadvantaged young people in the community. At a school reunion, Victoria runs into her old friend Janet, with whom she had lost contact over the last few years. Victoria remembers that Janet also went to Harvard to study computer science and that would have been around the same time that Richard Smart was a student there, too.

Victoria decides to mention her new CEO to Janet and ask her how well she remembers him from her time at Harvard. Janet gives Victoria a blank look and says that she had never heard Richard’s name before, she is nearly absolutely certain that no student with that name studied on the university’s computer science programme. Victoria is a little puzzled by this. She decides to check with the university herself and they confirm that Richard Smart has not been among their computer science graduates. What should Victoria do?

Case 4 (adapted from Siu and Lam 2009) Sam works in the design department of Baby Mobile, a pram and children’s accessories manufacturer. In the past, the company has been quite successful in selling infant carriers that can also be used as infant car seats. However, the current models are

relatively expensive to manufacture so profit-margins are rather low. Sam is member of the project team that has been asked to design a new, lighter weight model that should be in line with current trends but is also less expensive to manufacture.

Michael, the head of the design department, makes it clear to the team that he expects them to develop the new model within the set deadline, especially as executive management have already communicated to shareholders their plans of launching a new, more profitable product. On the day of the deadline, the team reports to Michael that they have come up with a new design that meets the project brief. However, the new model, because of its lighter materials, currently has a slightly higher risk of handle collapse, which could cause injury to children.

Their report states that they would need a few more weeks to find a solution to the problem with the handle. Michael Says that he will pass on their report to the executives. Two days later, Sam's team learns that the executives have decided to treat the ' handle problem' as a quality issue and launch the model as it is to satisfy shareholder expectations, although Improvements to the product may be incorporated later on. Sam thinks of his sister who has not Too long ago given birth to a baby girl... What should Sam do?