

The shoe store incident

Economics



This scenario provides a case for gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is illegal under Title VII (Bennett-Alexander & Hartman, 2007). In addition, in this scenario I will provide the legal and ethical issues that arise in this case. Furthermore, this paper will explain what Bob should do in this scenario.

Title VII Issues

Discrimination comes in all shapes and sizes, and managers have to be careful not to cross the line and do the wrong thing. Companies do not want lawsuits for discrimination or anything else. The store's best customer, Imelda, probably did not intend to offend anyone nor did she probably know that she was discriminating against anyone. Many times discrimination is not intended. Customers generally believe they are always right and get what they want.

However, in this instance the customer is very wrong. Requesting a female employee over a male employee is a form of discrimination, gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is illegal under Title VII (Bennett-Alexander & Hartman, 2007). If Bob asks Tom to step aside and allow Mary to assist Imelda with her purchases, he will be in violation of Title VII and can be held liable to the employee for gender discrimination. Customer preference is not a legitimate and protected reason to treat otherwise-qualified employees differently based on gender (Bennett-Alexander & Hartman, 2007, p. 283). Legally and ethically, Manager Bob cannot swap employees Tom and Mary simply because Imelda wants it.

Choice

The customer is promising to buy five pairs of shoes if she gets a female employee to help her. This would be a huge purchase for the store, great for the profit margin as well as a large commission for the employee. On the other hand, not providing a

female employee may denote a missed sale, Imelda may leave the store. Swapping employees would cheat Tom out of his commission. This would be unethical. Tom deserves his commission; he should not be asked or told to give this up.

The Shoe Store has very clear company policies. Company policy does not allow two employees to split the commission (UOPX, 2013, para. 5). As stated previously, having Tom give up his commission would not be fair. Company policy rotates employees to keep commissions as fair and equal as possible (UOPX, 2013, para. 5).

Manager Bob need to explain to Imelda as nicely and calmly as possible that he is very sorry, but cannot provide her with a female employee. Bob should promise Imelda that Tom is a very nice man and that she will be in very capable hands; ensure her that Tom knows shoes and will treat her and her feet right. Bob should smile and guarantee her that she will be happy with the service she receives. Bob should apologize for the problem, explain that he contacted his regional manager to see if he could make an exception to company policy this time and was told no, and explain that the company risks a discrimination lawsuit. Finally, tell Imelda that he understands if she chooses to shop elsewhere today and apologize again. Bob should not get into an argument with the customer; it is out of the stores control.

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Conclusion

Knowing the law is important for any manager. When questions arise that cannot be answered easily, ask for help. Title VII does not allow discrimination because of gender, meaning a man cannot be treated differently from a female and visa verse. In this case, all must be treated equally. Company policy will not allow Tom and Mary to split the commission and asking Tom to give up his commission would be illegal. Imelda will need to make her own decision whether to shop at the Shoe Store and allow Tom to assist her or leave for another store or until another day. The company must do what is

right and legal. The store must treats its employees properly and do what is legal and ethical. Whereas Imelda may not be happy, the company cannot do anything that may bring a lawsuit against them.