

Ethical dilemma assignment

Law



Ethical Dilemma Assignment An ethical dilemma is defined as a specific situation where an individual needs to choose between two or more conflicting solutions and does not know what to do, or is uncomfortable in regards to the possible impacts on others resulting from the choice.

Generally, there exists certain moral conflict in such situations. The ethical dilemma usually involves the individual questioning his own principles by testing his or her moral compass.

In other words, it involves ethical issues, which are general robbers that have virtuous content: most of the time, there is a social consensus that this constitutes an ethical issue. The ethical dilemma I have recently come across happened at my current Job: I've been working as a Customer Service Representative at Citibank since October 2013. At the time, I was majoring in Finance and thought it would be great to get a part-time Job at one of Canada's most established banks in order to gain experience.

Luckily, getting hired was not as hard as I thought it would be: one of my best friends named Michael, who is also in business school at Concordia, worked at the bank as a Head Teller and therefore referred me to his manager. Michael and I have been friends ever since we were born: our parents are extremely close and we basically grew up together since our birthdays were so close to each other. Mike, as I like to call him, has always been one of the people I have known best since we went to the same pre-school, elementary school and high school.

He is truly like a brother to me. Working at the bank was a brand new experience for me since I had never worked in this field before. Although I

am not necessarily fond of my Job there, I am thankful for he opportunities that have come my way and the experiences I have gained. Now I know that my plans for the future lay elsewhere, and that I probably will not be pursuing a career in banking. Putting aside my ill feelings towards my current position, I have decided to keep the Job for the time being as it my main source of income and a great addition to my resume.

After a couple of months of working at the bank, my manager decided to delegate to me the responsibility of helping Michael close the cash at the end of the day. Within a couple of weeks of closing the cash on a daily basis, I sometimes noticed that when Michael tried closing, the cash would not balance as we would have extra money. When this happened, Michael would usually give it a second try and it would always turn out successful; the balance always reverted back to zero.

At this time, I started to get suspicious. Before going to bed, these terrible thoughts started appearing in my mind; “ Is it really possible that he is stealing from a bank? ” . I could not believe I was questioning my best friend’s integrity, knowing him so well I thought it would never be possible for him to do such a thing. One day however, I saw it with my own two eyes. Michael had an extra 20\$ printed on the closing card, and a few minutes later he had slipped that same 20\$ in one of his pockets.

I couldn’t believe what I had Just witnessed- he is not a thief and I did not think he could get away with stealing money without anyone else realizing. My first instinct was to alert my colleagues, but I did not want anyone to know. After all, Michael is still one of my closest friends and I would never

want to put him in harm's way. On my way home that day, I decided I wouldn't mention anything to him and pretend as if I hadn't seen any of today's events. I also figured that he would get caught one way or another, since there are probably cameras installed in the bank for security reasons.

After many hours of going back and forth in my own head, I started overthinking the situation and noticed that I was actually putting my own job in danger since I was aware that one of the employees was committing theft and that I was remaining silent about it. Not only was I putting my current job in jeopardy, I was also putting my entire career at risk. In Canada, a person who aids or abets in the commission of a crime gets the same treatment as someone who is a principal offender under the criminal law.

There is a section of the Criminal Code of Canada which provides that: "Every one is a party to an offence who (a) actually commits it; (b) does or omits to do anything for the purpose of aiding any person to commit it; or (c) abets any person in committing it." Even though no one can possibly know that I caught Michael stealing, I would still be taking a risk by not reporting it to my superiors. On the other hand, if I reported the incident to my manager it would ruin my best friend's career as he would get fired and possibly arrested.

Furthermore, it would be almost impossible for him to get a job after such an incident, as it would be written on his permanent record. This means that regardless of my choice, the consequences would be heavy for all parties involved. I was put into a terribly compromising position: I had to make a

choice between my relationship with my best friend and the legal obligation of reporting any incidents to my manager. The decision I had to take was based on value: if I reported the incident, then I would forever hinder the relationship I have with Michael. On the other hand, if I kept the story to myself, I would be committing a criminal offence.

The dilemma I was faced with was the following: what I value the most between my relationship with my best friend, or my personal work ethic and my integrity. The decision I finally made sort of a compromise between my two options. I didn't want to reach out to my manager and tell her what I saw because that would completely destroy my relationship with Michael, which I wasn't ready to give up. However, I did not feel comfortable being a bystander and letting steal from the bank. Therefore, I decided to confront him about it as it would address the issues that had been weighing on my mind for so long.

By doing so, I would make sure that he understands not to repeat the same mistakes and I would let him know that if he were to do it again, I would be obligated to report him. The reason I made this decision is because honesty and loyalty have always been values Michael and I respected and treasured: it was always an automatism for both of us to talk about everything and share stories with each other. The reason I decided to value my friendship over reporting the incident is because I wasn't ready to give up all those great memories and my current relationship with Michael.

Throughout my first year at the bank, Michael was always honest with me, helped me with whatever problems I had, gave me advice, and valued me as

a person. He had never taken advantage of me as a person. Also, since he is the one who referred me for the position, I felt I owed it to him to keep quiet about his wrongdoing. By speaking to him, I felt like I could get my point across without betraying him and putting a dent in our friendship. In my opinion, it was the solution with the best perceived repercussions as it would teach Michael a lesson all while maintaining our honest and harmonious relationship.

In terms of moral impulse and emotions, I must admit that to this day, there is still a little part of me that is bothered about the situation. The reason behind me feeling this way is because of individual influences like personal values: honesty is one of the most important values for me and this is because I was raised in a house of “controllers”. My parents are the type of people who like to know or be aware of everything and one of the first things they taught me in life is to be honest, not only with people but with myself.

Being raised in Lebanon, a high-context culture, dishonesty was not an acceptable approach when it came to issues (whether regular or business issues). Being honest with yourself is to not make excuses for doing things that are against your beliefs or allowing others have a negative effect on you. However, these feelings I keep having about the situation made me discover a side of me I was not so aware of. Aside from honesty, I realized that I really value integrity. Integrity means thinking and doing what is right all the time, no matter what the consequences may be.

When you have integrity, you are willing to live by your standards and beliefs even when no one is watching. In my situation, what would have been the “

right thing” is talking to my manager and telling her what I saw. In fact, the situational factor that was making me reconsider my decision is the organizational culture at the bank. In the bank's guideline for business conduct, it is mentioned that “ doing the right thing and acting with integrity is essential, even when it is difficult or seems to conflict with other priorities”.

One of the six principles of the Citibank Code of Ethics is “ Conduct yourself honestly and with integrity”. Unfortunately, I did not follow this moral code and I still feel extremely guilty about it to this day. This is somehow causing a bit of moral damages to me: the fact that I am morally aware of breaking the law is keeping the thoughts stuck somewhere in my head. I am aware that the decision I made was not “ reasonable” and I feel remorse about that: I would be extremely embarrassed if my boss was aware of the situation or about my behavior in regards to what happened.

However, I feel assured because the whole story has remained between Michael and I ever since it happened. I always chose to keep it a private matter because both of our personal and professional reputations were at stake. In addition, I am more of a quiet and withdrawn person and I tend to handle problems by myself; I am used to keeping things to myself. Knowing this story is going to stay between us makes me feel at more at peace- I did not have to justify my decision to others and I did not feel pressured from others to behave in a certain way.

In conclusion, it would be only right to say that this ethical dilemma I experienced helped me learn a lot about myself and made me stronger in

terms of decision- making. I know that the decision I made is not the right one when I consider the banks code of ethics and guidelines. Also, it obvious that my personal interests not only affected the situation but also affected the decision I ended up making. I prioritize friendship because I wasn't ready to give up the closest person to me. Michael will be forever grateful for my loyalty and appreciated the second chance I gave him.