

4.7: Exercises

Ethical Dilemma

You are a department manager in an advertising agency. The employees of the department have recently completed an attitude survey. Three employees in your department reported that they were harassed by senior people in the department and they are experiencing a hostile work environment. You do not know who these people are, but you feel that you need to do something. The surveys were filled out confidentially, and employees were assured that their identities would not be revealed to management. You feel that you can identify who they are because the person in HR who administered the survey is a friend of yours and that person can tell you the demographics of the employees, which would help you identify them.

1. Should you ask for the identity-revealing information? What are the advantages and disadvantages of finding out the identity of these people?
2. How would you handle a situation like this now and in the future?

Individual Exercise

Reading and Responding to Employee Blogs

You found out that one employee from your company has created a blog about the company. Other current and ex-employees are also posting on this blog, and the picture they are painting is less than flattering. They are talking about their gripes, such as long work hours and below-market pay, and how the company's products are not great compared to those of competitors. Worse, they are talking about the people in the company by name. There are a couple of postings mentioning you by name and calling you unfair and unreasonable.

1. What action would you take when you learn the presence of this blog? Would you take action to stop this blogger? How?
2. Would you do anything to learn the identity of the blogger? If you found out, what action would you take to have the employee disciplined?
3. What would you change within the company to deal with this situation?
4. Would you post on this blog? If so, under what name, and what comments would you post?

Group Exercise

Exit Interview Role-Play and Developing an Attitude Survey

This role-play will be played by three students. One student will be an employee from the human resources (HR) department conducting the interview, the second will be the employee who is leaving, and the third will be an observer. The HR employee and the departing employee will conduct an exit interview. At the conclusion of the interview, the observer will provide feedback to the HR employee regarding how the interview could have been improved and how the employee could have been more open.

Part 1: Role-Play

Be sure to read only the role sheet assigned to you.

Part 2

In groups of three, review the information gathered from the exit interview. Many of these problems may be affecting the rest of the employees. Develop an attitude survey to be distributed to remaining employees of this company. Develop questions based on what came out of the interview as well as other areas you feel may be important to know. Discuss how the surveys would be administered and what would be done to (a) have a high response rate and (b) ensure the accuracy of responses.

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