

12.9: Exercises

Ethical Dilemma

You are currently a department manager and Jim is your “trusted assistant.” You have very similar working styles, and you went to the same college and worked in the insurance industry for several years. Before working in this company, you both worked at a different company and you have this shared history with him. You can trust him to come to your aid, support you in your decisions, and be loyal to you. Because of your trust in him, you do not supervise his work closely, and you give him a lot of leeway in how he structures his work. He sometimes chooses to work from home, and he has flexibility in his work hours, which is unusual in the department.

Now you decided to promote him to be the assistant department manager. However, when you shared this opinion with someone else in the department, you realized that this could be a problem. Apparently, Jim is not liked by his colleagues in the department and is known as an “impression manager.” Others view him as a slacker when you are not around, and the fact that he gets the first pick in schedules and gets the choice assignments causes a lot of frustration on the part of others. They feel that you are playing favorites.

Discussion Questions:

1. What would you do?
2. Would you still promote him?
3. How would you address this unpleasant situation within your department?

Individual Exercise

Ideas for Developing Yourself as an Authentic Leader

Authentic leaders have high levels of self-awareness, and their behavior is driven by their core personal values. This leadership approach recognizes the importance of self-reflection and understanding one’s life history. Answer the following questions while you are alone to gain a better understanding of your own core values and authentic leadership style.

- Understand Your History
 - *Review your life history.* What are the major events in your life? How did these events make you the person you are right now?
 - *Think about your role models.* Who were your role models as you were growing up? What did you learn from your role models?
- Take Stock of Who You Are Now
 - *Describe your personality.* How does your personality affect your life?
 - *Know your strengths and weaknesses.* What are they and how can you continue to improve yourself?
- Reflect on Your Successes and Challenges
 - *Keep a journal.* Research shows that journaling is an effective tool for self-reflection. Write down challenges you face and solutions you used to check your progress.
- Make Integrity a Priority
 - *Understand your core values.* What are your core values? Name three of your most important values.
 - *Do an ethics check.* Are you being consistent with your core values? If not, how can you get back on track?
- Understand the Power of Words
 - *Words shape reality.* Keep in mind that the words you use to describe people and situations matter. For example, how might the daily reality be different if you refer to those you manage as associates or team members rather than employees or subordinates?

In view of your answers to the questions above, what kind of a leader would you be if you truly acted out your values? How would people working with you respond to such a leadership style?

Group Exercise

You are charged with hiring a manager for a fast-food restaurant. The operations within the store are highly standardized, and employees have very specific job descriptions. The person will be in charge of managing around 30 employees. There is a high degree of turnover among employees, so retention will be an important priority. Most employees who work in the restaurant are young with low levels of work experience, and few of them view the restaurant business as a full-time career. The atmosphere in the restaurant has a fast pace. In this company, managers are often promoted from within, and this position is an exception. Therefore, the incoming manager may not expect a warm welcome from employees who were passed over for a promotion, as well as their colleagues. Finally, the position power of the manager will be somewhat limited because employees are unionized. Therefore, the manager will have limited opportunities for distributing pay raises or bonuses.

Discussion Questions

1. Identify the leadership traits and behaviors that are desirable for this position.
2. Design an approach to selecting this person. Which methods of employee selection would you use? Why?
3. Develop interview questions to be used in hiring this manager. Your questions should be aimed at predicting the leadership capabilities of the person in question.

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