



SONOMA COUNTY WORK-READY CERTIFICATION
WORKPLACE ETHICS SCENARIO #2:
“POOLS OF MONEY” & “FREE FOR FRIENDS”

Lesson Plan Title: “Pools of Money” & “Free for Friends”

Concept/Topic to Teach: Demonstrate integrity (WRC Skill #2)

General Goal(s): Students discuss and are made aware of issues surrounding integrity;
Students learn appropriate ways to deal with sensitive issues (i.e. theft) in the workplace

Required Materials:

1. Copies of “Pools of Money” workplace ethics scenario
2. Copies of “Free for Friends” workplace ethics scenario
3. Copies of Discussion Questions for the “Pools of Money” scenario
4. Copies of Discussion Questions for the “Free for Friends” scenario

Step-by-Step Procedures:

1. Pass out the “Pools of Money” scenario and ask a volunteer to read it aloud while the other students follow along.
2. Hold a brief discussion about what the students believe to be the relevant facts in the scenario and what the employee should do.
3. Pass out the “Free for Friends” scenario and ask a volunteer to read it aloud while the other students follow along.
4. Hold a brief discussion about what the students believe to be the relevant facts in the scenario and what the employee should do.
5. Ask students if they see a difference between the theft occurring in the “Pools of Money” scenario and that occurring in the “Free for Friends” scenario (solicit different points of view from the class).
6. Pass out the Discussion Questions for the “Just Joking” scenario and the “Free for Friends” scenario (you can have students complete these individually, in pairs, in small groups, or as a homework assignment).

Closure:

Debrief with all students about the appropriate way to deal with theft in the workplace and what they learned from the situation presented in the scenarios.

NOTE: Students can include their written responses to the Discussion Questions in their WRC Portfolio to demonstrate Skill #2.

Pools of Money

Pools of Money* Scenario

Key Characters:

You—Ticket Seller and Cashier

Mike—Co-Ticket Seller and Cashier

Andy—Assistant Manager

Scenario:

You recently accepted a summer job working as a cashier at a newly-opened pool. Your job is to take money from people as they come in the front gate. It isn't expensive to swim in the community pool, but there is a lot of business during the summer so you deal with a significant amount of money throughout the course of the day. The pool just opened up, so management hasn't yet set up the cash register. This means that you have to manually write down the number of pool patrons, per day, on a tally sheet and store the money in the cash box. At the end of the day, you count the money to make sure that the number of tallies on your sheet matches the amount of money in the box.

You work with one other cashier during the day, Mike. One day, while you're adding up the money for the day, Mike makes a suggestion: he will take some of the money out of the cash box and erase some of the tally marks. Since there is no electronic record of the money you receive, no one will know. You can then split the money and make a little extra cash. Besides, he points out, you aren't making that much money and the pool practically owes you more for how hard you've been working since it has opened.

At first, you tell Mike that you aren't interested and he makes you promise that you won't tell if he takes some money. You know that Mike is a pretty popular guy among the lifeguards and other pool staff, so you feel pressured to tell him that you won't report it to anyone. Then, after a few days, you start to feel guilty and think your boss, Andy, is starting to suspect something. You feel badly because you told Mike that you wouldn't tell, and you know that he probably needs to keep his job to make money before he starts college in the fall.

What should you do?

* Scenario and discussion material based on the following ethics case: Rao, Hema and Charles Alworth. "ZZ Cinema." 1992. Available online at: <http://web.tepper.cmu.edu/ethics/AA/arthurandersen.htm> (February 7, 2007)

Pools of Money

Discussion Questions

What are the relevant facts?

1. You are new on the job.
2. Mike is popular with all of the pool staff.
3. You promised Mike that you wouldn't tell if he took money from the cash-box.
4. You know that Mike is short on cash and can't afford to lose the job.

From an employee perspective:

1. Are you culpable in this situation because you told Mike that he could take money without your telling anyone?
2. Should you tell Mike that it's not okay to take money and encourage him to stop, thereby allowing him to keep his job if he stops his bad behavior? Or, should you go straight to your boss even though it means Mike might lose his job?

From an employer perspective:

1. If your employee came to you and admitted to knowing that a fellow employee had been stealing funds, what would you do?
2. Should Andy fire Mike or give him a second chance?
3. What should Andy do to the employee who is aware of Mike's stealing?

Free for Friends

Free for Friends* Scenario

Key Characters:

Patricia—Store Manager

Vince—Cashier

You—Cashier

Scenario:

The local ice cream shop is a pretty cool hang out for a lot of your friends. Through a series of good interviews you were able to score a full-time position for the summer, a rare feat for a young adult. You receive free ice cream, the tips aren't bad at all, and your friends often come in to visit after school.

When you began working, Vince, who had already been working at the ice cream shop for four months when you started, trained you for the first few weeks. Vince is fun, outgoing, and easy to get along with. While he was training you, Vince's friends dropped by to visit him. You noticed that he gave them free ice cream. You assumed this was against the rules, but you were new at the ice cream shop and didn't want to get anyone in trouble so you kept quiet. Besides, your boss Patricia seems to really like Vince, and you're sure that she would be really upset if she found out that Vince has essentially been stealing ice cream from the shop.

One day, a couple of your friends dropped by while Vince's friends were in the shop. They noticed that Vince gave them free ice cream and they asked why you wouldn't give them a couple scoops for free, too. You knew that you shouldn't, but you felt pressured, so you gave them some ice cream, "on the house."

Now your friends are starting to come in all the time, expecting free ice cream. You feel badly saying no, and clearly Vince has no problem giving away the ice cream, but you know that what you're doing is wrong. Your friends are coming in more frequently, and bringing people with them. Soon, Patricia is going to notice that the amount of ice cream that's missing at closing time is more than what you've made in revenues for the day.

You tell Vince that you want to stop giving friends free ice cream and encourage him to stop, too. He says that he likes his friends visiting, and if you tell Patricia, he'll be sure to tell her that you've been giving away ice cream too.

What should you do?

* Scenario and discussion material based on the following ethics case: Helms, Marilyn. "Family Business." 1992. Available online at: <http://web.tepper.cmu.edu/ethics/AA/arthurandersen.htm> (February 7, 2007).

Free for Friends

Discussion Questions

What are the relevant facts?

1. You are new and somewhat insecure in your position. You enjoy the job and the perks.
2. You think it's fun when your friends come into the shop, and you enjoy their company.
3. You feel badly telling your friends that you won't give them free ice cream, especially because you've already been doing it for weeks.
4. You like Vince and don't want him to think less of you just because you want to stop breaking the rules.
5. Patricia might soon notice that there is more ice cream missing than there is money in the cash register from sales.

From an employee perspective:

1. What should you do? Should you tell Patricia that you've been giving away ice cream before she notices for herself or finds out from someone else?
2. Do you have a moral obligation to tell Patricia what you and Vince have been doing?
3. How do you tell your friends that you can't keep giving them free ice cream?
4. What do you think is the effect of giving away free ice cream on a regular basis in the short-term on the company's finances? What about the long-term? Is it ethical to give away a product without the consent of the owners or your manager?

From an employer perspective:

1. What should Patricia do if her employees tell her that they've been giving away free ice cream?
2. What should Patricia do if she hears from someone else that her employees have been giving away free ice cream?
3. Should Vince be punished more harshly because he has been working in the store for longer?
4. What is the effect of giving away free ice cream on a regular basis in the short term on the company's finances? What about the long term? Is it ethical to give away a product without the consent of the owners or a manager?