

"Is Harry Too Social to be Promoted?"

(Case Study 1)

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First, Martin should be sensitive to the ethical implications of whatever choices he makes as part of his communication. Part of the sensitivity involves recognition of the ethical dimensions of decisions that may be fully considered in the process of handling this case. If there is no regulation or policy that is against the free use of employees using social media or any advice from the organization on the use of social media, then it is possible that the employees can use their private social media for whatever they want. Secondly, decision makers in this case, must be able to sort through various value positions and determine which one should take prominence in this context. According to Seeger, Sellnow, Ulmer and Novak (as cited in Shockley-Zalabak (2015, p.120). Most importantly, a set of guidelines which was developed by Wallace (1995) and was, first, applied to the political system and extended to the assessment of communication skills, according to Rubin and Yoder (as cited in Shockley-Zalabak, 2015, p. 121). These guidelines which are appropriate for considering Harry’s case include; the habit of search, the habit of justice, the habit of public versus private motivations and the habit of respect for dissent. With these habits, the problem will be explored and well- analyzed. Information, presented along these lines will be open and fair, with very little or no message distortion. Sharing sources of information such as special opinions, motivations, or even biased ad opposing viewpoints and arguments will be utilized.

Harry should be able to use the voice and participation practice (Shockley-Zalabak, 2015, p.124) to speak to this important issue that has both value and ethical dimensions. Harry needs an input such as the specific statements his organization holds on basic ethical behavior. His actions will be weighed against those statements to determine if any ethical abuse occurred or not. Organizational silence will have deep implications in this case especially as it links with Harry’s

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personal and professional life. Since he is still being considered for promotion, Harry should be willing to define the problem by examining issues critically and not exhibit any form of avoidance. He can present confidential information about this matter to Martins. That will silence the competitors. According to Shockley-Zalabak (2015, p. 127), confidentiality is designed to protect organizational information necessary for competitive advantage.

Finally, the Merton Ethics and Behavior Code must be rewritten to communicate and describe, and even confront destructive behaviors and also state the specific behaviors which are universally considered unethical.

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References

- Shockley-Zalabak, P. S. (2015). *Fundamentals of organizational communication: knowledge, sensitivity, skills, values* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Wallace, K. R. (1995). An ethical basis of communication. *Speech Teacher* 4(1): 1-9.