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Study Case Two: Communication Ethics

Prejudice is usually negative. It can significantly influence how we behave towards certain people and what expectations we have of them. This can be very dangerous. Negative prejudices that develop on a large scale in society can even cause tensions between groups. I don't think anyone is saved from having at least once passed judgment on another person, not even me.

I remember a few years ago, when I studied communications in Peru, I had a teacher who spoke highly of one of her students, saying that he was the best student and that she had never met anyone like him. I consider myself someone academically competitive, which is why I created a negative prejudice about him; I came to think that if he was such a good student, it meant that he was a person who thought he was the best in everything, that he lacked humility and that he was one of those whom everyone disliked. To my luck, one day, we had to take a class together, and I remember how my face changed when I saw him. I thought I knew him because I had a prejudice against him, that's why every time he spoke in class, I would get in a bad mood; coincidentally, the professor of that class that semester did not let us choose our groups for our final assignment, he made the groups according to what he thought was best, and put us both together. The final assignment would take us two months, and we had to meet for the assignments the professor left us every week. It didn't take many days to realize how wrong I was; the ideas I had about Aldo were false, this kid was amazing, even a much

better person than my teacher said. Aldo became my best friend; today, he still challenges me to improve.

My ethical guide has always been Jesus. I was born into a Christian family, where I learned from a very young age that Jesus should be our example in daily life. He came to earth, kept himself holy and pure, then sacrificed his life for our sins and finally resurrected, so I always ask myself, "What would Jesus do?" Challenges are daily at work, in studies, at home, and in our interpersonal relationships, so knowing what Jesus would do would make the difference between a happy life or a life of constant disappointments. In terms of ethics, Jesus was and continues to be the Master of Communication. The assertive, pedagogical, yet powerful and humble manner of his personality was the infallible combination to communicate his message effectively so that everyone would hear it. Jesus was always honest in his message; he transmitted with truthfulness and for the benefit of those who listened to him. Jesus cared about his disciples and anyone who came to him. That is what I want to imitate.

One example of ethical communication on Dr. Muehlhoff's part was understanding and listening to Jenna's questions. Because of his experience in the field, he could have chosen to be very technical in his answers and overuse industry jargon and terminology, which in turn would not make sense to his audience or Jenna. He thought about his audience and did not forget that communication is always a two-way street. Engaging with his community was not just about conveying a message; it was about receiving and understanding the response. In this sense, he considered the language barriers his audience might face and made a representative choice of words.