

and with some traveling and all that vacation time, there was never much opportunity to actually work with him. So they learned to be efficient and productive by themselves without the person who was supposed to be their team leader, teacher, and supervisor. It finally deteriorated to the point that even the most positive colleagues realized that Waters contributed nothing to either the work level or to morale, both of which were already low. And that was without even being burdened with the things Valerie now knew!

Could she let her boss get away with this? Was she not obligated to report this? After all, in the company's policies it was clearly stated:

Personal payments, bribes or kickbacks to customers or suppliers or the receipt of kickbacks, bribes or personal payments by employees are absolutely prohibited.

How could she even work with Waters any longer under these circumstances?

She felt her anger toward him growing stronger. What kind of person was this man? Was he just a greedy human being? Didn't he make enough money already? He always acted as if he was the most naïve person in the office, and then she discovered this! She wished she had never seen those papers. It would have been much easier for her to continue her work and conduct "business as usual."

What Valerie had to do, or not do, somehow became an easy decision. It was clear that she was unable to report this before she had another job or even before she graduated from the M.S. program, which was her ultimate short-term goal. Getting another job is not easy without a green card. The Immigration and Naturalization Service had recently made it more difficult for non-U.S. citizens to work in the United States, so companies hesitate to hire people like Valerie because it means a lot of paperwork and expenses for them. Also, workers with Valerie's type of visa have only 30 days to find a new job in the event they lose theirs; otherwise, they are required to leave the country.

Basically, Valerie did not really have a choice if she did not want to become a martyr for the ethics cause. She decided to wait for a while before bringing these findings to

light, at least until she was close to graduating from the M.S. program so that she could receive her degree. It seemed that the highly ethical stance would be to report this right away, but it also seemed silly to sacrifice herself and her own future for the sake of "outing" someone who had been so unethical. Did she act morally and ethically correctly? She felt that she put her own interests before ethics for now, and that bothered her deeply, but she knew she was going to do what had to be done as soon as her circumstances allowed for it.

Valerie's discovery changed everything, and nothing. She still had to set up meetings with their long-time perfumers, and participate and act as if she knew nothing about what happened. She did try talking to Waters about involving other fragrance companies again. Her stated reason to him was that Wisson only receives approximately 100 submissions per project now, instead of the 300 to 400 in prior years. He was not willing to discuss that topic at all though, which obviously did not surprise her. She wondered whether the perfumers knew about these sweet deals too, or if they believed that their hard work won them their projects. Every time Waters said something regarding the importance of keeping the fragrance development as this team's responsibility, she said to herself, "Yes, and I know why!"

When the timing is right, and Valerie makes this crucial information "public," of course Waters and his future will be affected. He will certainly lose his job, could possibly face criminal charges, and his reputation in the industry will be destroyed. For the team, the question will be whether it can survive without him. The teams do have a very strong brand manager among them, who has an excellent reputation within the Wisson organization. Perhaps he will be able to take over the team and restart this department the right way.

Questions

1. What ethical dilemmas are facing Valerie?
2. If you were Valerie, what would you do?

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