

The Moral Dilemma of a Young Business Man-A Case Study

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Abstract:

Ethics and morals, now-a-days, have no place in the world of demand and supply, competition and profit making is ruling the world. However, few families where the roots are firm and deeply nourished with their disciples with strong ethos and grounded behavioral aspects, those are contributing to the ethical economy and making all the difference. These kinds of young minds ignite the need for ethical footprint in their associates.

Key words:

Ethics & morals, ignite, young minds, ethical footprint etc.,

Introduction:

Sometimes, the dilemma exists in everybody's life in between the needs and wants and the ethics & morals that are put in by the parents, teachers and the society where the upbringing has taken place at the earlier days of our lives.

In the country like India, where the different holy books are practiced in every walks of life, the customary teaching of ethics with different storylines, it sometimes put people to decide between Profit making & the ethical way of leading life.

One such real life example is discussed below.

Case Study:

Mr. X is a 24yr young man who is desperately searching for work as he is the only son to his parents. His father passed away when he was a child.

His mother raised him alone and instilled morals and ethics in him which made him a man of integrity and strong character. Raised with such values he has never dishonored his word or disobeyed anyone. He is an ideal child that every parent wish they had.

Being the only man in the house, he feels the need to earn bread and butter for himself and his mother. After many failed attempts to get a job, he is offered one by a wealth management company although it pays him much lower than the standards. He accepts the job offered considering the need of the hour and signs an agreement that legally binds him to the company for 2 years.

He works hard, pours in his sweat and blood for the job. He is absolutely 100% honest in his work. Logs into office before time and leave much after all the employees leave. Due to his dedication and sincerity, he is appreciated and liked by all his colleagues and manager.

After a month at his new job, he finds out that the company he worked so diligently for is involved in unethical practices. The company is trying to defraud the customers by asking them to pay a high amount upfront for availing financial services and misleading them with false promises of high returns while the company is gambling with the money of the customers.

Ever since he has discovered the other side, he doesn't wish to be a part of an unethical company but he doesn't have any luck on finding other jobs. The thought of having no other means of financial assistance for the survival of his mother makes him want to stick to the job. And as an obedient person who has always finished the duty that he has started he feels it would be unfair to dishonor the agreement that he has signed.

All this has put him under immense stress and he is caught up in a moral dilemma.

Problem statements:

1. Assuming you are the mother of Mr. X what would you suggest him?
2. Assuming you are Mr. X what would you do?
3. You are an in-house counsellor of the company and Mr. X has come to you as he is dealing with stress with the said issue. How would you deal with the situation keeping the interests of the company in mind?

Case Facts & Discussion :

- Mr. X is a young hard working, sincere and obedient man.
- He is the only son to his parents and was raised by his mother alone.

- As the only son, his mother wanted her son to be a good human and she taught him values that ensured he grew up to be the kind of son she desired.
- After reaching a certain age Mr. X felt that he should now take up the responsibility of the house and take care of his mother.
- He starts to look for a job and after trying a lot he finally gets one which binds him to the company for 2 years.
- Considering the urgency of the situation he accepts the job without a second thought.
- A month into his new job, he learned that the company he worked so hard for was involved in unethical practices.
- After knowing the dirty deals of the company for which he worked honestly, he finds it hard to stick around with the company.
- He is in a fix as he is caught up between finding a source of revenue to support his family as he is unable to find other jobs and his own moral conscience which doesn't allow him to be a part of something unethical.
- On the other hand, he has always stood by his words and commitment therefore he feels that it would be unfair if he dishonors the binding agreement.
- Worried about the abovementioned things he has landed himself into stress and is unable to find the clarity in doing things.
- He is in a situation wherein he feels guilty for staying with the company as he doesn't want to be part of unethical activities and feel guilty for moving on from the company, he would be dishonoring the agreement and also would be taking away the financial support of his family.

PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED:

- After learning about the company's unethical activities with the intention to defraud its customers, Mr X doesn't wish to continue working for the company however he is legally bound to the company. In addition to that the survival currently depends upon the revenues from his job.
- It is easy to take a decision when the choices involve one right and one wrong outcome but what do you do when both the choices are wrong yet you have to take an irreversible decision?

SUGGESTIONS:

- Mr X should stick with the job until he finds a better job that fulfils his requirement.
- He should be honest with his mother and explain the situation to her because a mother would starve rather than enjoy the delicacies and luxuries bought from unethical source of income. Every mother wishes her child to be a sincere human before a successful person.
- He should confront the company about their unethical practices and explain its implications to them. The company might consider reforming their practices(although it's a rare possibility).
- He is currently facing a moral dilemma wherein his mind and conscience are moving in two different directions. He should finally pick one, either prioritize his mind over conscience or prioritize his conscience over his mind. He should decide between the kind of person he wants to be and the kind of employee he wants to be.
- He should consider taking a break and seek professional help to deal with the stress.
- He should put himself in the shoes of his mother or the person he idolizes by adapting "Figure storming" and thinking what they would do if they were in the similar situation. This would at least give him a direction to think in.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

1. Assuming you are the mother of Mr X what would you suggest him?

ANSWER:

Assuming I am Mr X's mother, I'd suggest my son to stick to his morals that I've raised him with. As a mother I'd prefer my son to earn his livelihood with utmost honesty and sincerity rather than get dirt on his hands. The whole purpose of instilling morals and ethics in him was to make him a man of integrity who is a good human first before anyone else. My son has been a man of strong character and I wouldn't want him to sacrifice it over some money. Not earning enough would be okay but living with the tag of immoral and unethical is not. One can go starving and live with it for a few days but not with the regret or the taint of being indulged in unethical practices when you had an option of being clean. I wouldn't want my son to live with the burden of that regret.

2. Assuming you are Mr X what would you do?

ANSWER:

If I am Mr X, I'd rather stick with the job than let my mother starve. How can I let the woman who made me what I am today, the one who raised me all alone, the one who starved on most of the days when there was not enough food, the one who wouldn't complain about hungry stomach to save some money for my education and so many other countless sacrifices. My mother has suffered enough and I don't want to add more to her sufferings by quitting the job. Sooner or later I will quit the job once I find an other job but till then I'd continue with my current job and honor the agreement which binds me to the company to the maximum extent possible. I'd rather beg, borrow or steal to ensure my mother doesn't sleep with an empty stomach.

One might even consider this inhuman considering the values my mother taught me but as quoted by Frank Lowy "The human being is very resourceful. When you fight for survival, you don't think much; you just do. If you think too much, you sink".

3. You are an in-house counsellor of the company and Mr X has come to you as he is dealing with stress with the said issue. How would you deal with the situation keeping the interests of the company in mind?

ANSWER:

As an in-house counsellor of the company I'd suggest Mr X to focus on the positives, the things about the job that make him happy and give him a reason to look forward to. I'd suggest Mr X to take a break and make him understand that the matters of business are different from his personal beliefs. I'd try convincing him to stay with the company but if it costs his peace of mind I'd recommend him a job switch if he finds another.

However if no other job is available considering the interests of both, the company and Mr X, it is best for Mr X to stick around with the company than quit and worry about his survival with no other source of income. It is better to have something you don't need than need something you don't have.

CONCLUSION

Sometimes all the options available in life seem wrong or all of them seem right. The trick is not always to choose the right option, but to choose something that's more right among the right or less wrong amongst the wrong.

In the given case Mr X is stuck between equally unprofessional (dishonoring the agreement), unethical (consciously working with a company involved in unethical practices) and devalued (letting his mother starve) choices. When all choices seem more or less similar and the consequences are also similar then it's tough choice to make. In such situation its better to choose the option with which you can live with. At the end of the day, we all have to face ourselves therefore it is advisable to make a choice that you will not regret later or the one that doesn't makes you question yourself and takes you farther away from the kind of the person you are or wish to be.