

It's for Real™

Workplace Ethics

Series I No. 1

What's the Big Deal?

Pizza Predicament



"Hey, Ling, Ling," shouted Pedro as he walked into the room. "Did you hear about the new band that's coming to town?"

Ling grabbed Pedro's hat and said, "You should have been at the basketball game last night. We were really good. It was my best game ever. I scored 29 points!"

"Give me my hat. I'm trying to tell you that a great new band is coming. Find out who wants to go hear it."

Later that afternoon, Ling and Pedro met their friends Nick and Shiva at Luigi's Pizza, where Emily worked. Above the noise Pedro shouted, "Hey, Emily, do you want to go with us to hear a new band next month? Let me know. And bring us a large pepperoni in a hurry. I have to get to work."

Ten minutes later, Emily brought out a large pepperoni pizza, four drinks, and the check. "Whose check is that, Emily?" teased Nick. "You aren't going to make us pay, are you? Your boss isn't around, so she'll never know."

"Look, Nick, you're not funny. If you want this pizza, you have to pay for it. I can take it right back to the kitchen," snapped Emily, who was rushed with customers. "If you were really my friend, you wouldn't ask that, even if you don't mean it. I could get in a lot of trouble if I gave you a free pizza. That's the same as stealing. I could lose my job."

"Emily, what's your problem?," joked Pedro. "It's not like we're asking you to commit murder. We're only talking about one little pizza. What's the big deal?"

What would you do?

If you were in Emily's situation, how would you react to the friends?

The Boss's Point of View

If Emily gives away free pizzas:

- I will lose money.
- I will be very angry.
- I will have to tell her to stop.
- I can't trust her.
- I will give her a warning about losing her job.
- I will wonder if other employees are giving away food.
- I will have to watch my employees more carefully.
- I will deduct the cost of the pizza from her pay.
- My relationship with Emily will suffer.
- I will think twice before I grant Emily special favors.



Left to right: Ling, Pedro, Nick; Shiva and Emily

Dishonesty at Work

Every year in the U.S. people who consider themselves "honest" steal millions of dollars in goods and services from their employers. In most cases, employees don't think twice about taking small items like pens or paper. They don't realize that taking unauthorized items lowers a company's profit.

Sometimes, the consequences for dishonesty can be harsh. For example, Philadelphia newspapers reported that a Villanova University basketball star was given a university phone card to make one call to a

reporter for an interview. He continued to use the card without permission, charging \$3,100 in calls. He was suspended for three games and had to repay the entire amount. His actions not only stained his reputation but threatened his school's ranking in the NCAA basketball championships.

Employee dishonesty can be found everywhere people work. Look at the following workplaces and list some items that employees take without realizing how much money it costs their employer.

Restaurant

Business Office

Movie Theater

Hospital

Clothing Store

Drugstore

Behind the Scenes

SuperAmerica Sports Center employs several people. The owner trusts the employees because they work hard and are cooperative. But some employees take supplies and arrive late to work. Multiply the cost of items taken in one day by

220, the number of working days in a year. How much is SuperAmerica losing to employee dishonesty? If more employees take time or merchandise, will SuperAmerica be able to afford annual raises and company bonuses?

Items Taken by Employees Each Day	Employer Cost	Loss to Company
Two pens	.89 each	\$ _____
One 10-minute personal long-distance call	.18 per minute	\$ _____
12 personal photocopies	.05 per copy	\$ _____
30 minutes spent in casual conversation	\$6.50 per hour	\$ _____
15 minutes late to arrive to work	\$5.75 per hour	\$ _____
15 minutes, 2 people extra time spent at lunch	\$7.20 per hour	\$ _____
10 minutes for early departure time from work	\$5.64 per hour	\$ _____
One tee shirt	\$8.00	\$ _____
One can of tennis balls	\$2.49	\$ _____
Total One Day's Loss		\$ _____
Multiply this number by 220 working days		_____
Total Annual Loss		\$ _____

Excuses, Excuses, Excuses...

List some of the reasons employees give for taking products or using services.

1. "It's only a pen. No one will care."
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Ask Jess

Dear Jess,

Last night, I went to a career fair to talk with employers about jobs. Before I left work, I made several copies of my resume to take with me. My boss looked at me funny when I walked out the door. Did I do anything wrong?

Worried

Dear Worried,

Did you ask your boss for permission? If not, keep your hands off the copier. Each business has its own policy about making personal copies. Ask what it is.

Dear Jess,

A person I work with is really nice, and I like him. The problem is he comes to work late sometimes because he has to drop his daughter off at school. He asks me to punch his time card so he won't get in trouble for being late. What should I do?

Willing to Help

Dear Willing to Help,

You both could get fired because he is stealing time from your company and you are being dishonest. Tell your friend to talk with your boss and work out a compromise. Maybe he could stay after work to make up the time.

Need help with a problem? Write to: Ask Jess, c/o Career Solutions Training Group, 13 East Central Ave., Paoli, PA 19301.



"GEE, MY DADDY HAS BOXES OF THESE SAME PENCILS AT HOME."



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Teaching Suggestions

Recommendations are given below for using each section of *It's for Real*.

What would you do?

Divide your students into groups of four or five. Ask each group to discuss what Emily should do in this situation, agree on an answer, and give reasons why. In a short feedback session, ask each group to report its decision and rationale. Expect the debate to be lively.

The Boss's Point of View

The Boss's Point of View provides a special opportunity for you to raise students' awareness about what is expected when they go to work. For some, it will be the first time they have ever heard the employer's point of view about honesty, and they may be surprised at the high standards. Many will have misconceptions about what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior in the workplace. Each of the points from *The Boss's Point of View* is discussed below.

- **I will lose money.** The employer had expenses in the making and selling of the pizza. When the money is not recouped through purchases, the store loses money.
- **I am going to be very angry.** Anger is one natural reaction of employers when people they trust disappoint them.
- **I will have to tell her to stop.** If Emily gave away a pizza once, she is likely to do so again.
- **I can't trust her.** Most employers trust their workers. When that trust is abused, the employer becomes suspicious of the employee's other actions.
- **I will give her a warning about losing her job.** A manager cannot afford to keep an employee who gives away the product. This boss is being generous by providing a first warning.
- **I will wonder if other employees are giving away food.** One employee can cast suspicion on a whole group of people.
- **I will have to watch my employees more carefully.** Greater supervision will be required.
- **I will deduct the cost of the pizza from her pay.** Someone has to pay for the pizza. If Emily wants to give a gift to her friends, then she has to pay for it.
- **My relationship with Emily will suffer.** Emily has confused her employer about what can be expected from her.
- **I will think twice before I grant Emily special favors.** The boss won't feel like granting favors any more if this is the reward for being nice.

Solutions for Page 2

Solutions for the exercises on page 2 of *It's for Real* are shown below.

Dishonesty at Work

Students will have many ideas to share about honesty. Accept any reasonable answers your students provide. Suggestions are listed below.

Restaurant

Food without permission
Time for personal matters

Business Office

Small supplies
Personal telephone calls

Movie Theatre

Watching a feature during work time
Talking with friends while customers wait

Hospital

Bandage supplies
Free drug samples

Clothing Store

Small personal items
Extended time at breaks

Drugstore

Candies
Film

Behind the Scenes

The loss to SuperAmerica Sports Center is shown below.

	Employer Costs	Loss to Company
Pens	2 x \$.89	\$ 1.78
Long distance call	10 min. x \$.18/min.	1.80
Photocopies	12 x \$.05/copy	.60
Time in conversation	.5 x \$6.50/hour	3.25
Arrived late	.25 x \$5.75	1.44*
Extra time at lunch		
2 people	.25 x \$7.20 x 2	3.60
Early departure	1/6 hour @ \$5.64	.94*
Tee shirt	1 @ \$8.00	8.00
Tennis balls	1 @ \$2.49	2.49
	Total One Day's Loss	\$ 23.90*
	Total Annual Loss	\$5,258.00*

*Answers may vary slightly due to rounding

Excuses, Excuses, Excuses

Let students share their answers. You will get a wide variety of excuses; however a few suggestions are given below.

1. This company is rich.
2. They'll never know.
3. I work hard. I deserve this.
4. It didn't cost much.

Ask Jess

Your students may not agree with the *Ask Jess* answers. If they disagree, consider this an opportunity to place issues on the table that students don't usually discuss. Any time you have an intelligent debate about business ethics, your students are better prepared for work.

What's the Big Deal?

Activity 1

Check your reading

How well do you remember what you read from "Pizza Predicament." Without looking back, write your answers in the blanks below.

1. How many points did Ling score in the basketball game? _____
2. What was coming to town? _____
3. What kind of pizza did Pedro order? _____
4. What did Emily deliver to the table that the group of friends did not want? _____
5. Why did the group of friends not want to pay for the pizza? _____

It's Your Decision

What would you do in each of the following situations? Compose complete sentences for your answers.

6. You work in a bakery making cinnamon buns. The manager has given permission for employees to take home all leftover fresh cinnamon buns when the store closes. Another employee asks you to make extras today. She wants to trade the leftovers with a friend who works at a bagel store that has the same "take home policy." _____
7. Your neighbor who lives next door to a church has hired you to rake leaves. You find a \$20 bill hanging in the wooden fence between the yard you are raking and the church. _____
8. You are baby-sitting at a home where the parents have told you "No visitors" while you are sitting. Your best friend, who has just broken up with her boyfriend, calls to ask if she can come over. She says she is desperate to talk. _____
9. As a driver for a florist, you are told to fill the car with gas at the beginning of each work shift and to use the car for florist deliveries only. Your girlfriend or boyfriend who bags at a grocery only a short distance away wants you to drive by and say hello. _____
10. Near the end of a movie, your friend stops by the refreshment counter in the theater and says, "How about a free box of popcorn? I'm out of money." You are the only person working the counter, and no one else is around. _____



What Upsets Employers Most

Dishonesty and lying

**Irresponsibility, goofing off, and attending to
personal business on company time**

Arrogance, egotism, and excessive aggressiveness

Absenteeism and lateness

Not following instructions or ignoring company policies

A whining or complaining attitude

Absence of commitment, concern, or dedication

Laziness and lack of motivation and enthusiasm

And, to a lesser extent:

**Lack of character, disrespect, making ill-informed decisions,
and taking credit for work done by others**

*Information taken from a nationwide survey of 100 Fortune 1000
company vice presidents compiled by Accountemps.*





Career Orientation

Unethical Behavior

In the News...

Scan current issues of newspapers or online news to find one example each of unethical behavior on the part of an employee and an employer.

- Create a poster describing both situations briefly.
- Include a Header/Title on the Page and your name
- List offenses or describe what the offender did in list form (or an easy to read format)
- Include what actions were taken in response to the behavior. (fired, suspended, indicted, placed on leave, etc)
- You should not work together. Each person should have their own poster.

Do a great job – we will display these posters 😊

Rubric

	1	2	3
Article Content	Selected 0-1 article, content of article was not related to ethics by an employee or an employer.	Selected 2 articles, however, did not have one of each example.	Selected two articles, one was directly related to an employee's ethics and the other was directly related to ethics by an employer.
Summary	Student did not summarize the articles.	Student summarized parts of the article but left out key points.	Student summarized all key points of the article.

Action Taken	Student did not list action taken by the company.	Student listed some of the action taken by the company but was not thorough.	Student was thorough in listing the action taken by the company.
Professionalism	Poster was not neat, eye-catching, well organized, 3 or more grammatical errors. No header or title on poster.	Poster was somewhat neat, well organized, but had 1-2 grammatical errors. Header/title did not stand out.	Poster was well-organized, eye-catching and had no grammatical errors. Header/title included.

CHAPTER 9 TEST

Workplace Ethics

A. Match each definition in the left column with the correct term from the right column. Write the letter of the term in the space provided.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| _____ 1. the willingness to accept obligations and to be accountable for an action or situation | a. ethics |
| _____ 2. the moral rules of society | b. cooperativeness |
| _____ 3. ensuring that secret information remains secret | c. initiative |
| _____ 4. taking responsibility for your work and career | d. confidentiality |
| _____ 5. willingness to work well with everyone else on the job | e. prejudice |
| _____ 6. the drive to do what's necessary without having to be told | f. responsibility |
| _____ 7. the root of most ethics problems in the workplace | g. self-management |
| _____ 8. unjustifiable negative attitude toward a person or group | h. dishonesty |

B. In the space at the left, write the letter of the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

- _____ 9. Monitoring your work habits and performance is one way you can
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. become self-managing. | c. maintain your values. |
| b. show company loyalty. | d. earn a promotion. |
- _____ 10. Employers generally expect new workers to
- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. fix the copier. | c. work overtime. |
| b. be willing to learn. | d. take a few office supplies. |
- _____ 11. The key skill you will need to follow directions is
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. setting goals. | c. speaking clearly |
| b. doing two tasks at once. | d. listening carefully. |
- _____ 12. People who complain when doing tasks they don't like are not being
- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. loyal. | c. responsible. |
| b. ethical. | d. cooperative. |
- _____ 13. If you are the victim of an unethical action by your employer, it's a good idea to
- | |
|---|
| a. keep a written record of the incident. |
| b. send a memo to all co-workers. |
| c. immediately confront your employer. |
| d. ignore the incident. |

14. Employers today seek employees who
- show initiative.
 - fit in to their organization's structure.
 - do a lot of things well.
 - all of the above.

15. Taking on more responsibility at work
- makes your job more interesting.
 - demonstrates your honesty.
 - helps keep confidentiality.
 - shows you are willing to follow directions.

16. Speaking poorly of a company's product is an example of
- honesty.
 - initiative.
 - disloyalty.
 - prejudice.

C. In the space provided, write the word (or words) from the list that will best complete each statement.

honesty	initiative	feedback	unethical behavior
values	confidentiality	reputation	sexual harassment

17. A company's reputation can be damaged by the _____ of an employee.
18. Solving problems on your own shows _____.
19. Asking for _____ can help you improve your work habits and skills.
20. Employers expect workers to demonstrate _____ about time and money.
21. Talking about a new product with someone from a competing company is a violation of _____.
22. Ethics refers to the _____ that help us decide what's right and wrong.
23. An example of unethical behavior in the workplace is _____.
24. Dishonest actions can damage your _____ and thus your career.

D. On a separate piece of paper, write a 50-word paragraph that answers this question.

25. Describe three ways you can behave ethically in the workplace.

Score (number correct x 4 points) = _____

CHAPTER 8 Beginning Your New Job

1. d
2. f
3. b
4. g
5. c
6. e
7. h
8. a
9. c
10. b
11. b
12. c
13. c
14. a
15. c
16. c
17. incentive plan
18. cafeteria plan
19. profit-sharing plan
20. fringe benefit
21. company culture
22. exempt employee
23. fair treatment
24. layoff
25. A good way to prepare for the first day is to get up early, so you don't have to hurry to arrive on time. When meeting new co-workers, try to repeat each person's name out loud to help you remember names. Concentrate on listening and observing others to learn about the company culture. Dress neatly and conservatively.

CHAPTER 9 Workplace Ethics

1. f
2. a
3. d
4. g
5. b
6. c
7. h
8. e
9. a
10. b
11. d
12. d
13. a
14. d
15. a
16. c
17. unethical behavior
18. initiative
19. feedback
20. honesty
21. confidentiality
22. values
23. sexual harassment
24. reputation
25. Being honest with your employer about time, money, and company property is one way to show ethical behavior. Employees should not lie about the hours they worked or expenses, and refrain from taking office supplies for personal use. Employees should also observe confidentiality and treat others fairly.