# Job Savvy

# How to Be a Success at Work

Sixth Edition

# Chapter 12: Doing the Right Thing

## Video Transcript

Slide 1

# Title Card

The Job Savvy video series for the sixth edition is brought to you by JIST Career Solutions, a leading provider of materials and technology that help build essential skills for career, academic, and life success.

Slide 2

# Chapter 12 Doing the Right Thing

Ethics are principles or standards that people in our society believe should govern everyone’s behavior. There are three levels of ethical behavior. There is the expectation that employees will follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the organization; employees are expected to follow company policies, and ethical behavior that is moral or virtuous in nature is also expected.

In this chapter you will identify common ethical dilemmas in a work setting, evaluate the problem and then choose the most ethical action. You will learn how to demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior and act responsibly with the interests of your workplace community in mind.

Slide 3

# Ethical Problems for Business

Unethical employee behavior costs businesses money and causes morale problems. Employee theft costs US businesses 50 billion dollars each year. When employees copy software illegally, their employer could be sued. Employees are responsible for 66 percent of successful cyberattacks.

It may seem surprising, but 70 percent of drug abusers are employed. The use of drugs and alcohol on the job results in 47 percent of accidents that cause serious injuries and 40 percent that result in death.

Employees who commit serious illegal or unethical actions are often fired. In addition, bad conduct hurts those employees’ reputations. Most people feel guilty about unethical behavior—even if they are not punished for it.

Slide 4

# Common Ethical Dilemmas

At first glance, ethical behavior seems easy. All you have to do is “the right thing.” Knowing what the right thing is for every situation is the hard part. Also, what you consider “right” or “ethical” might differ from others’ ideas about what is right or ethical.

Slide 5

# Common Ethical Dilemmas (continued)

Sometimes it’s hard to know what the right behavior is in the workplace. Most people face the same basic dilemmas when trying to decide what is the right thing to do. We call this uncertainty an **ethical dilemma**.

It’s fairly common:

…to be uncertain about what is expected. At times, you may face a situation and not know what your organization considers to be the right or wrong response.

…for your ethical standards to conflict with your coworkers, your supervisor or the organization itself. This can happen when a company supports policies that you believe are wrong or a supervisor tells you to do something you don’t feel is right.

…for an ethical decision to be neither strictly right or wrong. In ambiguous situations, it can be very difficult to decide how to behave.

Slide 6

# Guidelines for Making Ethical Decisions

To help in making ethical decisions ask yourself some questions.

Is it legal? How will it make you feel about yourself? People with good self-esteem are more likely to have the confidence to make ethical decisions.

How do others feel about it? How would you feel if the whole world knew about it?

Does the behavior make sense? Is the behavior fair to everyone involved?

Will leaders at your organization approve? How would you feel if someone did the same thing to you?

Will something bad happen if you don’t make a decision? You might decide to do nothing, and it won’t affect anyone.

Slide 7

# Common Ethical Problems

Workers often face ethical problems on the job.

Favoritism poses a particular problem in any business that deals directly with the public. Businesses may allow employee discounts for family members, but friends might expect special deals too. Know what your employer permits in these situations.

Some workers cheat their employer out of time by coming to work late, extending breaks, or texting during work time. Remember, your employer is paying you for time spent at work. Conducting personal business using office equipment or cyber loafing (in other words playing games or socializing on the computer) while at work are some ways workers cheat employers out of time.

Taking money from the cash register is obviously stealing. But workers can steal from their company by taking supplies, making personal photocopies, and stealing company data.

Slide 8

# Software Piracy, Freeware, and Shareware

Copying software illegally is called software piracy. Business leaders are becoming aware that installing pirated software increases the risk that companies will have computer systems affected by malware, or harmful software. An employee making illegal copies of software can be costly to an organization because it can face large fines, and leadership could even face imprisonment.

Software is protected by copyright laws. Commercial software is purchased, and the right to make copies is restricted. Typically, the program is installed on one computer. One copy is made and stored to be used if the original is damaged.

Slide 9

# Common Ethical Problems (continued)

Abusing alcoholic beverages or drugs on the job is wrong and can result in lower productivity, lower quality work and can be a major safety hazard. Substance abuse on the job can result in immediate termination.

Violating the confidentiality of your company or your customers can cause great harm and might even be illegal. With knowledge of another company’s financial data, competitors can identify the weaknesses and strengths of the business. Also, employees in both medical and educational organizations are governed by laws concerning confidentiality.

Slide 10

# Common Ethical Problems (continued)

One of the most difficult situations to face is knowing that another employee has done something wrong. You may discover that a coworker has behaved unethically when the other employee tells you personally or you see the employee do something wrong. However, don’t assume wrong-doing based on office gossip or a second-hand account. If you decide to speak to your supervisor about a coworker’s unethical behavior, make sure you have a reasonable reason for doing so.

Slide 11

# Common Ethical Problems (continued)

Many organizations have a set of personnel policies to govern employee behavior. Policies are communicated through a policy manual, memos, or email. Employees are expected to follow these policies. You can be disciplined for violating them. It’s important to know what the policies are and to follow them. Even if other workers get away with breaking the policies, you should not accept this as a good reason for breaking them yourself.

How you deal with ethical problems determines how successful you will be at your job. The wrong behavior could cause your supervisor to be dissatisfied with your performance and could cause you to be fired.

Slide 12

# A Useful Skill: Critical Thinking

Decisions made using critical thinking are based on logic and reason rather than emotions. A critical thinker identifies the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions to situations. Critical thinking requires a person’s time and effort. After an evaluation, the individual reaches a conclusion and takes action. Workers who can assess problems and initiate solutions are valued in the workplace. Critical thinking is needed to solve technical work-related problems on the job, but it is also useful when you must make an ethical decision.

Slide 13

# Conclusion

Supervisors evaluate workers based on their behavior. If they see workers doing something that they consider unethical, those workers will be disciplined. To maintain a good self-concept, you need to behave in a way that you feel is ethical. It’s not always easy to know what is ethical. But if you apply the questions in this chapter, you will make the best decision when you face ethical problems.