



Mary C. Gentile, PhD, Director
www.GivingVoiceToValues.org

Giving Voice to Values

Who's My Boss? (A)¹

The throng grimaced when Paul Wagland, the Senior Applications Programmer, stood up and asked, "What's the organization doing about the product quality issue that was raised six months ago?" This wasn't the first time that his statement, in front of the assembly of the entire IT staff, just over 100 members, was perceived as untimely. Although recognized as a strong performer, Paul was also known for his confrontational communication style, often during group meetings of the IT department. Many appreciated him, including his boss of two years, Allen Finan, and his internal clients, but several management team members cringed when he spoke. Frequently, Paul addressed issues that several considered to be inappropriate, particularly in a team setting. Among the group who struggled with Paul's style was the VP of IT, Miles Patterson, the executive who was leading the meeting.

CMS Industries, a leading aerospace company was known for its satellites and payloads. A multi-billion dollar enterprise, founded over 70 years ago. The mission of CMS was to build the best commercial and defense satellites for its global customers. Its success had been noted in the press and acknowledged in the equity markets. Miles had been with the company for 30 years and moved up the corporate ladder to his current position. Respected by the president, Miles often ascribed his accomplishments to his focus on goal attainment and building a dedicated team of IT professionals who delivered effective computer systems to a number of internal customers including Engineering, HR, Finance, and Procurement.

¹ Developed by Mark Mallinger and Gary Duck, Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business.

This case was inspired by actual experiences but names and other situational details have been changed, and interview sources left un-credited with permission, for confidentiality and teaching purposes.

WWW.BABSON.EDU

This material is part of the **Giving Voice to Values** curriculum collection (www.GivingVoiceToValues.org).
The Aspen Institute was founding partner, along with the Yale School of Management, and incubator for *Giving Voice to Values (GVV)*.
Note Funded by Babson College.

Do not alter or distribute without permission. © Mary C. Gentile, 2010

BY: student name - UB ID: number

"Case study title"

Word count:

1. Description of the main dilemmas raised in the scenario
 2. What are the main arguments you are trying to counter? What are the reasons and rationalizations you need to address?
 3. What is at stake for the key parties (including those who disagree with you)?
- What levers or arguments could you use to influence those with whom you disagree?

INDIVIDUAL SCRIPT

(In my play/script I have decided to use a narrator as a way of introducing the facts of the scenario, and Karl's 'conscience' to show how Karl has thought about the choices he needs to make. And then the main characters of Karl and his boss Sandra)

Narrator: Karl is fresh out of his undergraduate degree in financial investment at a highly ranked university. Karl got a job in a finance company and was excited to use his skills in his new role – even if his job was only to be for a short while as he was replacing someone on maternity leave. It was still a chance for Karl to learn some skills and to make some contacts who could then give him references for future jobs Karl applied for. Karl got to know how the finance company worked and he met his fellow employees. Karl got close to his supervisor, Sandra, and they formed a strong relationship. Karl was given his first task of calculating the investment returns for a group of elderly investors. Karl noticed that the money invested by these elderly investors was earning a low interest rate compared to the pool of investment funds of other investors – yet the elderly investors were being charged higher fees so the finance company earned higher commissions. Karl found himself asking many questions like...

Karl: shouldn't this be money be invested more wisely so that elderly investors earned more? And why are they charged more fees for the same amount of investment advice and planning?

Narrator: and...

Karl: I wonder if my other work colleagues are aware.

Narrator: and...

Karl: if I speak up what will my other workers think of me?

Narrator: and

Karl: if I speak up how will it affect the business?

Narrator: Karl didn't know how to approach the situation, his conscience came into play

Karl: what a tough choice, should I keep quiet?

Karl's conscience: what about all of these classes you did in university you know what the ethical thing to do would be....

Karl: But I am only new here, my work colleagues may not like me for this.

Karl's conscience: this is true but what about all the elderly investors who are being overcharged and who are not getting the financial return they should be? How would they feel about this? What if it was your elderly grandparents who were being taken advantage of? What would you do then?

Karl: But it is better for the business to make more money and then it can employ more people and grow....

Karl's conscience: But any profit and growth is the result of ripping off elderly investors.... like your grandparents.

Karl: Yeah it just doesn't feel right ripping off all these old people. I think I will talk to Sandra.

Narrator: Karl arranges to meet with Sandra that afternoon. At that meeting...

Karl: Can I talk to you Sandra, I am really worried about something.

Sandra: Of course. Come in.

Karl: I have been working with the investment returns for some elderly investors and I have realised that the finance company is not doing all it can to maximise these investors returns. It actually seems that they earn less but are being charged higher fees. I don't feel right working with this as I feel I am ripping off elderly people who should be given more care and respect. Can something please be done about this. Thanks for your time

Sandra: Oh. I will look into this and see what can be done. Thank-you for bringing this to my attention.

“Scenario Title”

SCRIPT- GROUP X

CAST/CHARACTERS:

Manager (X) – Student Name

Government Official – Student Name

Community Leader – Student Name

Employee (Y) – Student Name

*Director- Student Name

START... ACTION!!!

SCENE 1: X and Y arrive at airport. (Play airport sounds).

X: We have a meeting with Health Minister X.

Y: Yes, we are going to present our proposal for the sale of O.R.S. to the Health Minister.

SCENE 2: In the bus/car. (Background community. Video of people in area; poor drainage/water supply/death/vomiting. Sad Music).

X: I think the government will embrace our product because of the community.

Y: I think we should give the government a gift. (Holds a briefcase with bundles of cash).

SCENE 3: Health minister’s office. (Palatial background. Sound of gong!!! Welcome...).

HEALTH MINISTER: (Appearance: Wealthy looking with lots of bling bling. Sound effects with movements of Health Minister).

Welcome to the ministry of health. Let us go down to business.

X: Greetings Madame... We are here to present you (gestures to get money but is stopped rather indiscreetly by Ajith...)

MARKING SHEET TASK 2: INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SCENARIO (CASE)

Description of the main dilemmas raised in the scenario

/2

Recognition of reasons and rationalizations that could be used

/2

Identification of the issues at stake for the various stakeholders

/2

Script:

Application of the following:

The main arguments you are trying to counter

Reasons and rationalizations used by the various stakeholders.

Issues at stake

/4

Total marks

10

OTHER COMMENTS