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ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

Citation

Beauchamp, Tom L., and Anna Pinedo. "The Reluctant Security Guard." Case Studies in Business, Society and Ethics. Ed. Tom L. Beauchamp. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004. 32-36.

I. Identify the moral issues

What are the ethical questions?

What should David Tuff do in response to Blue Mountain Company's refusal to change a policy that violates procedures outlined in the Security Officer's Manual?

II. Gather the Facts

KNOWN: What are the relevant facts? What are the essential ethical, economic, social or political considerations?

David Tuff is bound by procedures and policies in Security Officer's Manual (SOM)

SOM requires licensees to notify police about crimes committed on premises of licensee

Security guard can have license revoked for state or local officials when found in violation of SOM

Blue Mountain Company issued new rules possibly in violation of SOM

Tuff initially worked within Blue Mountain chain of command to change rules

Tuff then told volunteer organization that was concerned about drunk driving about the new rule

Tuff Suspended

Sargent Shriver of county police agreed with Tuff's interpretation of situation

Blue Mountain Fired Tuff violation of rules regarding disclosure of company information

Many people called Blue Mountain to complain about the policy

National Labor Relations Board sided with Blue Mountain in its firing decision regarding Tuff

UNKNOWN: What additional facts, information or evidence would be useful?

Was anyone ever convicted of DUI after being escorted from Village Mall for being intoxicated?

Which supervisors complained about Tuff's attempts to change policy?

Who proposed rule change?

How was rule change decided?

Are there any legal ramifications for Blue Mountain for having enacted this policy?

How much revenue was lost by Village Mall due to incident?

How much revenue was lost by other contractors with Blue Mountain?

Did Blue Mountain lose any contracts due to incident?

Was anyone hurt or killed due to a drunk driver leaving Village Mall or other business contracting with Blue Mountain?

Was the policy changed after NLRB ruling?

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III. Consider the Controversy

Stakeholder David Tuff	Stakeholder Blue Mountain	Stakeholder Police
values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓	values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓	values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓
1. Integrity, Courage, loyalty (virtues) 2. Ability to work as security guard, financial well-being (consequences) 3. Rules of SOM (deontology)	1. Public Image, Financial Impact (consequences) 2. Safety and Security of patrons (consequences) 3. Safety and Security of Public (consequences)	1. Safety and Security of public (consequences) 2. Laws of state and local governments as well as SOM policies (deontology)

Stakeholder Public	Stakeholder National Labor Relations Board	Stakeholder Village Mall
values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓	values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓	values, duties, virtues, etc. ↓
1. Safety and Security of public consequences 2. Property damage (consequences)	1. Legal rights of employees and employers (deontology)	1. Public Image, Financial Impact (consequences) 2. Safety and Security of patrons (consequences) 3. Safety and security of public (consequences)

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IV. Address Alternatives

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Contact the local police and sheriff's office	• Required by SOM • Keeps license • Possibly change Blue Mountain Policy • Is consistent with virtues of integrity, courage, and loyalty to the general public • General public put in danger	• Violates Blue Mountain Policies • Violates loyalty to Blue Mountain • Loss of job • Possibly unable to ever get a job as a security officer again • Policy is not scrutinized or changed
Option 2: Stop fight after exhausting internal procedures at Blue Mountain	• Keep job • Follow Blue Mountain Policy • Remain loyal to Blue Mountain	• Violate SOM • Lose license • Policy remains in place • General public put in danger • Violates loyalty to general public
Option 3: Contact non-law enforcement organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving or local news organizations	• Policy is scrutinized • Policy is possibly changed • Consistent with integrity, courage, and loyalty to general public	• Loss of job • Violates Blue Mountain Policy • Violates loyalty to Blue Mountain • Possibly not consistent with loyalty to local law enforcement (does not actually follow rules of SOM)

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V. Decide

What is your decision?

Tuff should have gone to the police after exhausting internal Blue Mountain procedures and not contacted either the voluntary organization or the news organizations

Justify your decision, using the language of ethical concepts and principles below

1. Integrity is mentioned in the second paragraph of the paper. Integrity has two relevant definitions here: (1) a personal virtue in which one attempts to integrate various parts of their personality into a harmonious, intact whole; (2) a social virtue in which a person stands up for their best judgment within a community of people trying to discover what in life is worth doing (Stanford Encycl. Of Phi. "Integrity"). If Tuff can get the Blue Mountain policy changed, he can achieve 1 and 2; if he doggedly pursues attempts to change the policy that fail, he can at least achieve 2.
2. Courage is a virtue in which one is able to act despite the presence of danger. In this case, Tuff is in danger of losing his job, his income, and in fact losing all ability to pursue a career in security because he will be labeled a trouble maker. Despite both the immediate and long term consequences, courage would suggest that Tuff pursue all means to change the policy.
3. Loyalty can be defined as "practical disposition to persist in an intrinsically valued (though not necessarily valuable) associational attachment, where that involves a potentially costly commitment to secure or at least not to jeopardize the interests or well-being of the object of loyalty" (Stanford Encycl. Of Phil.). As is often the case with this virtue, competing loyalties can pull one in different directions. However, one can justify Tuff's actions by noting that (1) loyalty can never be absolute and (2) one's loyalty to the community and the legal system is persistent, one that can never be lacking, while loyalty to one's employer lasts only as long as the employment lasts, and is understood as a temporary situation. Thus, there is a hierarchy of loyalties owed and the loyalty to the community and law overrides that to the employer.

Virtues: Does the option help support or develop the character traits we value?

Care: Does the option support and strengthen relationships? Does it protect the vulnerable?

Principles/rule/duties: Does the option align with known moral principles?

Rights: Does the option respect negative or promote positive rights?

Consequences: Does the option, on balance, produce the best feasible outcomes?