

Case Analysis
Management Safety Concerns – Industrial vs. Federal

Relevant Facts

- Kirk is a very bright individual and is being trained for the position as Controller.
- He exhibits many qualities of a leader; being diligent.
- He started attending major company functions after his first year as Assistant Controller.
- He is optimistic and believes the company has a promising future.
- New manufacturing plant is proposed by a consultant.
- Current waste facilities are not adequate to handle problems that would be created as a result of a new plant.
- Industry and federal regulations are not equal, but there is an effort to increase federal regulations.
- Kirk is unsure if he can continue on with the firm.

Ethical Issues

- Is the company's laid back attitude towards the environment detrimental to the company in the long run?
 - Living in a society where society is pushing being more "green", will not upgrading affect the public perception and reputation of the company?
- As President, is Bob doing what is in the best interest of the company as a whole or is he money driven?
 - The company should work to maintain their ability to generate profit, however; as what expense to the company?
- Does Kirk have enough seniority to voice his opinion, or is he still too low on the totem pole of authority to speak up?
 - Will Kirk be over-stepping his boundaries as Assistant Controller by speaking up and basically telling Bob and John they are wrong in what they want to do with the company and expansion?
- Is it right to intentionally not upgrade in order to meet industry standards just because another company is not doing it?
 - SWOT analysis is great, but following a company that is not doing something that could be beneficial to you in the long run to be viewed as neglectful by society.

Stakeholders

- Kirk
- Henry
- Bob
- John
- Shareholders/Investors
- Environmentalists
- Other members of the firm

Possible Alternatives

- Kirk could remain in the meeting and not say anything, forgetting altogether about the difference in standards and his concerns.
 - Kirk could take the position of Assistant Controller, sit back and say nothing in order to not jeopardize his chances of getting that Controller position that he was being groomed for.
- Kirk could voice his opinion openly during the meeting in order to express his concerns about the standards not being up to par at the federal level.
 - Since Kirk has been attending these meetings since shortly after his first year as Assistant Controller, he could confidently express his opinions and have them heard by everyone else at the meeting.
- Kirk could speak with Bob privately after the meeting to express his concerns.
 - This would show that Kirk respects Bob as the President of the company, by not making him out to be a bad guy in the meeting and also show that Kirk is concerned for the well being of the company.
- Kirk could speak with Henry privately after the meeting to express his concerns.
 - Henry could take Kirk's concerns and bring them to Bob, following a more proper chain of command without anyone feeling like they have been by-passed in the hierarchy of authority.
- Kirk could leave the firm altogether and find a new job.
 - Kirk's feelings towards the situations do not parallel the beliefs of others, which could make it hard for Kirk to carry on with the firm. He could choose to quit his job there on good terms and find a company that was operating in a manner that was equally as concerned about the environment as he is.
- Kirk could do research of his own by contacting environmentalist groups that were pushing for the regulation changes at the federal level to meet the industry standards before approaching the company.
 - This would give Kirk more complete information about the situation before he approached anyone from the company about his thoughts.

Evaluation of Alternatives

- What are the short and long term costs and benefits to the company if they do not upgrade their facilities?
- What are the short and long term costs and benefits to the company if they do upgrade their facilities?
- Should what other firms are doing impact how Kirk's firm behaves?
- What are the risks to Kirk's career, and the chances of him getting the Controller position, if he speaks up in the meeting with his opinions?
- If I was the president of the company would I want employees at the meeting to not speak up if they had a genuine concern for the company?

- Is cost the only reason that the upgrade is not being considered or could there be other factors?
- Will Kirk be able to find a new job if he leaves the company.
- What will happen to the company's image/reputation if they choose to upgrade or not upgrade?
- If Kirk does research on his own by contacting environmentalists, other companies, industrial standards committees, etc, will he be labelled as a whistleblower or will the company be grateful for his extra work in attempting to keep the best interests of the firm at hand?

Practical Constraints

- Kirk could remain in the meeting and say nothing; during or after, and carry on as the Assistant Controller, being groomed for the Controller position.
- Kirk could speak up in the meeting, providing his opinions about the situation with hopes that the company listens and begins to see that the environment is important.
- Kirk could choose to leave the company and find a new place of employment that parallels his environmental and personal beliefs regarding his work.

What Actions Should be Taken

I believe that Kirk should speak with Henry after the meeting, as Henry is his direct boss. Speaking with Henry will allow for proper following of chain of command. Kirk can express his concerns, point out the reasons he believes the plant should be upgraded and then if Henry does not share the same opinion or is not willing to share the thoughts with Bob on behalf of Kirk, Kirk can go to Bob himself. Following the chain of command shows respect on Kirk's part to both Henry and Bob. If Kirk does not get anywhere by speaking with either Henry or Bob, then Kirk may be best suited to find a new career location. Working in an environment that operates against beliefs and morals is difficult to do everyday, especially when those around you do not share the same morals and beliefs. Kirk has been very successful with this company and will surely be able to find a job that will respect his thoughts and the environment, especially when specific standards have been set in the industry.