Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

You are the manager of a spare parts company A and you have to negotiate a deal with the manager of a large manufacturing company B. The deal is highly competitive and sealing the deal is critical for your company. The deal is being worked out over a dinner. After dinner the manager of manufacturing company B offered to drop you to the hotel in his car. On the way to hotel he happens to hit motorcycle injuring the motorcyclist badly. You know the manager was driving fast and thus lost control. The law enforcement officer comes to investigate the issue and you are the sole eyewitness to it. Knowing the strict laws pertaining to road accidents you are aware that your honest account of the incident would lead to the prosecution of the manager and as a consequence the deal is likely to be jeopardised, which is of immense importance to your company.

What are the dilemmas you face? What will be your response to the situation?

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EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

Truthfulness; professional integrity; human life; legal duty; corporate interest; conflict of interest; impartial testimony; accountability; ethical courage; rule of law

Model Answer

Introduction

This case presents a conflict between commercial interests and the moral and legal duty to report the truth. The injured motorcyclist's welfare and the integrity of the justice system must take priority over business gains.

Ethical Dilemmas

1. **Truth versus commercial interest:** Honest testimony may jeopardise an important contract, while concealment may protect company profits.
2. **Justice versus loyalty:** Loyalty to business partners cannot justify shielding a person from accountability.
3. **Individual welfare versus organisational benefit:** The victim deserves justice regardless of the commercial consequences.
4. **Short-term gain versus long-term reputation:** Dishonesty may create legal, ethical and reputational risks for my company.

My Response

- **Assist the victim:** Immediately ensure emergency medical help is called and cooperate with responders.
- **Tell the truth:** Provide the investigating officer with an accurate account of the incident, including the speeding I witnessed.
- **Avoid speculation:** State only what I directly observed and distinguish facts from assumptions.
- **Preserve evidence:** Cooperate with lawful requests and avoid influencing other witnesses.
- **Protect legitimate business interests:** Inform my company through appropriate channels and explain that the deal must be pursued on lawful and ethical terms.
- **Seek alternatives:** Explore other commercial partners or negotiations without demanding preferential treatment or obstructing justice.

Conclusion

Truthfulness, human dignity and the rule of law cannot be traded for commercial advantage. An ethical manager protects the company's long-term credibility by cooperating fully with a fair investigation.

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