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# MISTRUST

Business ethics

Real-life example O2-B-7-en



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# Basic information

- **Target audience:** students (tailored to business administration, but can be applied to all)
- **Summary:** course of actions that should be taken in questionable workplace practice
- **Objective:** to identify types of malpractices and potential remedies; consider the credibility of each employee
- **Length:** 30 minutes

# The story



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- Two colleagues, Brenda and John, were discussing what potential solutions they might suggest during the coming soon meeting with a department manager.
- John argued that as he has been working in the organisation for a longer period than Brenda, he knows all possible peculiarities in the field, and it is better to make as usual. Brenda, less experienced in the field, agreed to go with this usual solution on behalf of both, though she encouraged John to look at an issue from a different perspective.

# The story

- When both entered the room of a department manager, John started sharing ideas suggested by Brenda. The chair praised John for an innovative solution and then asked what Brenda could suggest from her side. She remained stunned and silent. She was absolutely shocked.



# Discussion with students



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- How would you define the relationship between Brenda and John before the meeting?
- How would you define the relationship between Brenda and John after the meeting?
- What malpractices emerge in a given situation?



# Discussion with students



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- What further steps had Brenda to take after the meeting? Why?
- What should consequences be for the involved parties?
- How would you decide being in the role of the manager if this case would be reported? Why?

# What was the story end?

- After some years the department manager got a promotion and John took his responsibilities.



# Discussion with students



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- Are John's newly assigned responsibilities fairly merited? Why?
- How would you decide being in the role of the manager if this case would be timely reported? Why?





# Message of the story



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- **Timely responsiveness vs organisational culture:** as Brenda didn't report in the time this case occurred, both the manager and John considered the meeting as a "proper" conduct while it was a misleading impression.
- **Consequences:** due to such an organisational culture, Brenda left this job while John was promoted gaining an unfair advantage.

# Didactic/teachers notes

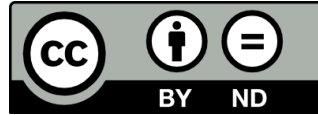
- Consider gender aspect (e.g. stereotypes in society) additionally
  - Idea: divide the students into two groups; one group receives the story as it is, the other with the genders twisted.

# Author & contact information



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