Introduction

Most people have good intentions. But sometimes, even when we mean well, we make the wrong choices.
Read this scenario and think about the questions, and about what you would do if this happened in your team, then discuss the scenario with your colleagues.

Part I

During Fatima’s first internship placement, she’s been working with Ollie, a software engineer who has explained and demonstrated how the software works and which process to use. Fatima has had hands-on experience, so she is confident that she has a good knowledge of the processes and procedures used in the Company.

Just before lockdown, Fatima is given her next placement on a similar defence project on another site. This project is being led by Lydia. Fatima notices that the software is different to the one she used in her first placement and decides to talk to Lydia about it.

I’m a bit unsure of the software, it’s different from the one I trained on in my first placement. I was told that it was the BAE Systems standard software, and that I should only ever work with that or things could go wrong.

Don’t worry Fatima, I can assure you we have a really good relationship with our supplier, and their software is just as good. Nothing has ever gone wrong.

Part 2
Hi Lydia, glad you called – it’s good to have a break from home-schooling!

Oh yes, didn’t they give you a first-class ticket? I’m amazed you managed to do all that in one weekend and review and amend the plans.

Well I took my laptop with me and I had a copy of the technical design plans on there – thanks to you emailing me the updates to the designs, I was able to check them from my hotel room and get the amends back to the team.

I bet! I miss being able to get out and about. At least I managed to attend the event in Paris before lockdown – our software supplier always puts on the best events.

Yes, but only one way. My brother was working in Brussels at the time, so I saw him on the Sunday before making my way back to the UK. I’m so glad we had the chance to meet up for the day – who knows when I’ll see him again!

Scenario questions and summary
Questions

- What do you think about the discussion? Are there any alarm bells that signal something might be wrong?
- What are the responsibilities of Fatima, Lydia and Carly in this situation? Did they each take enough action or could they have done more?
- What does this conversation tell us about the existing team culture? Who is responsible for that?
- What would you do in this situation? What advice would you give to Fatima, Lydia and Carly?

Ethical red flags

When people make poor choices, they usually create reasons to tell themselves, “It’s OK, I can go ahead”. We call these justifications ‘ethical red flags’. In this scenario, what might Lydia have told herself?

Common ethical red flags include:

- “We’ve always done it this way.”
- “No-one got hurt.”
- “Other people do it.”
- “I had no choice.”
- “I only did what I was told.”

When you hear these phrases being used, usually someone is thinking about doing the wrong thing, or has already done it. Do you hear any ethical red flags in the workplace or elsewhere? Would you feel confident to speak up and alert someone if you did?

Key messages

- Gifts and hospitality should be in good faith, occasional, appropriate and reasonable, and comply with any applicable laws.
- If Carly is concerned about the excessive perks Lydia is receiving she should seek guidance – always speak to someone if you are unsure of what to do or have seen or heard something that does not feel right.
- For guidance on accepting gifts or hospitality, seek approval from your Compliance Manager or your Legal department.
- Travelling outside the country with export controlled information may need to be authorised in advance in the form of an export licence. For example, if the information is military technology then every time the information moves from one country to another country another export takes place, which must be authorised in advance by the government of the country that the information is moving from.
- Did you know? If you delete the export controlled information from your laptop, in accordance with company procedures, before you leave the country you are travelling from, you no longer need to obtain an export licence for that information because no export is taking place.
- Before travelling with information, ask yourself, what is it? Is it export controlled in any way? If you don’t need it, don’t take it.
- If you need to take it, follow your local business process in advance of travelling in order to obtain authorisation to hand carry, receive or transmit export-controlled information.

Further reading

Code of Conduct
1.6 Speaking up
2.2 Safety and wellbeing
2.5 Bribery, gifts and entertainment
3.8 Trade restrictions and export controls

Policies and Guidelines
IT Acceptable Use Policy
‘Export Control intranet homepage – Export Control Policy and Procedures

This scenario’s key themes were around Anti-Bribery and Corruption, Security, Ethics and Export Control.