**Case 2-2**

Better Boston Beans

Better Boston Beans is a coffee shop located in the Faneuil Hall Marketplace near the waterfront and Government Center in Boston. It specializes in exotic blends of coffee, including Sumatra Dark Roast Black, India Mysore “Gold Nuggets,” and Guatemala Antigua. It also serves a number of blended coffees, including Reggae Blend, Jamaican Blue Mountain Blend, and Marrakesh Blend. For those with more pedestrian tastes, the shop serves French Vanilla, Hazelnut, and Hawaiian Macadamia Nut varieties. The coffee of the day varies, but the most popular is Colombia Supremo. The coffee shop also serves a variety of cold-blended coffees.

Cindie Rosen has worked for Better Boston Beans for six months. She took the job right out of college because she wasn’t sure whether she wanted to go to graduate school before beginning a career in financial services. Cindie hoped that by taking a year off before starting her career or going on to graduate school, she would experience “the real world” and find out firsthand what it is like to work a 40-hour week. (She did not have a full-time job during her college years because her parents helped pay for the tuition.)

Because Cindie is the “new kid on the block,” she is often asked to work the late shift, from 4 p.m. to midnight. She works with one other person, Jeffrey Lyndell, who is the assistant shift supervisor. Lyndell has been with Boston Beans for three years but recently was demoted from shift supervisor.

For the past two weeks, Lyndell has been leaving before 11 p.m., after most of the stores in the Marketplace close, and he has asked Cindie to close up by herself. Cindie feels that this is wrong and it is starting to concern her, but she hasn’t spoken to Lyndell and has not informed the store manager either. However, something happened one night that is causing Cindie to consider taking the next step.

At 11 p.m., 10 Japanese tourists came into the store for coffee. Cindie was alone and had to rush around and make five different cold-blended drinks and five different hot- blended coffees. While she was working, one of the Japanese tourists, who spoke English very well, approached her and said that he was shocked that such a famous American coffee shop would only have one worker in the store at any time during the workday. Cindie didn’t want to ignore the man’s comments, so she answered that her coworker had to go home early because he was sick. That seemed to satisfy the tourist.

It took Cindie almost 20 minutes to make all the drinks and also field two phone calls that came in during that time. After she closed for the night, Cindie reflected on the experience. She realized that it could get worse before it gets better because Lyndell was now making it a habit to leave work early.

At this point, she realizes that she has to either approach Lyndell about it or speak with the store manager. She feels much more comfortable talking to the store manager. In fact, in Cindie’s own words, “Lyndell gives me the creeps.”

**NOTES**

This case causes students to consider the loyalty to a co-worker versus loyalty to the employer; telling versus tattling.

**Ethical Issues**

Rights perspective: Cindie has a right to expect help from her co-workers especially at busy times. Lyndell has a right to be warned of complaints against him and a chance to reform. Lyndell has a right to expect that his confidence of alcoholism to be treated respectfully, particularly if it is considered a disability or disease rather than a character flaw.

Six Pillars: The values include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness and caring. These values are particularly important in dealing with Lyndell’s alcoholism. Cindie has two dilemmas with Lyndell’s alcoholism. Will Cindie be harming him more by hiding his secret or will she benefit him, at least in the long run, by turning him into the manager. The dilemma for Cindie is how to help Lyndell but not get him fired.

**Questions**

1. **Consider Kohlberg’s six stages of moral development. What would Cindie do and why if she reasoned at each of the six stages?**

Stage 1: Cindie would not tell because it would keep either Lyndell or the store manager from being mad at her. Stage 2: Cindie would tell the store manager and would probably be rewarded with his job. Stage 3: Cindie would warn Lyndell and, out of loyalty, give him a chance to change. Stage 4: Cindie would tell the store manager – rules have been broken. Stage 5: Cindie would weigh the harms and benefits of alternative actions and look for a compromise that maximizes net benefits to all while minimizing overall harms. Stage 6: Cindie would consider all options from her personal ethical system to do the right thing; the rights of the store manager and interests of customers outweigh any loyalty concerns to Lyndell.

1. **Assume that Cindie approached Lyndell about her concerns. Lyndell tells Cindie that he has an alcohol problem. Lately, it’s gotten to him real bad. That’s why he’s left early—to get a drink and calm his nerves. Lyndell also said that this is the real reason he was demoted. He had been warned that if one more incident occurred, the store manager would fire him. He pleaded with Cindie to work with him through these hard times. How would you react to Lyndell’s request if you were Cindie? Would you honor his request for confidentiality and support? Why or why not? What if Lyndell was a close personal friend—would that change your answer? Be sure to consider the implications of your decision on other parties potentially affected by your actions.**

Lyndell is appealing to Cindie based on co-worker loyalty to overlook his lapse. Ask students if they have been placed in a similar situation at work. This request is complicated by the fact that Lyndell is asking Cindie, out of loyalty, to become a “co-conspirator in handling his alcoholism problem. This puts her in a difficult position. What if all employees who knew about alcoholism or drug addiction stood by silently? Would that create a safe and supportive work environment? Cyndie needs to protect her own interests, which coincide with that of Better Boston Beans, and inform the manager of Lyndell’s problem. Honesty is always the best policy and it reflects responsibility on the job.

**3. Assume that Cindie keeps quiet. The following week, another incident occurred: Cindie got into a shouting match with a customer who became tired of waiting for his coffee after 10 minutes. Cindie felt terrible about it, apologized to the customer after serving his coffee, and left work that night wondering if it was time to apply to graduate school. The customer was so irate that he contacted the store manager and expressed his displeasure about both the service and Cindie’s attitude. What do you think the store manager should do? Support your answer with ethical reasoning.**

The manager should talk to Cindie about the complaint and the situation. He should ask what is going on with the evening shift. Cindie should be honest with the manager about the challenges of being alone on the night shift. Cindie should not allow loyalty to mask responsibility and jeopardize her own position. The case is similar as if an auditor were involved and knew of an employee’s drinking problems. The manager should listen to Cindie; he should address remedies to the situation; perhaps he reads the riot act to Lyndell and gives him one more chance in which case Cindie should be told to inform him if another incident occurs. The manager may need to randomly visit the shop during the night shift to observe for himself the situation.