

Business Communication Ethical Dilemma

The purpose of this activity is to help you explore your own ethical stance and to help you work together as a member of a team. Working in small groups of 4-5, read the scenario, discuss the following questions, and prepare a response to share with the class.

ETHICAL DILEMMA: When the boss says, “Change it,” and you have reservations, what should you do?

You have just completed a proposal in which you promise to deliver a product to the customer by April 15. You selected this date after checking with the manufacturing department to see when they could guarantee delivery.

However, when your boss reviews the proposal, she says, “We’ll never win this contract with an April 15 delivery date. Our competitors are promising to deliver by April 1. You’d better change the schedule. If we get the job, manufacturing will deliver on time. I know those guys. They’ve probably left themselves a good two-week cushion.”

Your boss has been around awhile. You respect her judgment—and her authority. She’s probably right, but then again, you had to lean on the people in manufacturing to get them to agree to the April 15 date. You seriously doubt whether they can deliver the product two weeks early without sacrificing quality.

Should you change your proposal?

Why or why not?

Who will be affected by your decision?

What are the consequences of your actions either way for the parties involved?