

test is one of theory rather than choice—if one really wants the job.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you'd feel if you had to take a psychological test or an honesty test either as an employee or as a precondition for employment. Under what conditions, if any, would you take such a test?
2. How useful or informative do you think such tests are? Is their use a reasonable business policy? Assuming that tests like those described are valid and reliable, are they fair? Explain.
3. Do you think tests like these invade privacy and, if so, that this invasion is justified? Explain why or why not.
4. What ideals, obligations, and effects must be considered in using psychological tests as pre-employment screens? In your view, which is the most important consideration?
5. If you were an employer, would you require either employees or job applicants to pass an honesty exam? Explain the moral principles that support your position.
6. What do you think a business's reaction would be if the government required its executive officers to submit to an honesty test as a precondition for the company's getting a government contract? If, in your opinion, the business would object, does it have any moral grounds for subjecting workers to comparable tests?
7. Utilitarians would not find anything inherently objectionable about psychological tests as long as the interests of all parties were taken into account and given equal consideration before such tests were made a pre-employment screen. Do you think this is generally the case?
8. Should there be a law prohibiting or regulating psychological tests as a pre-employment screen? Should a decision to use these tests be made jointly by management and labor, or is testing for employment an exclusive employer right?



CASE 9.3

She Snoops to Conquer

JEAN FANUCHI, MANAGER OF A MODERATELY large department store, was worried. Shrinkage in the costume jewelry department had continued to rise for the third consecutive month. In fact, this time it had nearly wiped out the department's net profit in sales. Worse, it couldn't be attributed to damage or improper handling of markdowns or even to shoplifting. The only other possibility was in-house theft.

Fanuchi ordered chief of security Matt Katwalski to instruct his security people to keep a special eye on jewelry department employees as they went about their business. She also instructed that packages, purses, and other containers employees carried with them be searched when workers left the store. When these measures failed to turn up any leads, Katwalski suggested they hire a couple of plainclothes

officers to observe the store's guards. Fanuchi agreed. But still nothing turned up.

"We're going to have to install a hidden camera at the checkout station in the jewelry department," Katwalski informed the manager.

"I don't know," Fanuchi replied.

"Of course," said Katwalski, "it won't be cheap. But you don't want this problem spreading to other departments, do you?" Fanuchi didn't.

"One other thing," Katwalski said. "I think we should install some microphones in the restroom, stockroom, and employee lounge."

"You mean snoop on our own employees?" Fanuchi asked, surprised.

"We could pick up something that could crack this thing wide open," Katwalski explained.

"But what if our employees found out? How would they feel, being spied on? And then there's the public to consider. Who knows how they'd react? Why, they'd probably think that if we are spying on our own workers, we were surely spying on them. No, Matt," Fanuchi decided. "Frankly, this whole approach troubles me."

"Okay, Ms. Fanuchi, but if it was my store . . ."

Fanuchi cut in, "No."

"You're the boss," said Katwalski.

When the shrinkage continued, Fanuchi finally gave in. She ordered Katwalski to have the camera and microphones installed. Within ten days the camera had nabbed the culprit.

The microphones contributed nothing to the apprehension of the thief. But because of them Fanuchi and Katwalski learned that at least one store employee was selling marijuana and perhaps hard drugs, that one was planning to quit without notice, that three were getting food stamps fraudulently, and that one buyer was out to discredit Fanuchi. In solving their shrinkage problem, the pair had unwittingly raised another: What should they do with the information they had gathered while catching the thief?¹¹⁸

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were Jean Fanuchi, how would you feel about your decision to order the installation of the viewing and listening devices? What other options did she have? Did she overlook any moral considerations or possible consequences?
2. Do employees have a right not to be spied on? If you were an employee at Fanuchi's store, would you think your privacy had been wrongly invaded?
3. How would you assess Fanuchi's actions if you were the owner of the store? Whose interests are more important in this case—the employer's or the employees'?
4. Do you think Fanuchi acted immorally? Why or why not? Evaluate her action by appeal to ethical principles.
5. How should Fanuchi and Katwalski handle the information they've gathered about their employees? What ideals, obligations, or effects are relevant to your answer?