Problem solving and decision making

**The moment when I was faced with a bid decision to make**

It is the responsibility of any individual to respect the rules and regulations of the institutions for which they work. Employers always require that the secrets of the company are not released to the people who are outside the organization for that may compromise the operations and ultimately cripple the functions of the company. A few years back, I had a situation with the company for which I worked. The organization dealt with processing of raw fruits into juices. In the process, it produced a lot of waste products that it dumped into a nearby river. According to federal statutes, it was required that the products needed to be treated using some chemicals before being dumped into the river. There was a strict stipulation on the amount of the chemical that needed to be used for a given volume of the waste materials.

Most of the employees knew that the company was fully complying with the rules in order to protect the aquatic life. However, one day, when I was going through some of the documents of the organization, I stumbled through some pieces of correspondences between some senior members of the management on how they would navigate through the provisions of treating the effluence in order to reduce the costs of operation and thereby maximizing the profits. They would have to dilute the chemicals used in treating the wastes so that they could avoid spending a lot of resources on what they termed as a non-rewarding endeavor. In the long run, the activities of the company were putting aquatic life at great risk. It appears that no other employee knew about this and that even the governmental authorities were convinced that the company was doing the right thing.

After a lot of self evaluation, I felt it was necessary to ask questions regarding this matter. The first person to be approached was my immediate supervisor. Honestly, he was equally concerned but warned that it was a potentially dangerous route to follow. He felt that there are some things that are better left in their current state. Besides, it could easily cost me the job. After making all the necessary inquests in to the matter, it emerged that the administration was aware of the practice and that it was a deliberate attempt to cut on the expenses and improve the profits. After recommending to the management to change the action, I was pleased to find out that they changed and decided to follow the regulations, however, after some time; I realized that they were scrutinizing me very keenly and waiting for a time when a mistake would happen and then fire. In the long run, I lost the job because I had challenged the practices of the organization.

**The strategy used to arrive at the decision**

It requires a little bit of confidence and strategic planning in correcting the wrongs that are going on in an organization. An institution may be so powerful that even the government t institutions that are supposed to control it may find difficulties approaching it. Besides, my job was at stake the moment I decided to look into the matter. One of the strategies that I adopted was to come up with a list of pros and cons of trying to correct this matter. The list provided the benefits against the risks thereby forming a vital tool for decision making. If the benefits outweigh the risks, then it is worth taking the particular course of action.

In addition to the pros and cons list, it became necessary to come up with mechanisms for weighing the courses of action available. Instructively, some approaches being used are more effective and appropriate than others. In that line, having chosen a list of possible courses of action, it was important t to knock some of them out one by one based on the weighing mechanism. That was important in making sure that the decision taken best serves my personal interests, the communal interests and those of the institution. It makes sure that the decision making process is as objective as possible and devoid of any personal biases.

**The application of the theories of cognitive and affective psychology in the instance**

Cognitive psychology is a branch of psychology that examines how different individuals acquire and process various pieces of information that reach their minds. It concerns how people receive information from the outside world, the manner in which such information is stored, how to solve the problems and various ways in which errors in thinking and judgment affects the emotional states of people. One of the theories of cognitive psychology that was applied in this scenario is the rational emotive behavior therapy. The theory was developed by Albert Ellis and explains that some of the psychological problems that individuals face are caused by interpretations. In some cases, individuals perceive things that are untrue to be real and that may ultimately have significant effects on their mental health. It occurs with the beginning of an activating event, a belief and then a repercussion. In the case, the fact that I had found information suggesting that the company was engaging in illegal practices was the activating event. The belief at that time was that the organization would not be pleased with me and would ultimately result in my retrenchment as the repercussion. That feeling caused me to consult a lot and even share the information with my immediate supervisor on the possible courses of action that taken having with a clear understanding of the dangers involved.

**The successfulness of the strategies chosen**

The strategy that was adopted in confronting the situation was partly successful. The reason for the part success is the fact that in the end I lost my position in the organization. Originally, the primary intention was to correct the wrongs in the organization without any casualty. However, since the job was lost but the company changed its habit, it is only prudent that the job strategy was partly successful.

**The theories and principles of the cognitive component of the cognitive affective psychology**

In the modern societies, cognitive psychology has been used to explain the reasons behind various actions that people take. It focuses on the belief that the manner or the ways in which people think affect their actions. Over the years, psychologists have come up with rules, regulations and assumptions that they have generalized as patterns of human actions. It created a general scientific approach the attempts to provide explanations as to why people act in various ways. The approach is different from the humanistic approach which makes a distinction between the actions of various people.

Some principles have been developed to guide the application of cognitive psychology; the first principle is that the behavior of a person is explainable largely by the pattern of a person’s thinking. Mostly, the principle is interpreted to mean that people will always act in a manner that reflects the status of their minds. For a person to resort to act in a particular, the mind must have been involved in planning and preparing for the action. Moreover, it indicates that the mind operates like some sort of a micro computer where it receives, stores, processes and retrieves data that may be required in a particular occasion. Finally, the approach states that there is a mediation process which occurs between the time of stimulation and action. Before the mind triggers an action to be taken, a lot of things must have happened. There must have been some inward consultation whose primary agenda is to find out the best modalities to approach the issues at hand.

**The theories and principles that pertain to the affective components**

The affective component of psychology relates to the attitude that an individual may have towards an object. In some cases, the decisions that people take are based on the attitudes that they have rather than any other factor. An example of affective component is illustrated by a person who has serious fears of snakes. In that sense, the person would not want anything to do with the reptiles to such an extent that even the imagination or hearing the mentioning of the snake would cause immense panic and fear.

A number of theories have been put forward to explain various attitudes that people develop. The initial theory is known as the functionalist theory. In this theory, the formation and adoption of attitudes is controlled by the functions that they serve to the parties involved. Reasonably, any individual has goals to achieve. In that regard, an attitude that a person adopts will be geared towards meeting such goals. The second theory explains the manner in which people acquire attitudes. It is known as the learning theory. In this regard, an attitude is described in line with the process that was followed in its formation. The third and last theory of the affective component regards the changes in attitude. It is called the cognitive dissonance theory and it attempts to illustrate the fact that behaviors can determine attitudes.

**Cognitive and affective psychology in professional practice**

The theories of both the cognitive and affective psychology can be incorporated in professional practices so as to improve efficiency in performance of professionals. One of the ways in which these ideas can be incorporated is through training of individuals on how to conduct themselves. It is evident that the affective component is one of the most rampant issues that professionals are grappling with. For example, in the modern world, there have been attempts to link every person with links to the Middle East as a potential terrorist. In the United States, during the processes of carrying out investigation and raids in facilities, the people of Arab descent have always suffered a lot. The main reason behind this kind of action is that people, including the law enforcement agencies have formed attitudes that it is only people from the Middle East who are capable of engaging in terrorism activities. Through training and exposure, information can be passed to the persons that may help in changing their attitudes.

Concerning the cognitive component, it is clear that the actions of people reflect the activities that go on in their minds. However, the mind is also a reflection of what takes place in the external environment. The pieces of information that are fed to the mind will be processed and reflect through various courses of action. In that sense, in a working environment, it becomes prudent to make sure that people are fed with the right information that will make rather than break the institution. It calls for the management to develop an institutional culture that all the people will adopt and guide in whatever they do.

**The ethical issues involved**

While addressing some of misconceptions in a defined group of people, there are ethical issues that need to be addressed. One of the ethical concerns that need to be addressed is deception. Some people have formed the habit of deliberately providing misleading pieces of information in order to influence how the people think and act. It is important to always be as honest as possible in order to make sure that all the pieces of information provided are factual and variable.

Another ethical issue that needs to be addressed fully is non disclosure. In some situations, people may only disclose partial information so as to achieve some desired end. That is very unethical. It is important to make sure that all the information that the group may need is provided so that they may be in a position to make their decisions from an informed point of view. While addressing the misconceptions that might exist, it is incredibly important that all the cards are put on the table so that all the parties involved are in a position to realize the ills and the wrongs in their beliefs system, not through deceit but from an object analysis of all the issues involved.