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Case Analysis on Professional Ethics

The article by Sourour demonstrated how sometimes in the professional world you will be asked to do certain things that you may not feel comfortable with. For instance, Sourour explains how being a coder for an organization will sometimes require you to write in code that can be malicious. He explains the strict laws that he had to encounter in Canada in the pharmaceutical world which advertised prescription drugs. Due to Canada regulations being strict pharmaceutical companies would create websites that would contain information about certain symptoms. Users would then see if their symptoms would allow them to get more information about their prescription drugs. His job pertained to begin on a website that would ensure to follow the strict laws but also being able to advertise what needed to be advertised. Through the design of the website the main question was what the requirement would be for the quiz? To ensure a client’s perspective they reached to one of their clients and received the necessary requirements that would be included in the quiz. This allowed for them to be able to finish the website and allowed it to be ready for testing. While testing a team member realized that the quiz was composed to always display the client’s drug as the answer to the question. This created lots of questions for the organization but ultimately it was dismissed because that was the intention for the website. Unfortunately, Sourour received notification that the client’s drug had caused a bad side effect of having suicidal thoughts and unfortunately a user of the drug has committed suicide. Sourour guilt ultimately led him to resign and ensured to educated by writing articles informing other coders on tips to continue their careers when situation don’t go as planned. Due to this incident Sourour realized the negative impact that some of his work has caused. In this case analysis, I will argue that deontology shows us the coding being used to avoid following strict regulations caused harm to some of the users and due to these issues Sourour should have been more morally responsible and have thought how his work could have caused serious negative impacts. Doing so, he would have ensured to prevent many of these negative impacts that his work unfortunately caused.

When analyzing all the components of ensuring that organizations work on an ethical manner the ‘IEEE Code of Ethics” implies the importance of ensuring that there are a set of guidelines that will help ensure that the members of the organizations understand what decisions are right or wrong within the organization. This code of ethics was written by its board of directors and ensure that they provide the necessary information and guidance for members to help prevent any situations that cause misinterpretation. The standards created are carefully reviewed by professional individuals to ensure that the regulations are being created the best way possible for the better good of the businesses. Such regulations are critical to ensuring that businesses are being run in an efficient and ethical manner. Allowing these regulations to be set will ensure that members of these organizations can properly follow a framework that would ensure that there are no misinterpretations.

The IEEE incorporated 10 guidelines that were carefully reviewed by these professional individuals so that they can be required for all their members to follow. One of the regulations that I will be focusing on states “in order to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, to strive to comply with ethical design and sustainable development practices, to protect the privacy of others, and to disclose promptly factors that might endanger the public or the environment”. Regarding Sourour this clearly demonstrates how Sourour failed to follow this guideline. He violated this guideline by not ensuring that his actions aligned with ensuring that individuals were kept safe. Instead, he managed to allow for his code to create harm for the public and caused the deaths of people due to him violating this regulation. Regarding this code, it ensures to provide detail on the importance of how professionals must provide the highest quality of ethical designs. When analyzing Sourour quizzes it failed to comply the necessary requirements to ensure that the design was prompted in an ethical manner but instead it his quizzes allowed for the users to be deceived by thinking that only one drug could help them for their needs. Sourour course of action would have been to question the organizations quiz requirements and its unethical design of code. Analyzing this situation through a deontology perspective Sourour acted in a morally wrong manner. He violated to ensure to incorporate the possible consequences that his code could have had before actually putting his code into action. In a deontology perspective it is believed that the actions should be able to be intended as a universal law. If we imply this to Sourour actions we can see how he failed to follow the deontology point of view due to him being selfish and thinking about his job and not the harm that his code could have towards the lives of the individuals being impacted by his code. He acted in a selfish manner and did not look at ensuring that his code was for the better good of the people.

Furthermore, I will be analyzing the article “Confidentially: A Comparison Across the Professions of Medicine, Engineering, and Accounting”. In this article, the main point is to compare all careers with each other. The comparison was made by viewing the confidentiality that each of these profession hold. This careers paths have an importance on ensuring that patients or client’s privacy is held with full confidentiality from any harm. It also, detailed how confidentiality was changed due to the challenges that were faced in each of the professions. For example, regarding the engineering they were originally told to ensure to prioritize their employers but later on were reprimanded from that action as being morally wrong, which later on changed to ensure that the public’s safety is the top priority. Such changes made it challenging for these careers to ensure that they are following the regulations that proper way while also following them in an ethical manner.

In this article it starts by explaining the importance of ensuring the safety of the employer and protecting the employer at all costs. In reference to Sourour case he did just do that, he ensured to do anything necessary for the employer to be protected, did not question any of the requirements that were being asked of him, and ensured he did what he was hired to do. He did not question anything that the employer had asked from him such as the questionable quizzes, he continued to incorporate his code through the website. He also did not ever let him employer know that he was going to resign, he instead just resigned with no notification due to him realizing the negative impact that his code caused in society. In a deontology perspective Sourour actions were still promoting a negative impact on society as whole. He acted morally wrong due to him only thinking about the employer and not thinking about society. He failed to ensure to provide the security necessary that all these individuals deserve. Overall, a business’s main goal is to ensure that their services provided are for good intentions for its users, such important goal relies heavily on the organization but also its employees to make sure that this is being done. Regarding Sourour situation, the employer and him both gazed at the commission of their products and not the effects that their products could have in society. It is the employers and employee’s main priority to ensure the safety of the public before anything else.

Another part of this article was how engineers’ responsibility to ensure to questions any action that could harm society. It demonstrated how an engineer has the responsibility to speak to his superior if there any issues that need to be questioned, it is unacceptable to ignore these issues due to the risk of it negatively impacting society. If for any reason that superior does not ensure to act on these concerns the engineer should then ensure to speak to management to make sure that those issues get seen and corrected. When comparing this to Sourour case we can see how Sourour failed to let any of his teammates or superiors know of the issues with the quizzes. Sourour knew the damage that his code could cause, and he never felt the need to speak to management to let them know the damages that his code on the website could potentially have on the users. Sourour morally did not do the wrong thing, all he did was resign without speaking to client and letting them know about the issues that are evident with the website. Regardless of the project being confidential, ensuring the better good for society would have been an acceptable reason for breaking the confidentiality towards the project. In a deontology perspective we can ensure that this was morally wrong because Sourour failed to provide its clients with respect. Sourour reaction of resigning demonstrated a lack of accountability for his actions. He did not provide individuals with the respect by explaining the issues and what had happened. These individuals using this website had trust in them and getting no accountability to the websites creator that they had messed up shows the lack of respect the company has for its users.

In conclusion, I think that Sourour acted in a morally wrong manner. There are many different approached he could have done to ensure to provide the users with respect and help promote ways to ensure that the users were protected at all costs. Sourour could have prevented such negative impacts by questioning his organization and ensure that they acted in an ethical manner. Sourour had the necessary qualities and professional position to be able to speak and change manners but instead he was selfish and did not think about the better good for society. According to the IEEE guidelines, Sourour failed to provide good professionalism and be a great ethical worker for the organization. A potential rebuttal for my argument could be that Sourour was doing what had required him and demonstrated loyalty to this employer. Unfortunately, he did not think about society but instead thought about the compensation and loyalty towards the company that had hired him for this job. I disagree with viewpoint due to Sourour not having any remorse and simply resigning with no explanation of what he had caused. Sourour could have done many preventive actions to ensure that his code was of no affect for the public good. Sourour failed to be more educated on the organization he was working for and failed to abide to Canada strict prescription laws which ultimately resulted in a tragedy due to his lack of knowledge and moral work ethic.