

Business Ethics
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Lecture – 32
Case Study – 02

Welcome. Today we will continue with our case discussions. Today we will take up a case which is very important with regards to in the area of employee selection and we find now like for recruitment and selection purposes, may be social media has become one of the important ways where people try to look into the profiles to find out whether an employee is suitable or not. So, today's particular case is going to deal with, like whether it is ethical or not to look into the profiles of the people from the social media.

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The case is stated as of your face from on Facebook. The case is taken from the book of Crane and Matten that is also that was discussed in the book of Crane and Matten. The case goes as such like you are the personal manager of Alicure pharmaceuticals. It is a busy time and the guys in the product approval department have called you up, because they desperately need to hire a new team member to assist them with the clinical tests of what could become the next blockbuster drug for the company. You get to work and within a week have actually managed to get 3 well qualified applicants for the job. The

interviews went well and there were 2 really good applicants. Both are women, recent college graduates and you find it hard to decide amongst them.

So, in the form the first paragraph, as the situation goes you find like you are the personal manager of the certain pharmaceuticals. It is a busy time for them and the guys in the product approval department have called you up. Because they desperately need to hire a new team member to assist them with the clinical tests of what could become the next blockbuster drug for the company. So, and within a week may be you find someone. So, issues could be regarding the recruitment process itself like how well planned it is or not because what you get from the start of the scenario is like it is a very hasty affair which is done the clinical trials that the new hire will work on are very important. They require a very reliable meticulous work attitude.

But also good social skills to manage the different relations between the clinics, sorry the approving authorities and various departments in the company. So, it shows like the clinical trials which are required it requires a part of your social skills to manage the different relations between the clinics, then the authorities and may be various departments. So, it more or less a coordinating activity and like good social skills to show that the may be the work gets done. A colleague suggests you check the 2 finalists out on Myspace, Facebook or any other social networking site. Later at home you go on to Facebook and yes one of them is there. Surfing through the posts and her photos you see a very sociable; obviously, well trained individual. The other candidate is a bit more difficult to locate.

This is too bad as she already has some work experience and this is the slightly better candidate of the 2 is the impression that you get in your mind. So, one person has a social you can get the social profile. So, and you find like what is appearing she social sociable well-travelled and individual, but for the other person though according to qualification you find better candidate or the better work experience you are not able to locate that individual in the social network and this leads you with some auto bad feeling. Her details are only available to friends, but browsing across to a list of some 4 hundred friends you find that one of your current interns is actually on her list.

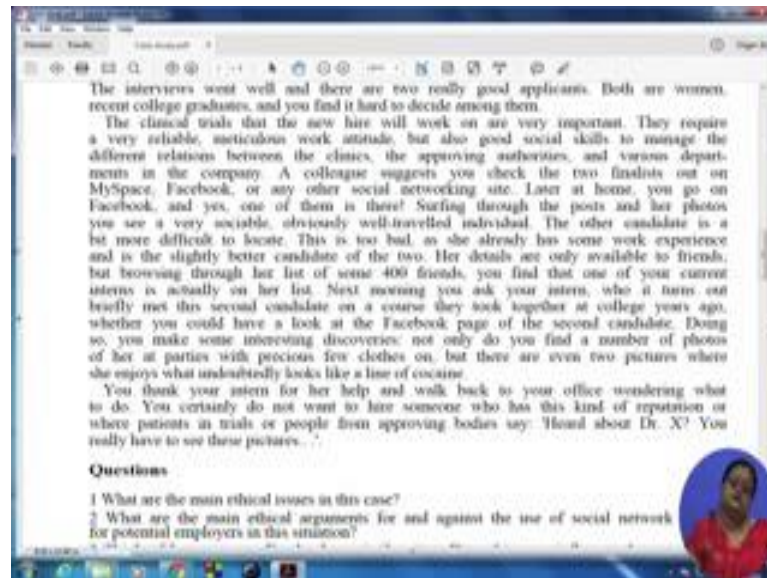
So, what you started doing is you started browsing her friends list before hundreds of them and you find one of your interns one on that list. Next morning you ask your intern

who it turns out has briefly met this second candidate on a course they took together at college years ago, whether you could have a look at the Facebook page of the second candidate. So, you call your intern who may have met the second candidate some years ago in some college course and you asked her like whether she could like he could access the second candidates Facebook page doing. So, you make some interesting discoveries not only do you find a number of photos of her at parties with precious few clothes on but there are even 2 pictures where she enjoys what undoubtedly looks to you like a line of cocaine. You think you thank your intern for her help and walk back to your office wondering what to do. You certainly do not want to hire someone who has this kind of reputation or where patients in trials or people from approving bodies say heard about doctor X you really have to see these pictures. Now what are the possible ethical issues in this case. So, what we can understand the case is that one of the important stakes over here is like, whether the information on Facebook is relevant for the job at hand. Whether the process in which it was obtained was because it was the profile was available to a group of friends and one of those friends were contacted to get this contact. And then like is it not you are also encroaching on the individual's privacy.

So, like in the case of like when you are accessing this Facebook a profile to look into what the person's social life is like. So, this is the like when you are dealing with place often we already discussed in the last of the sessions like IT and may be the ethical issues related to which social networking sites. So, whether then this technology is bringing us more responsibility on our part to think of what we are supposed to do. And what are our responsibilities and how we should use information and for what purpose.

So, the 2 stakes importance 2-3 stakes are there then the individual's privacy. And relevance of the information that you have taken from Facebook for the job. And third of course, is the process in which it is obtained. So, and whether it was necessary for the job for which we may argue like yes social skill we want to test, but are they not other ways of testing the social skill that needs those are the things which are debatable over here.

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So, the questions of course, which are following these are like, what are the main ethical issues in this case. The main ethical issues in this case are like the individual's right to privacy and the it also includes the individual's right to control information about oneself and to control situations where such information will be like available.

So, you can this can be seen from the all the 4 perspectives basic ethical perspectives like rights and justice ethics of duties utilitarianism, egoism as we have discussed in the earlier case. We can see this from the light of the different stake holders involved in the case, like first like if that is the personal manager as for the intern, then for others for the personal manager, the privacy issues are like whether seeking information about the candidate's private lives as a way of deciding whom to hire in, is ok or not. Seeking private information, the second candidate has not made her profile public, and it was therefore, confidential. So, and when the manager like tried to contact the intern who is on the friends list and tried to get hold of that information, then it is compromising the candidate's information, information of privacy.

So, this is more important because the candidate did not use any of the company's time or resources to generate her material. So, what is it right for the person for the personal manager to encroach into that privacy to seek information. According to power relationship the manager was higher in power dynamics as compared to the intern. So, and the manager was able to access to this page only through the intern. So, this may be

and abuse of power of the personal manager. If the intern was not there in the friends list may be he would not have been able to have access to this information. For others who were there, So, the like for the colleagues who suggested looking up the candidates in the Facebook or Myspace. So, it was easy for them to make the suggestions may be, but was it appropriate in the sense, because they were suggesting the personal manager to like invade into other people's privacy. So, where they responsible enough while suggesting this were they aware enough of the after effect of what may happened, if these things were done.

For the intern it is the betrayal of the trust by giving the employer access to a closed network. So, whether it is it is ethical for the intern also to behave in that way because she was in the closed group of the second candidate. So, these are the possible ethical issues with respect to the what the people did and whether it was ethical or not. Second question could be what are the main ethical arguments for and against the use of social network for potential employers in this situation, both the things actions may have a positive and negative outcome.

So, we have to take over here like and because we may find people arguing both for and against the action taken like for using social network for the selection and may be against the use of social network also.

So, what we find over here the arguments is, So, like for the use of social networking. So, those arguments which are for it is it provides extra information to people on the candidate which could be useful for determining whether the candidate will be effective in the social element of the job. Given the sensitivity of the position and the specific nature of business and thus the ability of the employ to do the harm is justifiable. Against the use of the social networking sites, it invades the privacy of the candidate. Which is not only unnecessary, but it is unethical also. And permit is the manager to make inappropriate moral judgement of the private behaviour. So, it is we are having the arguments both for and against the use of social networking sites, but the against arguments we understand like it is working against the privacy of the person or for the helping the manager to make inappropriate judgement about the private life of the person.

But we have to understand again those the arguments which are going for the use of the social network in that networking site. So, the overall statement like this will help in understanding whether the person will also be effective in the social element of the job is a like statement which is very general in nature. To understand that we have to understand what type of behaviour as a part of this social element of the job is desirable. And what is that I am going to tap through while looking into the Facebook profile.

So, if this is not clarity is not there, then we may like use some comments. In the sense like we see something and then may be try to judge the whole situation based on giving an overall comment like you are trying to see whether the person can take care of the social element of the job and there may be mismatch of qualities. So, to define to find out like whether the person is suitable for the social element of the job first the behavioural aspects that is required as the social element of the job needs to be defined clearly and they those qualities need to be very fair from the Facebook profile.

So, general statement may not be appropriate here. So, when we have finally, may be deciding about how to decide about the if the personal manager. Because the case ends with the dilemma where he is not able to decide what to do and if it is the personal manager has to decide if this type of situation. So, again we know like because this ethical decision is like decisions where lot of dilemma is there. So, this could be like n number of answers are possible. So, and it is very welcome situation where people are expanding their thoughts on while they are reasoning for it.

So; however, one thing is very clear from this case, like if the Facebook knowledge of the profile from the Facebook is not there, then it is very easy for the person to decide because by comparing the 2 profiles you may find like the second candidate is more in terms of experience may be and in terms of like the job done or so, but then the first one and that gives you a choice, but when it comes to again the social part which is viewed from the Facebook and it is gives a favourable picture to the first candidate and some are undesirable picture of the second candidate, then the dilemma starts for the personal manager.

So, what could be n number of answers are possible, but what could be like possible alternatives like, instead of thinking of this candidate or that candidate means instead of going for a binary decision. So, this could other options could be like hiring the abler

candidate and competent candidate, but with a conditional that there will be random drug testing, because in one situation what it is mentioned like what does second candidate is taking is appearing to be cocaine.

So, then, but again drug testing itself is very controversial. Because whether it is required or not for the job at hand needs to be defined. Then the other thing could be like why it was necessary to go to the Facebook and if we tell like it is to find out the social skills to get information of social skills, then it is we have to debate about whether Facebook is the only alternative through which we get the social skills done tested. Or we can very easily get it through may be some games that we do role plays that we do in the selection process itself. And include that is a selection stage and come to more accurate decisions about candidate's social skills.

So, instead of just going for a like the secondary search if you are just coming for understanding like if you really want to see the social skills can we go and discuss or test it with help of games role plays and then this becomes also a screening process. So, other side of the thing what we may not be have occurred in the personal manager's mind at that point of time. So, like if the second candidate supposedly is not selected, but she can, she comes to know from her friends may be or the intern or via any friend like it is the personal manager who has accessed her Facebook page which is a private page not in available publicly then it becomes the public relation issue.

If she does not get the job and she can even she can even go for telling about getting discriminated and that can be taken to court also. So, that there this is a debate which is there and it needs to be answered like whether what are the skills that we are looking into. It is the Facebook going to really give an answer to the skills. What if whether we have a profile and what if we do not have a profile. And here the focus of the case is only on the second candidate. And it is told about the first candidate like it is well travelled individual and social and all.

So, there is no way of cross checking also over here whether the person has tried to do some impression management while posting at this profile. Because faking of profiles could happen also and how do we guarantee like the impression that the that you get about the first candidate, because you have accessed her public profile may be you have

not got whole you do not know about her is she may be having another profile created which tells us about the like a private profile to which you may not have an access.

So, how do you now like she is also not of the same quality. Because what you see is a public profile and there may be she has posted or those things what will make her look desirable. So, how do we know like this is not happened. So, in this case and in similar cases also from case to case basis, we have to understand how far essential it is to go through these profiles how much weight-age should we put on the decisions, I we are considering this for the decision making. What are the other selection criteria or test should be included? So, that even if we are considering the Facebook profile or yes or not then what is a weight-age and what and relative weight-age of all the different ways of selecting. So, that even if you are not able to select it may be the person through a Facebook profiles or social networking sites properly.

But the other cross checks that we have may be through the games or role plays will tell us about the social skills of the person. And before actually going into the Facebook profiles or the other social networking profiles, we have to know ourselves what are the desirable social skills for the job we are trying to find out from the social networking profiles. If we have this clarity in mind if we have the relative weight-ages fixed that will be giving to the may be the interviews the competencies of the candidate the capability of the candidate the Facebook profile and other relevant may be test that we do, then we may include it as one of the ways, but it before we are sure enough and whether if we it is a question of debate and whether we have been able to access similar kind of profiles where all the candidates.

If you have asked a questions to our self and got the answer from our moral impulse also from the course modern ethics if we are telling like what if the person is a good candidate, but does not have a social network profile. So, are we going to select or deselect the candidate. So, if you have answered to those debates properly, before we take an action our action becomes more justifying.

Thank you.