

Ethics in Entrepreneurship

B2E Case Study 13 “Victoria’s Secret?”

Terry Tate is a Graphic Designer. She has worked as an independent contractor at B2E for many years. Though not really an employee, she has been around so long that people view her as one.

This year B2E launched a major new marketing campaign for a spectacular new product known as the Widget. With its cutting-edge technology and unique design it outperforms and outsells everything else in the industry. This product is so hot that B2E is having a hard time keeping up with the demand.

One of its most appealing features is its 21st century metallic-look, created by a special space-age finish. The exact formula is a Trade Secret known only to a few at B2E. Because Terry Tate was part of the research and development team for the Widget, she knows the formula.

Terry stops by Tina’s office, to tell her about a fabulous lunch she had with her new friend, Victoria, who she met at a business conference. Victoria works for a competitor of B2E– the CG Corporation. Since they have mutual friends and share many interests, Terry and Victoria did not “talk shop”.

Terry told Tina that Victoria invited her to an expensive restaurant for lunch with colleagues from her organization. In the course of the conversation, Terry was asked about her career, education and experience. She was made to feel very welcomed.

The next morning Victoria called Terry at work. She told Terry that she made a great impression with all her coworkers. One of them works in HR and mentioned that CG Group has an opening for a Graphic Designer in Product Research and Development. She says that her company’s benefits are the best in the business, and that if Terry decides to sign on she will be guaranteed a huge sign on bonus. Victoria offered to set up an interview with the Hiring Manager. While Terry was very flattered, she told Victoria she needs to think about it a bit.

Terry tells Tina that she’s really excited at this opportunity. The bonus and benefits sound really great. Victoria says that CG Corporation is very impressed by her portfolio, work experience and education. She tells Tina that since she hasn’t signed a non-compete agreement that she is really free to interview. Since they never questioned her about the new product, she’s not worried about their interest in the B2E trade secrets. So if she applies and hires on at CG Corporation there are no worries, right?

What would you say? What would you do? How could you be most effective?