

Office Affair

Donald is a Team Leader at TelephonUs Inc., a local direct sales company. His team has been assigned to handle recruitment via telephone for another direct sales company. Because of this, his job now mainly consists of ascertaining that his Customer Service Representatives are able to meet their team's quota for daily calls. A team member's failure to meet quota is automatically his failure, too.

He has observed in the past year that two of his subordinates, Ella and Jimbo, seem to be having a budding romantic relationship. Though he didn't give much thought to it at first, in the past two months Donald has become increasingly concerned about them as he observes Jimbo's performance degrading. He looks at their logs and notices that many leads which were supposed to be Jimbo's somehow ended up becoming Ella's. This is alarming for Donald, because Jimbo's failure as a Customer Service Representative reflects poorly on Donald's capability as Team Leader.

Bothered by this, Donald asks Bernadette, a Training and Development Officer with the HRMD, about the company's policy on office romances. "We don't allow them because we want to avoid potential sexual harassment suits. Why do you ask?" Bernadette responds.

"I just noticed Jimbo and Ella are ---"

"Oh! They were dating even before they joined the company. Just don't pay attention to it. They're both consenting adults and it's not like he's her boss or she's his boss. Believe me, Donald, it's harmless."

Should Donald take Bernadette's advice and turn a blind eye to the situation, or should he intervene?

(Case prepared by Gov. Jose B. Fernandez Ethics Center, Ateneo de Manila Univ., Philippines)