**Gilbane Gold Ethics Review**

1. **List and describe the ethical issues you observe in Gilbane Gold. Prioritize these ethical issues from most critical to least critical.**

David Jackson is a young engineer who is responsible for signing off on Z-Corp’s effluent discharge. After discovering that for six months Z-Corp has knowingly been releasing more lead and arsenic into Gilbane’s waste water system than is allowed by regulation. David has attempted to notify Diane Collins (the vice president of Z-Corp); however, Dianne was uninterested in rectifying the issue. With Z-Corp now about to increase production five-fold and, therefore, increase its effluent output, some of the ethical issues facing Gilbane are:

* The pollution of Gilbane’s waste water and ‘Gilbane Gold’. – *‘promote sustainability’*
* The fact that Z-Corp is knowingly breaking regulations. – *‘practise competently’*
* David had known of the high levels of pollutants for a month and had done nothing. – *‘exercise leadership’*
* David has put his name and engineering license on the line signing off on Z-Corps pollutant waste water. – *‘practise competently’*
* Even though David may not agree with what Z-Corp is doing, they are still his employers with whom he would have entered into a non-disclosure contract with. - *‘demonstrate integrity’*
* Whether or not David will keep his head down, keep his job, and sign off on Z-Corp’s effluent. – *‘demonstrate integrity’*

1. **What is your opinion of professor Massin’s comments and advice?**

Professor Massin and Tom play the role of David’s conscience; Tom taking the side of what is in the best interest of Gilbane and its people; while Massin takes the side of David and his interests (i.e. his career).

Obviously, Tom wants David to go public on what Z-Corp are doing so that the issue will be uncovered and handled by the proper authorities; however, there is a chance that Tom merely wishes to retaliate against the company that fired him, which is a very shallow argument as Tom was fired for trying to ‘blow the whistle’ himself.

Massin pushes hard for David to keep his head down and keep his job. He argues that “It’s not our responsibility” with regards to the regulations being flawed and suggests taking the matter up with the Engineering Society, knowing that no progress would be made until well after the damage from the effluent had been done.

The advice given by Massin is very much on the side of “what is done is done” and that David’s primary focus is to keep his job and maintain his professional integrity; however, David would be neglecting his responsibility to the community and those with reliance on engineering expertise (*Exercise Leadership)* as well as neglecting the health and wellbeing of the environment (*Promote Sustainability).*

1. **What, in your opinion, should David have done when he first found out about the newer test showed emissions from Z-Corp exceeded the city standards?**

Rather than waiting one month to bring the issue to light in an engineering meeting with the vice president of Z-Corp, David could have contacted the Engineering Society as soon as he noticed the high levels of pollutants in the waste water. Even though it would of taken time for the society to react to David’s inquiry, at least David could have claimed that he had taken the issue up with the society one month prior to the meeting.

However, since David did not contact the Engineering Society early enough, he should have first approached his Boss Phil Port, and explained the situation with him and then further pursued the case with Diane in a private meeting, having Phil on side. David also could have approached the water treatment plant and left an anonymous tip that some companies are releasing a higher amount of lead and arsenic and that they need to upgrade their testing facilities to detect it. There is also the Gilbane government that instigated the regulations, David could have notified them that their laws are flawed and need reworking. As good as David’s intentions were, his response to contact the media and ‘go public’ was a knee jerk reaction and there were a number of other avenues David could have taken, not only if had simply acted faster.

1. **If you were in charge of Z-Corp and had the authority and the funding to make any changes you wanted to make in company policies, what specific steps would you take to improve company culture?**

Given infinite funding and authority, necessary steps to be taken that will change/improve company culture would be: investing in a more sustainable production line. This would look at reducing waste production or any internal recycling that can be conducted; working with other organisations to either decrease waste production or improve Gilbanes water treatment processes. This would show an involvement with the community as well as any neighbouring industries; offering small payouts to any employees that are able to find an economic solution for any waste management issues that the company is having. These small steps would show that Z-Corp has an engagement with the city of Gilbane, both in its community as well as neighbouring industries.

1. **What, if any, tenets of the Engineering Code of Ethics did David fail to comply with?**

The code of ethics stipulates that you must act on the basis of a well-informed conscience and in his extent David did; However, David did not act in a trustworthy manner towards Z-Corp (his employers), neither did he uphold the reputation nor the trustworthiness of the practice of engineering, by signing off on data he knew incorrect and potentially harmful. David did not seek the advice and guidance of others more experienced in engineering he simply left the issue to escalate until it reached a point where he simply made a knee jerk reaction to leak all of his information to the media after being harassed by reporter Maria Renato outside Z-Corp. The idea of ethics is extremely subjective, and even though David’s actions may have lost him his job, he was able to bring Z-Corp’s harmful effluent into the public eye. David’s decision to ‘go public’, in terms of the code of ethics, is split as he was promoting sustainability in alerting people to the pollution in the waste water, however, he wasn’t demonstrating integrity by “selling out” Z-Corp, the company he works for.

1. **What do you think will happen at the meeting with Diane and the company lawyer?**

There are three potential outcomes to the meeting with Diane and the company lawyer. The first, and most likely, is that Diane knows that it was David who disclosed the information to the media and she plans on either firing David, if she legally can. The second is that Diane is unsure as to who “went public”, and she contacted the company lawyer to call everyone she believes to have had knowledge (on the pollution of the waste water) to find out who “went public”. The final outcome is that Diane wishes to have counsel with David to discuss a remedial action that Z-Corp can take to rectify the publically known pollution of Gilbane Gold.