

Spirituality in the Workplace Case Study

May 2007

Joe and Jane work for state government in a local county office. There are 7 employees total including a secretary and a supervisor. The nature of the work is human services.

Joe is very punctual. He arrives at work on time and leaves precisely at 4:30 p.m. every day barring a major crisis. His productivity is above average with case documentation, reports, etc always completed within the required timeframe. Rarely does he volunteer to assist fellow workers with a case, however, if assigned to do so by his supervisor, he will comply. If extra work results in an overtime situation, he usually takes the time off the next day by coming in later or leaving early. It is a rare occasion that he submits a timesheet with a request for OT pay.

Having been in his position for 12 years, Joe has no desire to assume more responsibilities and has not pursued promotion. His overall job satisfaction seems adequate; however, he subtly expresses displeasure with his pay scale by justifying use of office supplies and equipment for personal needs. His taxes are completed on the office computer during work hours, he routinely takes home notebooks, calendars, folders, etc, and he calls his brother who lives in another state once a week from the office phone during work hours.

Jane is the embodiment of a "helping person". Her clients love her and she has a high success rate in terms of "positive changes" with them. She is never too busy to listen to a fellow employee or drop-in client. Punctuality and paperwork are not her strong point. Her supervisor frequently asks for write-ups and reports after the due date. Jane is the first to volunteer to stay late for a crisis case or to assist a fellow employee. She watches her hours, never claiming more time than she has worked. If she comes in late, she stays later. Recently she had to stay until 11 p.m. before a court date in order to update documentation in a case. She requested no OT pay.

Consider the following questions as a supervisor, fellow employee, or young, new worker in the office.

1. Does overall positive productivity justify noncompliance in other areas?
2. How do the actions of Joe and/or Jane affect your performance?
3. Is Joe stealing?
4. Are Jane's paperwork habits fulfilling her job duties as outlined in her position description?
5. As a Christian, do you have any obligations to do anything? Do the actions of Joe and Jane really concern you?