Question 1: Should employers be allowed to drug-test employees?

Answer 1: In 1995, the Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace of Washington, D.C. commissioned The Gallup Organization of Princeton, New Jersey to conduct a survey. The survey objectives were to determine attitudes about drugs in the workplace, drug testing, and experiences with drugs. Those surveyed worked full time outside of the home. When asked about drug testing, the majority of those surveyed supported drug screening tests for all occupations. However, the respondents put greater emphasis on testing those employees who are responsible for many people, such as airline pilots, school bus drivers, or doctors (Employers and Employees Benefit, 2000).

Question 2: What is discriminatory genetic screening?

Answer 2: In 1972, scientists first isolated the DNA segment from a virus and combined it with bacterial DNA, which was the beginning of genetic engineering. Since then, the field of biotechnology has flourished exponentially. As scientists find out more about the human DNA and genes, there is substantial concern that organizations will want to screen potential employees for possible genetic flaws. People with genetic flaws may be denied life insurance, health insurance, and access to schooling or to jobs.

It is not unfathomable that, as costs for tests decline and health care responsibilities are shifted from public sector to private sector, private insurers may use risk rating as a method for providing health insurance to those persons who are predisposed to a serious disease. This would seriously undermine the universal provision of health care.

Question 3: What is whistle-blowing, and why is it acceptable?

Answer 3: Whistle-blowing is when an employee knows that the company he or she is working for is engaged in activities that cause unnecessary harm, violate human rights, are illegal, are counter to the defined purpose of the entity, or are otherwise immoral and notifies the public or government agency of these activities (Duska, 1998). Business ethicists claim that employees have some obligation to the company or employer, but when the company violates ethical or legal constraints, loyalty of the employee has been compromised.

Whistle-blowing and loyalty are competing values or ethical dilemmas. Loyalty is seen as a good thing, while whistle-blowing is not. Whistle-blowers are known as rats, finks, tattletales, snitches, informants, and the like. However, loyalty, in extreme cases, can cause disasters, such as the Columbine shootings, where peer pressure kept students from sharing their concerns with authorities. Employees have an obligation to their employees to serve the company’s legitimate and legal interests as well as reporting actions of employees.
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that act against the public good (Navran & Pittman, 2003). Attitudes toward whistle-blowing are changing. The public recognizes that there is a need to stop wrongdoing, and this is different from being a snitch (Why Whistle-Blowing Is Good for Business, 2002).

References


