

Library Peer Group Training on Professional Ethics (January 2022)

Ethics Scenario Discussion Questions:

1. *What more do you need to know before responding or taking action?*
2. *What ethical Values or Principles are relevant to this situation? Where is the conflict?*
3. *What potential actions could be taken to resolve this situation?*
4. *What might we learn from this situation? How could it be prevented in the future?*

SCENARIO A:

Senior management has asked you to increase the diversity of volunteers throughout your organization. You develop a plan for targeted recruitment to attract people who have not been involved to any large extent in the past. Your efforts are successful, and you begin to place new volunteers in various departments. After several months your supervisor meets with you for your annual performance review. She comments that although you did increase the number of volunteers, she has been hearing from department staff that “these volunteers weren’t exactly the kind of people we had in mind.” Thus, she has given you a lower performance rating than you expected. *How should you respond?*

SCENARIO B:

Your organization is reviewing its volunteer application form which was developed several years ago. Currently, the form requires identity disclosures for gender, salutation/marital status, preferred pronouns, ethnic origin and date of birth. There has been much discussion on many of these mandatory fields and the reasons why the organization would collect and require this information. Some leaders feel the fields are needed to support a new initiative to increase the diversity of the volunteer workforce and to reflect the recipients being served. As the Volunteer Services Coordinator, you are asked for your input. *How should you respond?*

SCENARIO C:

Lucy, a long-term Baby Boomer volunteer, refuses to meet the new program requirements that were established earlier that year. She says she gets great personal gratification from the program and wants to continue, but that she can’t meet the new minimum time requirement because of other commitments in her life. Because of her long-term status Lucy is granted an initial exception from the new rule by top management, but her direct supervisor feels she should have to follow the new guidelines or be dismissed. *As Director of Volunteers, what action should you take?*

SCENARIO D:

Ruth has been the Coordinator of Volunteer Services at a local library for 3 years. She was recruited to rebuild and expand the program after a period of reorganization and decline. However, she serves in this position as a volunteer herself. After several years of hard work and success, she is wondering if she should advocate for the position to become a salaried job in the museum. She does not want to appear selfish, but also feels that the role deserves to be valued by the institution. *What should Ruth do?*