

## Cosmetic Applications Teaching Notes

### *What Are the Relevant Facts?*

1. Maria is new to the company and, with her job title and responsibility, as well as her limited experience, does not want to sound naive about the need for profitability.
2. Hans has far more experience, and he is the one who will be evaluating Maria for promotability.
3. Increasing the recommended usage rate seems excessive and wasteful, given consumer feedback

### *What Are the Ethical Issues?*

1. To what extent can Maria, in trying to protect consumers, object to the directive from Hans without jeopardizing her career?
2. Does Maria's responsibility include critiquing potential product misrepresentation?
3. Should Maria inform others in the company of the potential inappropriateness of the change in usage rate being enacted by Hans?

Is the reputation of Maria's company at stake?

### *Who Are the Primary Stakeholders?*

- Customers
- Hans
- Maria
- The company

### *What Are the Possible Alternatives?*

1. Remind Hans of the research results, and suggest delaying a change in the recommended usage rate until further testing occurs.
2. Go over Hans's head, and suggest to the Vice President of Marketing that changing the recommended usage rate does not appear warranted.
3. Try to get the Director of Research to speak with Hans, siding with Maria's objections.
4. Do nothing.

### *What Are the Ethics of the Alternatives?*

- Ask questions based on a "utilitarian" perspective (costs and benefits). For example:

1. Which of the alternatives would provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number?
2. How would costs be measured in this vignette (loss of consumer trust, risk to Maria's advancement)?
3. Do the benefits of being consistent with focus group data outweigh the "cost" of lower sales volumes?

- Ask questions based on a "rights" perspective. For example:

1. What does each stakeholder have the right to expect? Is each stakeholder represented as a person or persons?
2. Which alternative(s) would not respect your rights if you were Maria? A TruBlush customer? Stockholders of TruBlush?

- Ask questions based on a "justice" perspective (benefits and burdens). For example:

1. Which alternative distributes the benefits and burdens most fairly among the stakeholders?
2. Which stakeholders carry the greatest burden if Maria follows Hans's directive? What if Maria refuses the assignment?

### *What Are the Practical Constraints?*

1. Hans will probably go ahead with his decision with or without Maria's support.
2. Even though increasing the recommended usage rate affords consumers no benefit, no evidence of harmful effects are known either.

### *What Actions Should Be Taken?*

1. The company hired Maria based on her potential to contribute insights in the direction of its marketing communications program. Thus, she has a professional obligation to share her concerns.
2. It is possible for Maria to share her concerns diplomatically with Hans. He may well have forgotten the focus group findings (or may never have seen them). A key ingredient in Hans's evaluation of Maria's performance is her integrity, and she has an opportunity to demonstrate that as well.