

Episode 114: Should I “rat” someone out?

It can be easy to look the other way when someone is being bad. Lots of people just don't want to get involved.



1. Should you say something?

The simple answer to this question is YES.

If you think someone or something is wrong, you should always say something.

Here are some reasons:

- 1) There may be legal or regularity reasons for doing so – failing to do something maybe an offense
- 2) Your company rules may require you to say something
- 3) When they are caught, if you are found to have known, you may damage your career
- 4) Knowing and not saying so is effectively a lie – a slippery slope
- 5) If you want to keep your integrity, you need to act with integrity

2. How should you say something?

How you say something may depend on where you work and what you found out.

In the simplest of cases I would always tell you to tell your boss or supervisor.

They should have the skills to deal with the problem and protect you.

If you don't trust your boss – then maybe you should go to their boss.

If the whole management chain concerns you then talk to HR.

Typically they are good at keeping confidences and dealing with the case.

Failing your HR team then try and get access to the most senior executive you can.

If you go that route, you better be sure you have your facts rights.

If not, you need to share your suspicions but let them know they are not facts.

Should there be no one to talk to then maybe it's time for a statutory body.

3. Is it gossip?

I know from talking to people they think of this as gossip.

If someone is doing wrong – it's not gossip. Let's use Enron as an example.

There must have been more people who knew what was going on.

Whether for selfish reasons or because they were scared – they said nothing.

They may have only seen small things but small things mount up quickly.

In the end, each of those people contributed to financial and personal disasters.

Do not let that be you.

Bottom Line: You know right from wrong and keeping on the side of right is always the better approach.