

SCENARIO

USE OF WORK RESOURCES

All in a good day's work

Jayne is employed in an office-based role, which means that she sits at her computer for hours every day. Her job can become pretty monotonous, so every now and then she gives herself a breather by browsing online or doing some personal business. It's all to break up the day and give her a bit of light relief.

Lately, she's been keen to buy a flat so has started looking at real estate sites in between spreadsheets. As the internet is already connected and being used by others in the organisation, she doesn't see any harm in it – and she's still doing her work.

Her colleague Helen disagrees. Jayne's productivity has taken a dive lately and Helen is having to pick up the slack. Some days, it seems like Jayne just glances at her work and then spends the rest of the time searching for properties.

Their team leader has noticed that Helen has been stressed at work lately but can't understand what's changed. As far as she can tell both Jayne and Helen are working away as usual. Even so, she knows there is some kind of issue and assumes Helen must have problems at home.

What are the ethical issues in this situation?

- Use of work resources (computer and time)
- Not acting in the public interest
- Not acting with honesty and integrity
- Not reporting misconduct

What could be the impact of this situation?

- The productivity of the team continues to decrease
- Helen's stress level reaches an extreme point, she becomes sick and has to take time off
- Tension builds between Helen and Jayne

What processes could be put in place to ensure this doesn't happen?

- Having an IT policy that staff are familiar with. If there is a 'reasonable use' policy, this needs to be defined
- Management monitoring employees' time online





- If productivity has slowed, processes in place to monitor and deal with what is happening

Information used in this scenario is not based in fact, but has been created for the purpose of education and discussion. Any likeness to real persons or events is coincidental.

