

WOULD YOU TELL YOUR COLLEAGUE?**By Ken Korkow**

If you saw a work colleague come out of a restroom and noticed he had forgotten to pull up the zipper on his pants, would you tell him to avert a potentially embarrassing situation? If you were walking in the parking lot after work, stopped to talk briefly with a coworker and noticed a tire on her car appeared very low, would you tell her so she could avoid a major problem on the way home?

Or if you recognized a friend of work had a disturbing habit or trait that was preventing that person from advancing within the company, would you tactfully tell him or her so positive changes could be made? This last situation probably would be the most difficult, since not everyone responds favorably when flaws are pointed out. But I think we would agree in all three scenarios, it would be best to inform them and give them the opportunity to correct the situation. And we would most likely appreciate it if we were having any of those problems and someone told us.

Switching the circumstances a bit, suppose you had very helpful information to share with a colleague. For instance, new computer software that could greatly enhance the quality of his or her work. Or some insight into a client's needs that could assist in closing a crucial sale. Would you tell your colleague? Or would you want that person to inform you if they had such useful information?

We might not have a legal or even ethical obligation to do so, but it would be the right thing to do – the caring, compassionate thing to do. I find it interesting, however, that when it comes to discussing matters of spiritual importance, we often feel as if we are “imposing” upon others to communicate our deeply held beliefs. Yes, we need to respect what other people believe, whether they agree with us or not. But if we are convinced matters of faith are important, whether in our personal or professional lives, why are we often reluctant to talk with others about them?

In the 19th century, British preacher Charles H. Spurgeon made this powerful statement that still challenges us today: “If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for.” Strong words, no doubt, but spoken from an impassioned, persuaded heart.

In the New Testament, Jesus made a declaration many of His hearers probably considered audacious, even intolerant: “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*” (John 14:6). Every day we encounter people who believe there are “many ways to God,” and others who believe this life is all there is. But if we really believe in a heaven and a hell, and that Jesus offers the only way to spending eternity with God, is it wrong to want to tell others?

In Colossians 1:28-29, the apostle Paul wrote, “*We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.*”

Let me ask you: If you saw I was headed to eternal hell – would you tell me?

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever approached a colleague or coworker to inform them about a problem they were having, large or small? Were you at all hesitant to tell them? How did they respond?
2. How would you feel if you were having a problem that you were unaware of, for whatever reason, and no one was concerned enough or had the courage to tell you about it?
3. Why do you think people are reluctant to talk with others about matters of faith, even when they think spirituality is an important element of life – even in the business and professional world?
4. Has anyone ever talked with you about spiritual or faith-related matters in a work context? If so, what was your response? When, in your opinion, is it appropriate to have conversations or discussions like that – and when is it not appropriate?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

John 3:16; Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 6:19-20; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:15