

CFM CAREER MANAGEMENT: CM.7 LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

Recognizing Conflicts of Interest and Using Ethical Safeguards

Detailed practice, calculation, decision-making, and assessment

GRADES 9-12	TIME 2 x 42 min	GROUPING I / pairs / whole	PRODUCT Recommend
YOUR CHALLENGE Identify actual, potential, and apparent conflicts; disclose facts; compare safeguards; and recommend an ethical process.			

New York CFM Connections: Leadership Styles, Inclusive Teams, Delegation, and Ethical Safeguards

A conflict of interest occurs when a personal interest could influence—or appear to influence—a work decision. A conflict is not automatically proof of corruption. Ethical leadership requires disclosure, independent review, recusal when appropriate, transparent criteria, accurate records, and protection of confidential information.

Term	Student-friendly meaning
Conflict of interest	A personal interest that may improperly influence work judgment.
Actual conflict	A present conflict affecting a decision.
Potential conflict	A situation that could become a conflict.
Apparent conflict	A situation that could reasonably look biased even if no improper act occurred.
Disclosure	Providing relevant facts to an authorized person.
Recusal	Withdrawing from a decision because impartiality may be questioned.
CLASSROOM USE All people, employers, figures, brackets, and documents in this packet are fictional. Never place a real Social Security number, employer ID, bank number, or tax document in classroom work.	

Part 1 - Classify Conflict-of-Interest Scenarios

Review gifts, family vendors, outside jobs, confidential information, friendships, and school-club purchasing.

Scenario	Actual, potential, apparent, or none	Why	Missing facts
Vendor gift			
Relative owns bidder			
Employee has second job			
Uses customer list			
Friend applies			
Club leader buys own product			

Do not call every relationship unethical.

Part 2 - Map Interests and Duties

Analyze a fictional student store choosing among three suppliers when the buyer’s cousin owns one.

Stakeholder	Interest/duty	Possible harm	Information to protect
Student buyer			
Cousin/vendor			
Other vendors			
School/store			
Customers			
Advisor			

Identify both fairness and confidentiality.

Part 3 - Compare Ethical Safeguards

Evaluate disclosure, recusal, multiple bids, scoring rubric, approval, gift policy, and audit trail.

Safeguard	Risk reduced	Limitation	Evidence it was used
Disclosure			
Recusal			
Multiple bids			
Rubric			
Second approval			
Gift policy			
Audit trail			

One safeguard may not be enough.

Part 4 - Write a Conflict Disclosure

Draft a short message to the advisor.

Message element	Student wording
Relationship	
Decision involved	
Known facts	
No motive claim	
Requested safeguard	
Confidentiality	

Disclosure should be timely and factual.

Part 5 - Write an Ethical Purchasing Process

Write 150–200 words with criteria, roles, documentation, and review.

Decision check	Evidence
Conflict type	
Disclosure	
Recusal	
Bid criteria	
Independent review	
Recordkeeping	
Privacy	
Follow-up	

Do not choose a winning vendor without complete bid data.