

Scenario

- John Smith, a Sales Executive at ABC Toy Company, the leading online supplier of children's toys in North America, received notice from ABC Toy's Human Resources Department that an online internet activist group advocating for "a woman's right to be respected in the workplace" had initiated a boycott of ABC based on a conversation originally posted on Smith's Facebook page. In that post, Smith said . . . "instead of making kid's toys, we should be making adult toys – that's where all the money is!! You can't even eye a chick without her crying 'sexual assault' ". The comment was followed by a re-tweeted picture of Smith wearing a polo shirt with the company logo, watching what appears to be a child's soccer game and suggestively smiling at an attractive woman (who ABC later learned was Smith's wife).

- Within hours of the call to boycott, ABC's employees started an email exchange in which Smith was called a "liar", "tyrant", "idiot boss", "old geezer" and "pig". ABC's internal Working Moms Employees Resource Group and a local city councilman had reached out to ABC's CEO demanding that Smith be fired. A major corporate customer of ABC's also called the ABC CEO to express his "support" of Smith, stating – "If it wasn't for Smith, I would have moved our business a long time ago."

ABC's Social Media policy states

- “ABC Toy Company supports healthy and honest discourse with its readers. Discussions about financial information, sales trends, strategies, forecasts, legal issues and future promotional activities is prohibited. Disclosure of personal information about customers or employees is prohibited.”

- Question of the Day?

“Did John Smith’s conduct violate company policy? If yes, should he be disciplined?”