A TASTY PROJECT

Thank you very much, Sir. I will keep doing my best.
“A Tasty Project” is a title of Tiri for the Aga Khan Development Network Civil Society Programme. It includes a series of other comic strip booklets that challenge the reader on the role of ethics and integrity as contributors to success in the conduct of business.

The materials are for use by: Tiri

However no part of this publication may be used for personal or business profit in any form by any means, be they electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise.

Visit our website: www.tiri.org
Original story written by Dr. Harutyun Aleksanyan

Edited by Tiri team
Drama script written by Lusine Karapetyan
Drawings and layout by Eduard Cholakhyan

“A Tasty Project” ©2009
A TASTY PROJECT

Introduction

Ali Ahmed is a script writer and editor at Hizar Telecommunications. He is working in the Musical and Entertainment Department. He is well educated and very creative and has developed an innovative project called a "Musical Show for Contemporaries" for Hizar Telecommunications. This is a high quality project and will surely bring the company success. Ali shows this project to the head of his department, Zahar Ishmar, seeking his advice.

Characters

1) Ali Ahmed - a script writer and editor of Hizar Telecommunications
2) Erum - Ali’s colleague
3) Zahar Ishmar - Head of the Musical and Entertainment Department
4) Zabruni - CEO of Hizar Telecommunications
5) Employees of other departments
ALI AHMED WORKS AT A TV STATION, IN THE MUSICAL AND ENTERTAINMENT DEPARTMENT. HE IS TALKING TO ERUM, HIS COLLEAGUE.

Don't you think our company could do with fresh ideas that would appeal to more of the population, especially young people.

I do, but where do we take them?

We could work one out, ourselves.

Sure, we could, with the boss that we have! He always finds fault with new ideas and turns them down.
Let's see what he'll have to say when I show him my new project!

Your project, when did you work it out?!

I've been working hard these two months, and have come up with a project. It's called 'Musical Show for Contemporaries'.

What do you mean, 'for Contemporaries'? 
It means that the new younger stars will be included in the show, and there will be humour, and all that.

That's great! Has Ishmar, the boss, seen it yet?

Not yet, but I'm going to show him tomorrow.

Then good luck to you! I'm afraid he will try to find fault with it, as usual.
Ali is showing his project to Zahar Ishmar.

Ishmar to Ali, with irony.

I'd like to show you the project I have been working on for the last two months.

It must be an interesting one, if it took you that long to develop.

Ishmar to Ali, stifling a yawn and looking bored.

Just have a look.

So be it, I'll have a look, though you must know I have no spare time to waste.
ONE MONTH LATER, ALI RUNS INTO
ISHMAR IN THE CORRIDOR.

Did you find time
to look at my
project?

Not yet, I've been busy.
But I will,
sometime next week.

A WHILE LATER. TWO EMPLOYEES OF THE ADVERTISING
DEPARTMENT OF THE TV STATION ARE TALKING IN THE CAFETERIA.
ALI OVERHEARS THEM.

I hear that the General Director
has approved a new, interesting
project by the Musical and
Entertainment Department.

What is it?
It's called 'Musical Show for Contemporaries'.

I wonder who the author is.

As far as I know, it's Ishmar, the deputy manager.

You can't be serious! He has not come up with anything in the last five years.
THE FIRST EMPLOYEE TAKES OUT THE APPROVED PROJECT.

It's definitely Ishmar's idea. It's his signature, all right.

When will the project be launched?

Quite soon. The General Director was so taken with it that he requested our department to prepare a commercial to launch it as soon as possible.

That must be it! I heard at the accountant's that the management is thinking of rewarding Ishmar with a substantial bonus.
Ali’s face flushes red with shock and resentment, and the other two can’t help noticing it.

What’s happened? Are you all right?

Indeedy sometime later Ishmar is rewarded with a bonus of $3,000.

The general director is handing Ishmar an envelope with the reward money at the company’s meeting.

Innovative projects such as yours must be encouraged.

Thank you very much, Sir. I will keep doing my best.

I’m sure you will. Just you wait and see!
ALI MEETS HIS FRIEND SAFAR IN THE CAFETERIA.

You look upset. Is something wrong?

Yes, it is.

Why don't you tell me?

You won't believe it, but my boss stole the project I had been working on for two months!
What do you mean, he stole it?

I took it to him for his opinion. He just signed his name as the author and told the TV management the project was his idea.

What impudence!

There's more to it: the management is so taken with the project that they are going to launch it any time now. Ishmar, that boss of mine, was rewarded with a bonus of $3,000!
This is outrageous! You must do something about it.

Yes, but what? After all, he is my boss. Besides, who will believe me, anyway?

But that’s not fair! You can’t just go on working for him after all this.

What choice do I have? We do not have an Ethics Commission to apply to, and it’s no use going to the management.
I could advise you to do something...

What?

I have a friend who is a reporter. Why don't we tell him everything? He could write an article, and if we prove the case, your boss will be made to pay for plagiarizing.

It could work. One of my colleagues can attest that I am the author of the project.
So shall I arrange the meeting with this reporter friend?

I am not sure. Its the incident is made public, the image of our company might suffer.

The image of your company already suffers with people like Ishmar working for it. But then, it’s up to you.
QUESTIONS

1. What would you do in Ali’s place:
   a) go to the reporter?
   b) go to the General Director of the TV station?
   c) give in your notice and resign from your job
   d) threaten Ishmar?
   e) put the whole thing behind you and continue working?
2. Why are situations like this one possible in some organizations?
3. What integrity challenges and points of concern do you identify in the situation?