



Public Service Puzzler!

5 Minutes with the Conflicts of Interest Law

Our contest for September 2015 is a new twist on an old favorite: the cartoon caption contest. This time, WE provide the caption, and YOU draw the cartoon.

Criteria:

1. The cartoon should be humorous, and should relate in some way to the City's conflicts of interest law.
2. We're more interested in the cartoon concept than in artistic skill, which means that legible stick figures and sketches are fine. We're not looking for the next Picasso.
3. Have fun with it!

To enter, email a PDF or picture file of your cartoon to contest@coib.nyc.gov by close of business on September 17th. The winner will be chosen by the Training and Education Unit.

NYC Conflicts of Interest Board

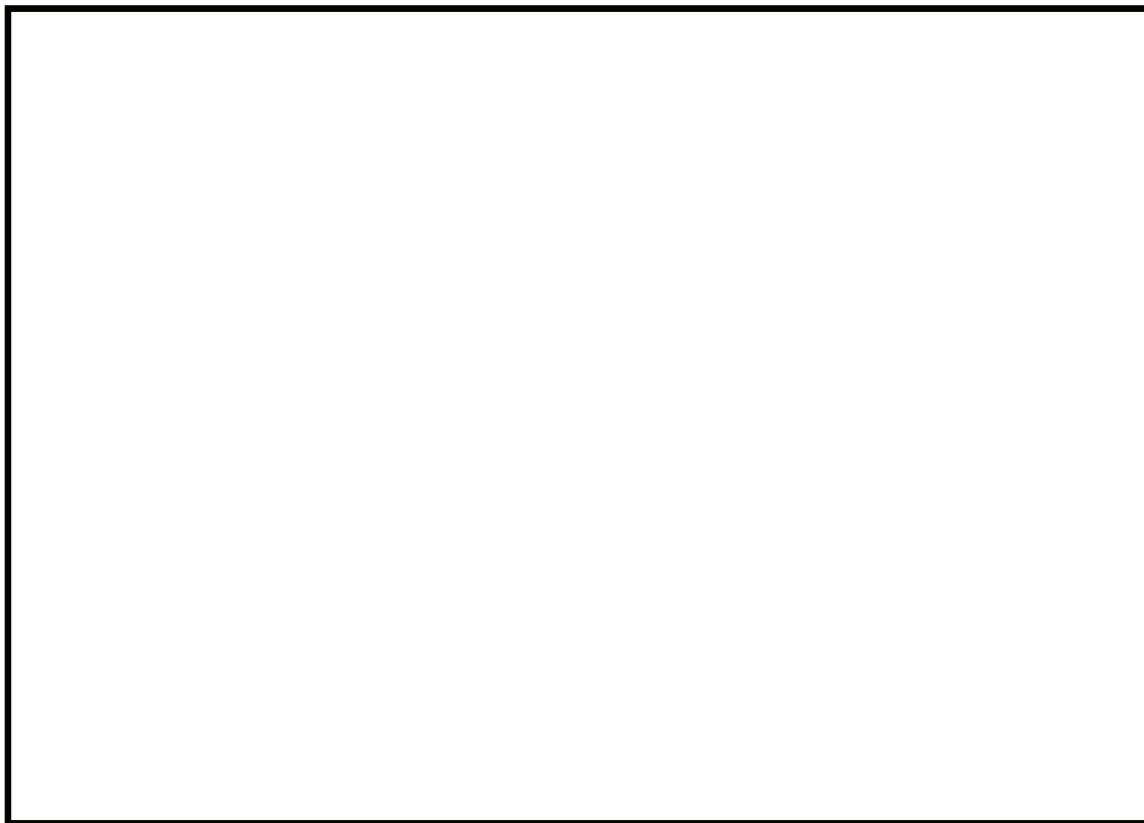
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Cartoon Contest



“Huh, who knew a conflict of interest could be so entertaining?”

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August Puzzler Winner!!

Congratulations to the winner of the August Public Service Puzzler, Lindsay Deguel-dre!! Lindsay correctly identified 7 violations in our **Count the Violations** challenge. See an explanation of all the answers on the next two pages. Lindsay is an Accountable Manager for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction



Q: What do you do in your job?

A: I am an Environmental Engineer and Project Manager currently working on the facility planning and design for two new Combined Sewer Overflow Retention Facilities to be constructed at the Gowanus Canal under the USEPA's Superfund Program.

Q: How long have you been working for the City?

A: Since December 2014!

Q: Name a special interest or hobby!

A: Outside of work, I really enjoy spending quality time with my family.

Q: What's your favorite thing about City service?

A: Contributing to the planning and implementation of projects that will improve the infrastructure and quality of life in our City .

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August Puzzler ANSWER KEY

The Answer Was.....**7** violations!

Red Underline: Violation

Blue Underline: NOT a violation

(see next page for explanations)

Dan works at a City agency, where he deals with lots of vendors. One day Dan (1) sends his resume to a firm whose City business he currently oversees, (2) along with some confidential information to demonstrate the value he can bring to the company. (3) While waiting to hear back, he day trades commodities on his City computer and (4) prints out a few fliers for his City Council campaign. After (5) emailing some members of his staff to ask if they'd like to get involved in distributing the fliers, (6) he takes a ten minute call from his wife on his personal cell phone.

That call gets interrupted by (7) Joey, Dan's subordinate, who stops by to pay back the loan Dan made to him. Later that day, (8) Dan accepts two theater tickets from his subordinate Kate – (9) Dan had given Kate some extra tickets he couldn't use last week, similar in price, and Kate wants to return the favor. (10) After work, without receiving a waiver, Dan volunteers at a not-for-profit which teaches children to read.

August Puzzler Answer Key—Explanations:

Remember, the August challenge was to identify *Chapter 68* violations—your agency may have its own Code of Conduct, around personal use of City resources for instance, that is stricter than these answers.

- (1) **Violation:** Public servants cannot seek jobs with private companies they are currently dealing with in their City jobs.
- (2) **Violation:** Impermissible disclosure of confidential info.
- (3) **Violation:** Business use of City resources is never allowed.
- (4) **Violation:** Political use of City resources is never allowed.
- (5) **Violation:** Supervisors cannot even indirectly ask subordinates to participate in political activities.
- (6) **No Violation:** Minimal, incidental personal use of City resources is allowed under the Acceptable Use Policy.
- (7) **Violation:** Supervisor-subordinate financial relationships are never allowed.
- (8) **Violation:** Supervisors can only accept ‘minimal’ gifts from subordinates—theater tickets are not minimal. See the Board’s [Advisory Opinion 2013-1](#) on gifts between City employees.
- (9) **No Violation:** While there are limits on what supervisors may *accept* from subordinates, there are no restrictions against supervisors *giving* gifts to subordinates, absent highly unusual circumstances. See the Board’s [Advisory Opinion 2013-1](#) on gifts between City employees.
- (10) **No Violation:** There are no restrictions under the Conflicts of Interest Law regarding volunteer work unless the public servant wishes to be a Board Member or Officer for a not-for-profit that receives money from their *own* City agency.