



2MC - A Tale of Five Fire Trucks

You are beginning to budget for the holiday season, and you must purchase gifts for your three children. Your total budget for gifts is \$75, and although this is a bit of a stretch for you, you want to make the holiday season special. You have decided to purchase a toy fire truck, a gift they can all share, and will love to play with. You have the following options:

- ▶ **Brand 1 (\$100):** This truck is made in a local factory just outside your hometown; the product is high-quality and durable.
- ▶ **Brand 2 (\$60):** This company has faced repeated publicity about using lead paint on its products to save money. It has been previously cited for other health hazards, too. The company insists it has fixed all of its quality issues.
- ▶ **Brand 3 (\$60):** The manufacturer has faced repeated allegations of child labor violations at its overseas manufacturing plants. An advocacy group is leading a boycott of their products.
- ▶ **Brand 4 (\$60):** These trucks are produced in an Asian factory where environmental rules are clearly violated, though the rules are unenforced by the local government. There have been media exposes about health concerns in the surrounding area.
- ▶ **Brand 5 (\$75):** The U.S. based-company that makes this truck has recently outsourced its manufacturing to a foreign subsidiary to save on labor costs. 5,000 American employees were laid-off. The company advertises (and it has been confirmed) that it follows all American standards for environmental and product safety standards.

Takeaways

- ✓ Every choice you make shows your support (or not) of your values; if you're not willing to sacrifice for them, how important are your principles to you?
- ✓ There are tradeoffs in your choices; what is the most important to you? How do you know which is your highest value in any given choice?
- ✓ Your personal background and experiences will influence the weight you assign to different elements.

Issues

- ✓ Support of local production
- ✓ Would you want your children working in these factories?
- ✓ Paying more for higher quality goods
- ✓ What affects you directly vs. what affects others around you

Rules and Regulations

- ✓ Your values and principles
- ✓ International standards
- ✓ Health codes
- ✓ The law in the US and each country where the product is manufactured

Questions

- ✓ Are the allegations about the manufacturing conditions for each product accurate/true?
- ✓ What values do you hold on child labor, health hazards, and environmental rules?
- ✓ Does it only matter if you know the people? If you saw videos of production, or knew the families, would that change your view?
- ✓ Can you reallocate among your resources or is the \$75 a hard line?
- ✓ Will your children recognize the differences? Will your children see *why* you chose the truck you did? Do you care? Can you find something else that would make a great present?

Available Resources

- ✓ News, media outlets, online information
- ✓ Friends, family members

Options

- ✓ Make a choice among the products
- ✓ Look at other product options
- ✓ Reallocate in your budget
- ✓ Other?