

Humane Society of the United States: Perception vs. Reality

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SYNOPSIS

Roger Redford was intrigued by a story he had just seen on TV about a horse trainer who routinely abused horses to enhance their performance in the show ring. The video was reportedly shot by an undercover representative of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). He routinely donated a fixed percentage of his salary to various charities, including the local humane society. He wondered if he should redirect some of his donations to HSUS. Before he donated to a charity, he always did some research. The case reports the research he did before making a decision about supporting HSUS. Specific questions he asked himself include: Did HSUS support worthwhile causes? Was HSUS utilizing resources in a manner he felt comfortable or would animals be better off if he donated to another organization? What would happen if HSUS were successful in achieving its mission?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this case are to:

1. Develop criteria for judging the worthiness of a charity
2. Evaluate specific actions of HSUS to determine if they are appropriate
3. Identify sources of information about a charitable organization
4. Evaluate whether or not they believe a charity is worthy of their donation
5. Identify steps donors can take to assure their resources go to a worthy cause

APPLICATION

The case is most appropriate for courses in ethics, social responsibility not-for-profit business, personal finance, and public policy.

KEY WORDS

not-for-profit, social responsibility, ethics, philanthropy

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