



Moonlighting

Description

Theme:

- In September 2022, Wipro fired 300 employees for taking up a second job at its rival companies.

What is Moonlighting:

- Moonlighting refers to taking up a second job or a side hustle in addition to a main full-time job.
- Moonlighting is not new. Several people do two or more jobs for financial needs or passion. For example, we often witness full-time teachers provide private tuition in the evenings after school hours. The pandemic forced many IT employees to work from home. This coupled with the rising gig economy drastically increased the incidences of moonlighting in the IT sector, which triggered the debate.

Why do employees moonlight?:

- Some people take up a second job or side gig for financial needs.
- A few people want to work hard and take advantage of the skill shortage when their skills are in demand. This can secure their future and also can help them in retiring early.
- The sudden layoffs by several companies especially during the pandemic caused fear in many employees. And hence several people took up side gigs or a second job as a safety net in case they are laid off.
- Moonlighting can help in upskilling. A few people want to learn new skills apart from what they are working on in their primary job. This can help them in developing expertise in their field. Some might get bored with monotonous jobs and hence take up second jobs to learn new skills and thereby make their days exciting.
- Some people moonlight to pursue their passion when the earnings from their passion cannot replace the salary from their main job. Several entrepreneurs take this route and



leave their jobs once they earn enough from their new ventures.

- Some are interested in more than one field (For example – IT job + Dancing).

Why several companies are against moonlighting:

- Companies fear about information and sensitive data theft and the possibility of sharing it with their rival companies.
- Some managers are worrying that the employees who moonlight may not be productive in their primary job due to fatigue and increased stress.
- There are also concerns about working for other companies during the office hours of my primary job.
- In general, companies provide several benefits to employees such as provident fund, health insurance etc. So, they feel it is unfair when their employees focus their energy and time on a second job, which doesn't provide any of those benefits.

Is Moonlighting legal?:

- If the contract with the employer mentions a clause, which prohibits taking up a second job, moonlighting is illegal. Otherwise, it is legal. However, stealing information from the company to share it with rival companies or to create a rival company is illegal.



Is moonlighting ethical?:

- People are divided on the ethicality of moonlighting. Some companies are of the opinion that moonlighting is unethical. Some say that it is ethical.
- Tech Mahindra CEO C.P. Gurnani supported moonlighting. Recently, in August 2022, food-delivery platform Swiggy announced a 'Moonlighting policy' to allow its employees to take up other jobs after work hours. Whereas, several companies such as Wipro, and Infosys said that moonlighting is unethical. Infosys announced that the company would allow gig



work with prior approval.

Effect of moonlighting on day job:

- The fatigue and stress may affect the productivity of employees who moonlight.
- By upskilling through moonlighting, employees can enhance their contributions to the primary job. This will be a win-win situation for both employer and employee.
- As per a study published by the Academy of Management Journal in 2021, moonlighting can provide a sense of control and motivation, which can improve the productivity of employees.

Conclusion:

A moonlighting policy to ensure the employers' confidentiality and the freedom of employees to explore other opportunities will be a win-win situation. With the rise of the gig economy, more and more people may opt for moonlighting. So, to adapt to the change and retain talent, companies should make peace with moonlighting. Moreover, companies need to compensate their employees well, provide overtime pay, and provide opportunities to upskill to prevent their employees to search for those things at other places.

Your Turn...

What's your take on Moonlighting? Express your point of view through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

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References:

- [Moonlighting under the lights can be beneficial for everyone involved](#)
- [Should IT companies make peace with moonlighting?](#)
- [Sunlight on moonlighting](#)
- [The moonlighting drama](#)
- [Changes in job market demand an ethical moonlighting policy](#)

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