

# Law and Order

Legal and ethical considerations make up only 5% of questions on the test, or about five or six questions. So get familiar with these terms and situations and breeze through the questions.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest occurs when an organizer or someone in a position of trust has competing interests that make it difficult to fulfill her duties impartially. Even if there is no evidence of improper actions, it gives the appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence. It may also be a conflict between competing duties such as when an organizer works with one client and is compensated for the work by another.

Example: An organizer is helping a client with a clothing closet. The client has been known to offer the organizer items that she is choosing to give away. The organizer urges the client to give away a blouse, hoping she will ask her if she would like it for herself.

Example: An organizer sells items on eBay and makes a 25% commission. She does this to help clients. The organizer urges the client to sell a designer dress rather than giving it to her daughter so that the organizer can make a profit from the sale.

Example: A manager hires an organizer to work with a subordinate to get the office organized and neat so the desk is clear all the time. The organizer finds that this isn't the best solution for the client's organizing style. The client needs some items on the desk as a reminder system. The organizer's duties are in conflict.

## **Confidentiality**

Organizers who take The CPO® exam agree to keep the confidences of their clients, that is keeping the organizing and anything else a client says or does a secret (including disclosing the name of a client) unless the client consents to allow disclosure.

Example: An organizer works with the CEO of a large corporation. To maintain confidentiality, she tells others upon arriving she is going there to assist with a project they are working on rather than disclosing the organization issue.

Example: Barry's boss Shirley hires an organizer to help him with time management. Shirley asks the organizer how Barry is doing. Before answering, the organizer asks Barry if he is comfortable with her sharing information with his boss and to what extent. The organizer even has Barry sign a statement confirming that he will allow the organizer to discuss his situation with the boss.