

Used Car Case

Your Dodge Neon has been a lemon ever since you bought it in 1997. The dealer took care of the problems for the first 36,000 miles. The last two years have been a major headache. While nothing major has broken, it seems that the car always needs something fixed. First it was the radio, then shocks, then struts, and then the air conditioner. Two months ago, the door latch failed, and then the windshield wipers quit. The last time you took it to the garage was because the rear seat belt would not hook. You have become increasingly frustrated with the car and with the multiple times you have taken it to the garage for repair. The car looks immaculate, not a scratch on it. In fact, it only has 52,000 miles on it because you have discovered that it is less stressful riding your bike to work. The dealer has urged you to trade for a newer, more reliable car, but he won't give you much for the car if you trade.

So you decide to sell the car yourself. A single mother with two small children responds to your classified ad. She is in desperate need of a car that she can afford. She is impressed with the condition of the car and complements you on how well you have maintained the car. You readily agree with her assessment that this car is a "cream puff". She inquires about its working condition and you acknowledge that everything is in working order (or it was the last time you drove it). You are afraid that if you disclose everything that has gone wrong with the car, no one will buy it. When she asks why you are selling the car, you mention that you just want a new car, and that you've had your eyes on a new SUV. She asks if she can test drive it and you secretly pray that it doesn't quit during the test drive. Two days later she shows up back at your house with her two little children and pays you for the car. Was this an ethical business decision? Why or why not? Please explain. Please focus on the ethical principles and your decision making process.