**Problem:**

Joe has been working a lot of hours. Not only does he need a break, but he also worries that his studies are suffering. Midterm exams are coming up and Joe has a research paper due. There never seems to be enough time to study on weekends since he works on Saturdays. It is tiring to come home at night after a long day of work or after night classes. With June pregnant and working full time, Joe worries about not being at home to help with household duties. He feels he hasn’t been as involved as he needs to be in looking after their daughter, Betsy.

Adding to his frustrations, there have been problems at the customer service desk. Not only is he dealing with difficult employees like Tina Tumultuous, but the team leader position for the customer service desk is still open. At the same time that he is advertising to fill the position and conducting interviews, he is working two jobs – his own and the vacant position. Jim Talent has been after him to fill the position.

Jim has also been talking to the managers about improving customer service. The level of service has suffered in recent months which translates into reduced revenues. Usually patient, Jim has been pushing lately to turn things around. He does not dictate the precise hours his assistant managers must work but the expectation is that, for now, they will put in extra time. Although Jim has honored Joe’s need to leave work early on various days to attend class, Joe is sensing growing impatience.

Now does not seem like the time to ask Jim for a reduction in work hours-say, from sixty five hours to fifty-at least for the next month so he can catch up on studies and deal with his family situation. But he must nonetheless ask.