

9-2 Ethics in Communication

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Each business has an established Code of Ethics. These ethics are for the managers, executives, and employees. The purpose of having a Code of Ethics is to reinforce moral principles as it relates to having professional behavior. It is intended to keep all employees consistent in knowing what the organization stands for (Redstone, 2013). Although the purpose behind having a Code of Ethics is important, it is not easily followed. Communication leaders should have their own ethical make-up before entering into one with an employer. With practice there are benefits and without them there are consequences in which all may suffer.

According to the Josephson Institute, there are twelve ethical principles that an effective leader should have. The number one practice in ethics is having honesty. Honesty goes a long way as it establishes trust with your employees. It allows them to feel comfortable knowing that they are represented under no deception and selective omissions (Josephson, 2010) Employees need to know what they are in for in their job responsibilities and what to expect to receive in return. Honesty is synonymous with integrity. This is the second ethical principle on the list that consists of doing the right thing regardless of the pressures to do otherwise (Josephson, 2010). During a hiring process of a new employee, a board of directors from human resources would meet to discuss potential applicants. All but one agrees to sign-off on bringing in a new hire because they are Indian. Although the prospective employee meets all required specifications, a representative wants the board to deny the applicant for an equivalent that is no more experienced but possesses a special conflict of interest. Does the board rule against the opposing board member or deny the applicant? The deciding factor between discrimination and having integrity is all in the board and their professional means of handling the situation. This is an anecdotal example of how leaders should adhere to good ethics.

Leaders in journalism and mass media are important and also more specific to global communication. Journalists have to be neutral and bipartisan when engaging in international reporting. There are numerous cultural differences that need to be identified before reporting so you don't offend anyone by being stereotypical. The ethical principles surrounding this practice would be accountability and respect for others. Having respect for others regardless of race, sex, and national origin coincides with the Golden rule, treat others that way you want to be treated (Josephson, 2010). These concepts are also essential and relevant to the other example mentioned earlier. In global communication, Journalists are executives alike should work against being too patriotic and take on a variety of diverse resources to provide an international perspective (Ward, 2005).

Wal-Mart has been known to show lack of compassion to their employees. A member of ways has been due to the low salaries they are paid by the employer that doesn't equate to the amount of extensive work that takes place. Since compassion is an important ethical practice, it is important to investigate a specific case when Wal-Mart failed at their compassion from a woman that was struck in an accident. 52-year old Deborah Shank was left brain-dead and in a wheelchair after a semi-trailer collided with her. The trucking company provided her with \$700,000 in medical expenses and the \$417,000 was put in her trust fund by her husband. However, Wal-Mart sued the Shank family for the remaining balance feeling entitled to the amount since their health plan was covered by Wal-Mart. The family was left to pay with Medicaid and social security payments for the rest of her care (Hynes, 2011). It was only after the corporation received a massive up-roar that they may reverse the decision.

Businesses have to monitor their employees and themselves when conducting their attitudes in the workplace. It can be a huge public relations setback for companies for unethical practices that take place. Having Integrity is the center point of following all other ethical practices. Accountability for one's actions is also an important tool that can either sustain a company or cause potential lawsuits for cases such as discrimination, race, national origin and etc. The company's Code of Ethics should always be a second set of security for the principles that you come in with upon working.

References

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