

IS BUSINESS ETHICS AN OXYMORON ?

OR IS IT SIMPLY AS COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT AS IT SEEMS ?

Before each of the following statements, fill in a number.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = not sure 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Your final decision in each case will depend on all the circumstances. But indicate how far you agree with the attitude and orientation underlying these statements. Are they basically wrong-headed, naive, and unrealistic, or do they indicate a tough-minded, sensible, and ethically correct direction for business to take?

____ 1. Business's responsibility extends beyond the letter of the law and the economic bottom line; it is more than "give in order to get"; it cares about the people it affects, and should respond to the expectations that society has of it. For example, a bank should assist a deteriorating neighborhood rather than red-lining it, or itself closing down thereby hastening the deterioration.

____ 2. When self-interests are in conflict, look to society to decide. Consider, for example, a U.S.-owned tourist hotel in the Bahamas. Should it be staffed with highly qualified U.S. help or with less-qualified local help? Let the Bahamanians decide.

____ 3. A U.S.-based company need not enforce the same occupational safety standards on its foreign subsidiaries as it does on its U.S. operations. Rather, local working conditions should be the norm.

____ 4. Even at the risk of losing a one-shot sale, I would not lead an unsuspecting customer to believe the truth of the exaggerated marketing claims of the computer software he is intending to buy from me.

____ 5. An engineering director lost a contract by informing a buyer that the scheduled delivery dates could not be met. As his superior, I should reassure him that his intention was good and that he did the right thing.

____ 6. A corporation planning manager from Maryland acquires an Ecuadorian company which uses two sets of books to evade income taxes. He plans to continue the tax evasion on the grounds that this is a local standard practice.

____ 7. I'm a salesman earning about \$25,000 per year. I pad my expense account by about \$2,000. My boss knows this and says nothing, so I feel morally justified.

____ 8. My company has discovered a revolutionary and secret film-developing process in the highly competitive photography industry. Our chief rival offered to hire me and the secret at double my present salary. I'm accepting. Money's the name of the game and both companies know this.



OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.