

ETHICS vs. PROFITS

Social Dilema

Ethics in Business Management is the basic need with paramount importance. Like *Total Quality Management (TQM)*, *Ethics* is a factor that cannot be ignored. *Ethics* is a watch word for all business activities —including behavioral aspects of the management personnel going down to the level end-users. It must be integrated with the formulation of policy and preparation of strategy for catching the fancy of end-users in a highly competitive global market flooded with similar consumer goods.

Corporate governance, with the all pervasive fundamental fibre of *Ethics*, will certainly go a long way in developing good moral character and inculcating a sense of social responsibility in the organization. If business organizations go on maximizing their profits without caring for social aspects related to ecosystem and health hazards; the entire atmosphere is bound to be vitiated making this planet unfit for us all to live in.

It is now sincerely being felt that any long-term proposition devoid of essence of ethics is bound to prove a failure. It is a time honoured principle that business without caring for commitments regarding quality and schedule for delivery can never be expected to flourish. Such firmness in ethical conduct of business creates goodwill and credibility that counts heavily in capturing the market, whether local or global. But it takes a long period of untiring assiduous effort to gain confidence of consumers and it starts dwindling delicately even on seemingly little jerks to the ethical chord. The first task of *Business Management* is to create a harmonious ethical atmosphere congenial to the concept of promoting collective capabilities of all the people working for the organization.

The men who matter in formulation of strategies must feel free to take decisions in consonance with the ethical aspect of the matter. Initiation of suitable rewards for such ethical behaviour will make it more effective.

Business organisations have some social obligations also and their decisions and operations should conform to primary needs and interests of society as well. It entails an ethical approach to every

segment of trade activity. Ethical practice will ultimately lead to a healthy development of business management.

The greed for more and more profit, ignoring the norms of social and ethical responsibilities, is all pervading and touching the limites globally. We must realize that all actions from the business angle will consequently affect society. Naturally, economic considerations cannot prevail upon social responsibilities, which will ultimately create a void and segregation from ethical bonds that keep us cohesive to tune harmony with nature, environment and society as a whole.

The objective of every business activity is to be "socially profitable." This leads to the conclusion that business organizations should be assessed in terms of their total contribution to society and not merely on fiscal achievements. Ethical atmosphere, if maintained, in an organization is bound to bring healthy practice and moral confidence in workers to make united effort to obtain such value added goals. Profit greed has led to indiscriminate felling of trees, wanton destruction of natural habitats, dumping toxic wastes in water bodies, rivers and streams, polluting and poisoning them with pesticides and industrial afflux together with atrocious pollution of air we breathe in. This glooming phenomenon has made this planet putrified just because business has so far kept itself callously unconcerned with its ethical and moral responsibilities.

We must not forget, business organizations have to work and pursue their policies towards achieving profits without harming the ethical and social symmetry.

The concepts of social responsibility make us realize that business is different from a purely profit-oriented institution. It involves an socio-economic relationship for a healthy, though gradual, growth. This ethical approach to progress is the need of the hour for business management. It is high time we pause and ponder over the precarious plight pervading the entire universe owing to wanton plunder of this planet by business organizations the world over, in pursuit of their single objective of maximizing profits. Business management can no more be a mute spectator to the erosion of ethical values from commercial activities. Let us rise to the occasion and contribute our mite to rebuild the thinning moral and ethical base and stick to the onerous task of fulfilling social responsibilities.

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