

Meetings on the topic of business ethics

In small groups, choose three topics from below to talk about in one roleplay meeting.

- You feel that your company is doing well at making itself into a more ethical business, and want to prove that to customers, potential investors, etc
- A company in Vietnam is making counterfeit copies of your products
- A company with a reputation for asset stripping has offered a 50% premium on your share price to take over your company
- A competitor has contacted you to suggest price cutting is hurting everyone's profits
- A local charity has asked your company if staff could help with their work
- A manager has complained about backstabbing by another manager
- A social enterprise has asked your company for some investment
- A supplier in Sri Lanka has been accused of using child labour
- A union has started approaching your employees at a non-unionised workplace
- An employee has accused their manager of workplace bullying
- An online influencer has made untrue claims which could hurt your brand image
- An outside PR firm has offered their services at a special introductory discount rate
- Around 5% of customer complaints are about false claims on your website
- Gift giving in your country is considered bribery by your Swedish parent company
- It is impossible to do business without paying some bribes in a country which you have identified as a good potential market
- No one in the company works exclusively on CSR
- No one uses the internal whistleblowing system
- Suppliers demand payment within one month, but your competitors pay up to two months later anyway
- The government is proposing a bill which would make it especially difficult for your company to do business
- The green policies that you decided on last year are making your products uncompetitively expensive
- The union claims that there is still lots of unpaid overtime being done, despite previous efforts of the company to deal with it
- The unions are complaining about the gap in pay between the average salary and executive compensation
- There are animal rights protesters outside one of your premises
- There are female middle managers but no female executives
- There have a small but significant number of injuries due to one of your products
- There is a consumer boycott of your company by environmental groups
- There is a danger that your checks on people's visa statuses could seem like discrimination
- There was a sudden move in your company's share price before the recent announcement of your new product
- There was some local community resistance before you opened your most recent regional HQ
- Two employees have accused an executive of sexual harassment
- You are thinking of moving your headquarters to another country, but a full impact assessment including all the stakeholders would take at least two years
- You have an 85% market share, so discuss how to exploit that position without indulging in unfair business practices

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- You have evidence that some of your competitors have found a way around paying the legal minimum wage
- You need a policy on employing family members of existing members of staff
- You're sure someone's passing company secrets to a competitor, but don't know who
- Your accounts department has discovered a way of avoiding tax that is perfectly legal but might get bad publicity if the public heard about it

Roleplay a whole meeting to decide on action plans for those three things. Start from greetings at the beginning of the meeting, small talk, getting down to business, etc, try to agree on an action plan, then smoothly end the meeting with more small talk, goodbye, talking about the next contact, etc.

Share one of your decisions and see if other groups agree that it is best solution.

Ask about anything above which you don't understand, discussing what you can do in that situation each time.

Without looking above, join words on the left and right of the same section to make collocations related to business ethics.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. asset | blowing (system) |
| 2. back- | bribes |
| 3. social | bullying |
| 4. child | claims |
| 5. non- | enterprise |
| 6. workplace | firm |
| 7. untrue/ false | giving |
| 8. brand | image |
| 9. PR | labour |
| 10. gift | stabbing |
| 11. paying | stripping |
| 12. whistle- | unionised workplace |
| 13. green/ environmental | assessment |
| 14. unpaid | boycott |
| 15. executive | compensation |
| 16. animal | harassment |
| 17. consumer | holders |
| 18. sexual | members |
| 19. (full) impact | overtime |
| 20. (all) stake | policies/ groups |
| 21. unfair business | practices |
| 22. (legal) minimum | rights (protesters) |
| 23. (employing) family | tax |
| 24. avoiding | wage |

Check above.