

# ETHICS & INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS IMPORTANCE FOR THE RECRUITING PROCESS

Second Edition

## JOB APPLICANTS

(guide for companies and  
recruiters on reverse)

### Benefits of Working for an Ethical Employer:

- ▶ Ethical companies treat employees fairly and with respect.
- ▶ These organizations create an environment where employees aren't pressured to compromise company standards or their personal values.
- ▶ They often provide training and guidance to assist employees in making ethical decisions.
- ▶ Firms with proven reputations for highly-ethical behavior attract other principled, qualified employees—this self-selection creates a reinforcing “norm.”

### Practices Job Seekers Should AVOID:

- ▶ Misrepresenting one's background or skills in interviews or on a resume.
- ▶ Accepting on-site interviews when they are unlikely to accept an offer from the prospective employer.
  - ▶ Misrepresenting job seeking status (e.g., number of offers).
  - ▶ Exhibiting unprofessional behavior (e.g., making disparaging comments, fraternizing with recruiters, or posting personal or inappropriate information on social media platforms).
  - ▶ Reneging on an acceptance of a job offer—either ask for an extension or say no.

## FACT:

The 2011 Corporate Recruiters Survey\* asked 1,509 employers in 51 countries what primary traits and abilities they sought in MBA candidates. **INTEGRITY** ranked in the top three of 18 identified attributes, along with professionalism and initiative.

### Questions You Might Ask

#### Companies and Recruiters:\*\*

- ▶ Is there a formal statement of ethics (whether a code, values statement, or credo)? How is it distributed, reinforced, and “lived” by the organization?
- ▶ Are employees at all levels trained in ethical decision making? Is ethics an integral part of leadership development programs?
- ▶ Do employees have multiple channels available to express their concerns confidentially and without fear of retaliation? How does leadership encourage pushback and “getting bad news early?”
- ▶ How does top management set the tone regarding ethics and values?
- ▶ What types of community service are available? Is participating in service a part of the organization's culture?



Notre Dame Deloitte  
**Center for Ethical Leadership**



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\* Conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council in cooperation with the MBA Career Services Council and the European Foundation for Management Development.

\*\* Adapted from Treviño, L. K. & Nelson, K. *Managing Business Ethics: Straight Talk About How To Do It Right*. 5th ed. NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2011. Answers to some of these questions can be found on organizations' websites. Only pick a few to ask during interviews.

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## COMPANIES & RECRUITERS

(guide for job  
applicants on reverse)

### Benefits of Hiring an Ethical Employee:

- ▶ Ethical employees are ambassadors for the company, reinforcing a values-driven culture.
- ▶ They safeguard the organization's reputation, saving it from costly regulatory violations and loss of revenue through fraud and abuse of resources.
- ▶ Such individuals demonstrate higher levels of employee commitment and engagement.
- ▶ They have a broader sense of responsibility and can be trusted to exercise good judgment in challenging situations.

### Ethics Questions Recruiters Should Consider Asking Job Applicants:

- ▶ Describe an ethical dilemma you have faced as a student or employee. How did you identify it, and what steps did you take to resolve it?
- ▶ Tell me about a time when your integrity was tested.
- ▶ What does "business ethics" mean to you?
- ▶ Who would you first consult if faced with a workplace or personal ethical issue?
- ▶ What personal values guide you in making ethical decisions in your life?

## FACT:

The 2012 Global Management Education Graduate Survey\* asked 6,292 graduate management students at 136 business schools worldwide to rate the importance of 25 attributes or selection criteria related to the jobs and companies they were considering. One of the highest was corporate culture, defined by "high ethical standards, emphasis on community and inclusion, fit with organizational culture, and organizational climate."

### Recruiters Should AVOID:

- ▶ Withholding or misrepresenting relevant information in extending a job offer (e.g., salary, relocation allowance, start date, job title, etc.).
  - ▶ Glorifying or exaggerating job responsibilities or inaccurately portraying the growth potential of a position within the company.
    - ▶ Exhibiting unprofessional behavior (e.g., fraternizing with applicants, harassing them, or making inappropriate connections via social media).
    - ▶ Revoking a job offer or placing unrealistic deadlines or pressure on candidates to make a decision.
    - ▶ Tying a signing bonus to an exploding job offer (e.g., failing to allow applicants to participate in the entire recruiting season, or giving applicants less than two weeks to decide on an offer).
- ▶ Using high pressure interviewing tactics on campus or during site visits.



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\* The Global Management Education Graduate Survey is a product of the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), a global nonprofit education organization of leading graduate business schools.