

Building a Corporate Reputation of Integrity: A Discussion Guide for Executives about Communications and Ethics

Ethics Resource Center, 2011

Objective

This resource was created to provide executives with incentives to promote ethics within their organizations and suggestions as to how to make sure ethics programs are supporting the company's reputation.

Key Points (The statistics below were taken from various surveys)

- Executives estimate that 63% of companies' market value is due to their reputation
- 75% of customers will actively avoid doing business with a company they don't trust, while 85% of customers will go out of their way to buy from a company they do trust
- Challenges facing companies include branding their product, effectively handling social media, and using public relations appropriately
- Discussion Questions
 - What level of importance do stakeholders assign integrity when they describe their company's reputation?
 - What schemas do we need to break so customers and employees give their company high scores for integrity and ethics?
 - In what ways can ethics officers help the communication team tell the corporate story to key audiences?
 - How can ethics/compliance draw from communications expertise to help employees understand the importance of compliance?
 - Does the company have a senior executive to champion ethical performance and provide a powerful voice for integrity from the top of the organization?
- Action Steps
 - Conduct an assessment of stakeholder perceptions

- Conduct an assessment of employee perceptions
- Conduct training of staff
- Identify champions to help set a tone from the top
- Develop a strategy for messaging that breaks schemas

Conclusion

Companies must work hard to maintain their reputation, as social media has drastically increased the information available to consumers regarding a company's practices. With reputation and branding so important to customers, organizations must make improving these aspects of their business a focal point in addition to their normal operations.

<http://www.ethics.org/files/u5/integrity.pdf>