

# Better Business Bureau E-Bulletin



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With  
Trust

## Making the Case for Business Ethics

By Karen E. Klein

Smart Answers December 30, 2008

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**In a state where corruption abounds, laws must be very numerous.**

Tacitus -AD 55  
Roman  
Philosopher

Your employees know if you treat customers right. Because the great majority of jobs in this country are in small businesses, it's critically important for the entrepreneur to place as much emphasis on ethics and integrity as it is for the CEO of a large business.

If the dry cleaner, the restaurant owner, the small manufacturer, or service company is cheating its customers, mistreating its employees, and cutting corners, that creates a big problem. The basic fabric of America is strong, and I believe most people out there want to do the right thing. But the bad news is that as a culture we've slipped in terms of being able to define what the right thing really is.

It's critically important for business leaders to set good examples. If a CEO gives lip service to integrity but behaves in a different manner, that hypocrisy undermines any attempt to inspire the troops. If your knee-jerk reaction as a business owner is to ask: "What can we get away with here?" that's a message your employees will pick up on. As a leader you have to say: "Look, it's not a matter of what we can get away with. The question is what is the right and honorable thing to do."

Read the complete article at:

<http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/dec2008/>



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"Whether you think that you can, or that you can't, you are usually right."

Henry Ford 1863-1947

Shop Local Businesses

# The Ethics of Being a Tightwad

By Bruce Weinstein, PhD

You can't blame the American consumer for feeling frustrated. After all, we're caught on the horns of a dilemma: We're supposed to continue spending our rapidly dwindling dollars to keep our faltering economy from collapsing altogether, but we're also told to save as much money as we can to prepare for an uncertain future. What to do?

I'll argue here that placing the economy ahead of our own needs isn't merely misguided. It's unethical. Here's why. There is something fundamentally wrong with

an economic philosophy that requires people to spend money so that the economy will remain strong. Not only does such an outlook weaken our ability to save, but it is tied to the false idea that happiness is to be found in the acquisition of material goods.

There is never a good time for a financial crisis, but this one happens to coincide with our most festive season, when we feel especially obligated to shop and spend. Surely we can temporarily overlook the value of saving and show our family, friends, and co-workers how

much we care about them by giving them lavish gifts, right? There are lots of ways to say "thank you" or "I value our relationship" without spending money. How about spending time with someone? Making a small donation in their name?

You have no reason to feel guilty for not giving holiday presents during our financially shaky times. More than ever, we have to count every penny—but we should still give of ourselves to those who matter most.

## International Company's Name Being used In Scam Targeting Business Advertisers Nationwide

**September 30, 2009 Bryan/College Station, TX** – The Better Business Bureau has been made aware of a scam using the Timken Company's UPS account to ship fraudulent checks to businesses Nationwide in exchange for services not rendered.

The scam artists are contacting businesses found on Craigslist, newspaper, and online advertisements about hiring the company to perform services.

The scam artist then sends the victim company a fraudulent check before services are performed and tells the company accounts payable has made a mistake and instructs the business to cash the check, keep \$500, and Western Union or Money Gram the rest to a UPS box.

The Better Business Bureau offers the following advice to business that advertise on Craigslist, in newspapers, and online...

Get as many details from the consumer as possible before you begin work.

Investigate checks that appear to come from someone other than the person that hired you to do the job.

Never cash a check from anyone that tells you to keep some of the money for your inconvenience and wire the rest back.

Check with your local Better Business Bureau if something just doesn't seem right.

[www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)

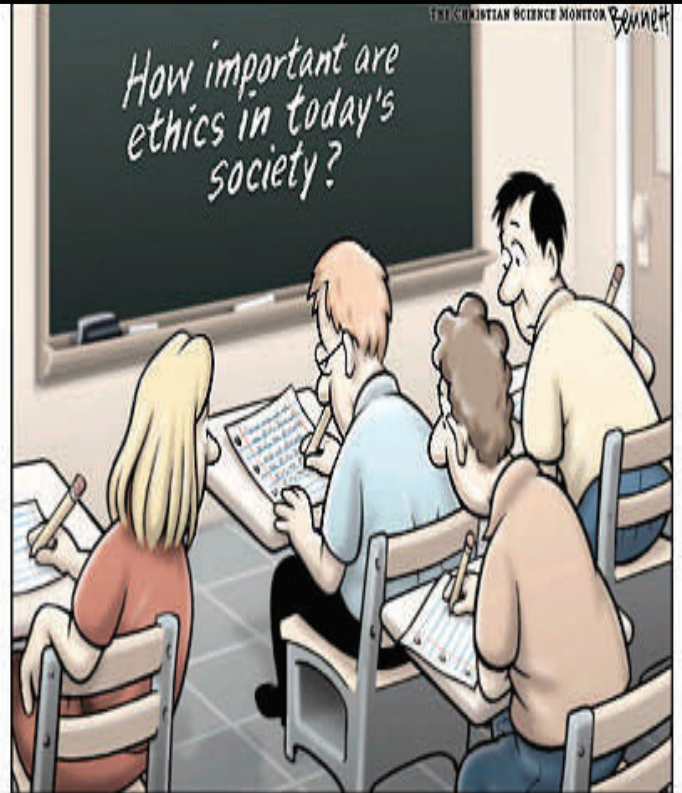


# Defend Your Business Against the H1N1 Virus

**Encourage employees who are feeling sick to stay home.**

**Remind employees to practice good hygiene. Good hygiene will greatly help prevent the spread of germs and viruses throughout the office.**

**Prepare a business continuation plan. 50 percent of businesses that don't have a continuation of operations plan never reopen if forced to close.**



## Will your privacy be compromised online?

(CNN) -- The 2010 Census is nearly under way, but don't expect an e-mail from the U.S. Census Bureau asking you personal questions in its head count of America. If you do get one, it's a scam.

"Like most large organizations, we have seen e-mail scams and phishing attacks that cite the U.S. Census Bureau," agency spokesman Neil Tillman wrote in an e-mail.

The Census Bureau stresses that it will not request personal information from you via e-mail, such as PIN codes, passwords, Social Security numbers, credit-card numbers or other financial account information.

**"A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both."**

**Dwight D. Eisenhower  
1890-1969**



**Profit in business comes from repeat customers, customers that boast about your product or service, and that brings friends with them.**

**Edward Deming**

**Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who kept on trying when their seemed to be no hope at all.**

**Dale Carnegie**

## Regaining lost customers

October 7, 2009 by Ken Dooley BusinessBrief.com

Losing old customers is always upsetting, but it can be especially devastating in today's economy. There's a proven process for getting them back. Unlike a new prospect, old customers know your company and must place some value on your product or service or they wouldn't have become customers in the first place. You can build on that: Most customers stop buying for one of three reasons, according to a survey by the Jay Abraham Group:

1. Lack of contact by the salesperson
  2. A problem or unsatisfying experience.
- Better deal from a competitor. Lack of contact is the number one reason customers stop doing business with salespeople, according to the survey. They resent being taken for granted while salespeople concentrate on finding new business. The same survey showed that former customers will return if approached in the right way. Here are some tips to share with your salespeople to get a lapsed

customer back:

- **Accept responsibility.** Show customers you're prepared to do what it takes to win them back. This approach tends to neutralize any anger or hostility the customer is feeling.
- **If there's a problem, ask how to fix it.** Often customers don't demand all that much. Sometimes it's as simple as an apology. **Do something now.** It's better to make amends on the spot than to come back later with a solution.

## Service is Like Applying for a Job

All the public relations, marketing, branding and advertising won't help you grow your business if, when the customer comes in, they don't feel like what you marketed matches us with their experience. This may seem like a no-brainer to most of you, however, when you are

in your business every day, sometimes we spend more time figuring out how to bring in more new business with innovative pricing or sales, than we do in looking at how we fail to meet our current customer's expectations.

### How do we improve our customer service ?

Dress for success in your industry.

Remind employees how to meet and greet customers.

Pay attention to customers.

**Remind your employees of the value of a smile.**

**Smiling makes you look younger.**

**Smiling relives Stress.**

**Smiling improves your mood,**

# BBB Cautions about Census Scams

Over the next 18 months, 1.4 million U.S. Census workers will be surveying the population of the country to gather demographic information about everyone living here.

As the 2010 census process begins, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises citizens to cooperate carefully in order to avoid becoming a victim of census-related scams.

Citizens are required by law to respond to the U.S. Census Bureau's requests for information. Census data will be used in allocation of more than \$300 billion in federal funds as well as in determining the number of Congressional representatives that each state is allowed.

"Most people are understandably cautious about giving

out personal information to unsolicited phone callers or visitors, but the Census is an exception to the rule," said Larry Lightfoot, President/CEO of the BBB of the Brazos Valley and Deep East Texas "Scammers know that the public is more willing to share personal data when participating in the Census, so they take advantage of this opportunity by posing as government workers to get access to personal financial information."

The BBB and local media have gotten calls from citizens who have been approached by census workers, but are uncertain about giving out personal information.

**The BBB offers the following advice to help distinguish between bona fide Census workers and con artists:**

- U.S. Census workers will have a **Census identification badge, a handheld device and a confidentiality notice.**
  - **Caution: never invite strangers into your home.**
  - U.S. Census workers will not ask for your Social Security number or any information about bank or credit card accounts.
  - U.S. Census workers will not ask you for money or say that you owe money.
  - U.S. Census workers will not harass or intimidate you.
  - U.S. Census workers will not contact you by email – only by phone, by mail or in person.
- For more information regarding the 2010 Census, visit the U.S. Census Bureau online at**
- [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**The invisible hand of the free market always moves faster and better than the heavy hand of government.**

**Mitt Romney**



## Better Business Bureau

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## The Better Business Bureau

### Mission

The BBB's mission is to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust. The BBB accomplishes this mission by;

1. Creating a community of trustworthy businesses.
2. Establishing standards of marketplace trust.
3. Recognizing those businesses who are role models of marketplace ethics.
4. Denouncing and reporting substandard marketplace behavior.

## Before You Go

**"Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws."**

**Plato (427-347 B.C.)**