



**JEFF HAVENS**

# **ETHICS** VIDEO SERIES

**PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK**



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# INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to the only ethics training that will not make you wish you were in a full body cast. This stuff is usually about as exciting as a thimble, which I think we can all agree is not a terribly exciting toy. Indeed, in the history of humanity, no one has ever said, “As long as I have my thimble, I shall be filled with joy.” Likewise, no one has ever gotten excited reading about ethics – until now.

Now I’m not just saying this training program is going to be awesome because I wrote it – and I’m not just saying it’ll be awesome because I happen to be the most ethical person alive, which you’ll soon see is 100% true. I’m saying it because ethics

training is fraught with opportunity for hilarity. You see, pretty much the only way to teach you how to do things the right way is to spend some time showing you how to do things the wrong way. And trust me, that stuff is hilarious.

This training is going to cover four key ethical areas:

- **How to handle gifts, favors, and other things that are sometimes called bribes**
- **How to deal with the always-exploding minefield known as conflicts of interest**
- **How to address (and avoid) issues of workplace discrimination and harassment**
- **How to talk about company property and information, and who to talk about it with**

Now I know you're still skeptical. You're only reading this stupid training manual because somebody else is forcing you to do it, and you probably think the videos you're about to watch are going to be as boring as watching someone else watch paint dry. But I guarantee you'll like it. I guarantee you'll laugh a few times. And although I won't actually guarantee this, I'm pretty sure that you'll laugh so hard at least once that a tiny little booger flies out of your nose. That's how awesome this training is going to be.

And to prove it, let's show you the kinds of questions you're going to have to answer.

# QUESTIONS:

- 1.** Name (or assumed name if you are currently fleeing from the law):
- 2.** Level of enthusiasm about being subjected to ethics training
  - a. Wish I were dead
  - b. Wish I were wounded in a non-fatal way that would simultaneously get me out of this stupid training and also give me access to some really fun painkillers
  - c. I'll survive, but only because I've given up all hope of having a happy life
  - d. Excited because this gives me a great excuse to not to do anything else productive today. "Gosh, boss, I wish I could have worked more today, but I had to go that ethics training, you know?"
  - e. Enthusiastic about the opportunity to learn more about ethics and use that knowledge to make other people feel inferior to me
  - f. Something different (if so, please explain – I feel like I covered pretty much everything in the other choices):
- 3.** Most unethical thing you did as a child. (I'll tell you mine – I stole a bunch of baseball cards from a grocery store. I didn't suffer any moral agony, by the way; I wanted them, and I took them. But my mom caught me, and she made me return them. And apologize! My mom was mean.)
- 4.** Your current understanding of what ethics is and why it's important.

See? That wasn't so bad, was it? And it's about to get a whole lot more amazing.

# JEFF HAVENS

## SPEAKER & TRAINER

*"Most Ethical Person Alive"*





# PART ONE





# **GIFTS, FAVORS, AND OTHER THINGS OCCASIONALLY CALLED BRIBES**

# **EPISODE 1**

## **WHY EVEN BOTHER WITH ETHICS TRAINING?**

And now you know why we're doing this ethics training and what my tongue looks like. Seriously, could you possibly be any happier right now?

Anyway, there are basically two reasons that ethics training exists:

1. People think that being ethical is bad for business. If you ever served watered-down lemonade at a sidewalk lemonade stand in an effort to slash costs and maximize profits, you'll know what I'm talking about.
2. People want to do things just because we want to do them, and we don't care if other people like it. And don't even pretend that you've never acted this way. I know you occasionally stole toys from your brothers or sisters so that you could play with them. That's the reason Santa Claus stopped bringing you presents. It's not that he isn't real; it's

that he eventually got tired of you being such a bad boy or girl and crossed you permanently off the list.

People act in one of the above two ways all the time – and if nothing bad ever came from it, then there wouldn't be any need to have this conversation in the first place. We'd just live in a profit-at-all-costs, do-what-I-want world, and everything would be glorious and filled with sugar and honey and bacon bits and every other delicious condiment you can think of. But alas! There are occasions when the above ideas are incorrect, hence the whole ethical dilemma thing and the need for this training.

Bottom line – being ethical can improve your bottom line, both in terms of actual dollars and in terms of the environment you're able to create with your colleagues.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES

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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Don't worry! These are easy, and they'll make sure that you actually pay attention to what you're supposed to be reading (and staring at). I'd love to not have to put questions and short answers in here, but unfortunately I do. We're only at the beginning of our ethics training. That means you are currently not fully ethical, which means you can't fully be trusted yet. So get to work!

## **1. Why should we even care about being ethical?**

- a. Because doing the right thing is intrinsically important
- b. Because sometimes you get caught when you're unethical and get fined a lot or even have to go to prison, and even the nice white-collar prisons are still pretty crappy
- c. I kind of think that both answers are OK. Can I circle both answers please?

## **2. Have you ever chosen not to buy things from a particular business for ethical reasons? What business (or businesses), and what were your reasons?**

**3.** What is one instance relating to your particular job where you think there is absolutely a right way to do things, and a wrong way to do things?

**4.** Can you think of an instance in which the ethical decision also turned out to be the best business decision? (Hint: the answer to this question is "Yes I can!" You just need to think long enough to pick one of those examples and write it down here.)

## **EPISODE 2**

### **THE REMARKABLY OBVIOUS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GIFT AND A BRIBE**

Congratulations! By virtue of having seen what you've just seen, you are now more moral than ever. You also know why you shouldn't buy presents for someone before they say they'll go out with you. Helpful tip in case you're single.

The distinction between 'acceptable gift' and 'unacceptable bribe' is easy to answer just by asking yourself the following questions:

- **Is the gift or favor being offered in conjunction with an expectation to do something in return for the person offering it?**
- **Is the value of the gift or favor excessively high?**

If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then you should not accept whatever it is they're trying to give you. And the answer to the first question is always a yes. If



someone does something nice for you, they always want something from you. That doesn't mean they're being malicious or deceitful or anything negative. A lot of people do nice things simply because they like doing nice things. But they always hope that they'll get nice things in return, whether that involves love, attention, money, luxuries, or anything else.

Which means the real question you have to ask yourself is whether the gift they're offering you is above an acceptable amount. If you ever have trouble figuring out the difference between 'acceptable offer of paying for dinner' and 'unacceptable bribe of stolen gold ingots,' ask around. There's a person at your company who knows what your company's guidelines are. That person probably has 'supervisor' or 'HR' or 'ethics' or 'king' in their job description.

But sometimes your company's ethics king will break their legs in a heli-skiing accident or take a vacation to Papua New Guinea. So if you need an immediate answer and can't find one, go with your gut (or remarkably well-kept washboard stomach, whichever one you have). If you even think that a particular offer comes with strings attached, then you should probably turn it down, even if it turns out that you were imagining the whole thing. Because let's be honest – you weren't imagining the whole thing.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION NOTES

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# SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Can you distinguish between gift and bribe? Let's find out!

**1.** Which of the following statements are true regarding acceptable and unacceptable gifts? Circle as many as you like!

- a. If a transaction takes place at night in a dark alley somewhere, it is acceptable.
- b. If the gift-giver is expecting something in return for giving you something, it is unacceptable.
- c. It is no big deal if the 'gift' in question affects your ability to make an objective decision.
- d. If a client hands me a brown paper bag stuffed with 10s and 20s, I see no reason not to treat myself to a steak dinner.

**2.** One of your employees offers to let you use their speedboat for the weekend. You really really want to, and you know that your employee really really wants you to give them a promotion for which you're obligated to consider at least three candidates. What should you do? (You know the answer! Don't make me shake my head in sadness at you!)

**3.** A vendor you frequently work with is coming to town for the weekend, and she offers to take you and your family to a basketball game. Or a vineyard, or an amusement park, or a dolphin-riding excursion, or an underground cage fighting tournament – whatever. The point is, is it ethical to take her up on it, and why?

**4.** A vendor you've never worked with is coming to town and wants to take you to dinner and talk about their products. Is it ethical to accept? What if they want to take you on an expensive sleigh ride through the city while showering you with jewelry and handmade alpaca furs?

**5.** If you ever don't know what you're supposed to do in a given situation, who can you ask for guidance? What if that person is trapped in a mine somewhere?