

LESSON «THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRITY AND ETHICS FOR BUSINESS»

JusTeam team (Veritas law clinic of the Black Sea National University named after Petro Mohyla)

LESSON GOAL	Explain the concepts of «Integrity» and «Ethics in business». Explain to the audience the importance of these concepts in work and everyday life.
AUDIENCE/NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:	students of grades 8-9/20-30 people
DURATION:	45 minutes
FORMAT:	classes (online or offline).
EQUIPMENT:	projector.
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LESSON PROGRESS.



INTRODUCTORY PART

Good afternoon, we are very happy to be with you today and teach you this lesson.

My name is Yuliia, and Diana, Anastasiia, and Tetiana will also teach the lesson with me. We are conducting this lesson as part of the Street Law Contest; a technique that helps understand how laws and ethical norms work in real life.

So, before we start the main part of our lesson, we would like to get to know you a little better!



GETTING TO KNOW STUDENTS

- *If you want, say your name and share one word that you associate with business. For example, I will say: responsibility.*
- *I am grateful to you for such activity.*
- *What do you think the words ethics and integrity mean in your daily life? (hints)*

- *Do you think a business should be honest with its customers?*
- *What can be the consequences of unfair treatment?*

You have identified the key points very well! Today we will embark on an interesting journey through the world of ethics and integrity. This concept is probably already familiar to you: you have repeatedly heard about academic integrity in teaching, the rules of fair play, or ethical behavior in various life situations.

Presentation for the lesson:



But today we offer to look at these topics from a different angle. Imagine that ethics and integrity are not just rules, but a powerful tool for achieving success, strengthening trust, and building a future based on justice and mutual respect.

We'll cover a topic that applies to everyone, even if you don't have your own business yet. Because each of us is a consumer, a future employee, or perhaps an entrepreneur. Now imagine: you go to a store where you are always greeted with a smile, served efficiently, and the product meets your expectations. Nice?

Today we will learn why such things are not just an accident, but the result of following ethical principles. Today we will tell you more about why ethics and integrity are important for business and how it affects society. After this lesson, you will understand how these principles work in real life, and you may even have ideas on how to apply them in your future activities.



DISCLOSURE OF CONCEPTS

And now we invite you to plunge into the interesting and informative part of the lesson.

Let's summarize ethics and integrity in business.



Ethics is a system of moral principles that determines what is right or wrong in the behavior of a person or organization. It includes honesty, responsibility, respect for others, and fairness. Ethical standards help businesses build trust between partners, customers, and society.



Integrity is to do the right thing, even when no one is looking at you.

Let's consolidate these concepts with quotes from famous people.

You can see a photo of Bill Gates on the slide of our presentation, raise your hands, who knows this name. Bill Gates is the co-founder of Microsoft, and in an interview he said that «business must be honest. This means that you need to take care of your employees, customers, and the community.»

In this quote, we can emphasize the importance of an ethical attitude towards all participants in the business process. Honesty in business helps establish trust and long-term relationships with customers and employees, which are key to a company's success.

The author of the next quote, Amanda Green, is an expert in business ethics. In one of her works, she pointed out that «Ethics in business is not only about doing the right thing, but also thinking the right thing.»

Thanks to this definition, we understand that ethics includes not only actions, but also thinking. Ethical thinking helps to avoid potentially negative consequences for the company and society.

Oprah Winfrey - American TV presenter, actress, producer, journalist, writer, entrepreneur, feminist said: «Be honest in all your affairs and you will always be confident that your actions will meet your principles.»

With these words, she emphasizes the importance of compliance of the company's actions with its principles and values. Honesty in business ensures strong reputation and trust among customers and partners.

Now on the slide you see associative words with such a phenomenon as bluewashing or is someone familiar with this concept?

Bluewashing - the word comes from a combination of «blue» and «whitewashing» (bleaching). Blue is associated with the United Nations (UN), which uses it in its logo and symbols. Bluewashing is when companies or organizations use their affiliation with the UN or other international organizations to create an image of social responsibility and environmental sustainability, but do not adhere to these principles in real-world activities. This is a kind of form of «whitewashing», when attempts are made to improve their image by using connections with reputable organizations.

Now I will bring to your attention **examples** of the bluewashing concept.

Clothing giant Primark has repeatedly been publicly condemned over child labor scandals.

A fast fashion retailer can offer very low prices because he hires workers from the world's poorest countries, such as India and Cambodia, and pays them very low wages in terrible working conditions.

Our next example will be related to the global company Nestlé. Still, as a child, you tried Nestlé's Nesquik cocoa?»

In 2022, Nestlé faced criticism on social media for using child labor on cocoa plantations. This led to the disclosure of other unethical practices of the company, in particular, related to the marketing of baby milk, when they advertised quality milk, although in 2008 chemical impurities were found in it — melamine, which leads to serious health problems in children, including the formation of kidney stones.

Therefore, in some of the most popular social networks today, like Tik-Tok, we can see how users are calling for abandoning the products of this company.

The latest example of bluewashing concerns the huge cosmetics brand L'Oreal, which has also been accused of modern slavery in its supply chains. BBC News posted a video on its YouTube channel about children in Egypt picking jasmine flowers at night for L'Oréal perfume. How old do you think the children were?

In the upper part of the picture (at the presentation) we see Amazon (this is a huge online store, like AliExpress, only American) in the form of a man with some kind of sticker also we see a damaged container, it depicts dissatisfied warehouse workers, working in terrible conditions during the pandemic.

Just below, we see a man sticking a container with a sticker describing Amazon's actions, such as giving away T-shirts that say «Thank you» for joining our team.

The meme emphasizes that the company tries to cover up the poor working conditions of employees with small gifts, so as not to improve working conditions.

Here we see the largest international chain of fast-food cafes Starbucks in the form of a man who deviates from raising the barista's salary so that it corresponds to the subsistence minimum.

And then he happily chooses the option «Introduce a new corporate slogan — 'We are here as a family'».

The meme mocks the fact that the company, instead of a real salary increase, is trying to create the illusion of support and unity among employees through new slogans.

A character with a surprised expression on his face, and an inscription that Coca-Cola is launching a campaign to reduce ocean pollution, and then is shocked by the reality that it remains one of the biggest pollutants in the ocean - by bottles.



GAME

Dear friends, and now I suggest you play a very interesting game, are you ready?

I suggest you divide into teams based on the calculation from 1 to 3

The game will consist in each team's receiving task cards, i.e. with relevant situations in which an ethical dilemma is described, which you should familiarize yourself with and make an appropriate decision through team discussion whether this meets ethical standards in business or not.

After the team makes a decision, you must choose a representative *or representatives* of the team to voice it and discuss it in front of other teams. I would also like to emphasize that we have a time limit, so we need to think quickly and efficiently. So, let's get started!

1. Students are divided into teams — I ask each team to be divided into different parts of the class, so as not to get confused.
2. We distribute the cards.
3. We mark the time for reviewing tasks and discussing them.
4. If necessary, we answer questions asked by students.
5. We note that students have one minute left to discuss.

* We start the presentation in front of the teams.

Dear students, time is up. Who wants to be the first to present your solutions?

7. Finishing the presentation.

Thank you for your answers! You are doing great; we are sure that in the future you will become cool entrepreneurs with a clear conscience and reputation.

8. Discussing the results.

Clarifying questions for students if they are not active:

1. Please tell me what feelings guided you when making your decision?
2. What can you add to the performances of opposing teams?
3. Are you interested in this topic as a future activity?
4. What decision would you make based on the decisions of other teams?
5. Can you now say what you think is ethics and what is the opposite? Please give some examples.
6. Please tell me, did you like our game? If so, which part you liked best?
9. We end the interactive exercise.

Thank you, dear students, for your active participation and such great feedback. We should already move on to our last part of the lesson.

Today we have explored what integrity and ethics are in business, and why these concepts are important.

To summarize our lesson, I want to suggest that you briefly write on the stickers:



«What is ethics?», «What is integrity?» and «What is bluewashing?»



REFLECTION

And now we will «exchange opinions» with you. In my hands I hold a key that symbolizes honesty, responsibility and ethics — these are the qualities that open the door to a successful and fair business. While you are holding it in your hands, share your thoughts and impressions about our lesson.

(Exchange of views continues)

You did a great job with this task!

I thank each of you for your activity, interesting thoughts and courage to share your ideas. Today, all of you have taken a big step towards understanding how ethics shapes not only business, but also our lives.

Ethics is what builds trust and opens up new opportunities. So, remember that every action you take matters, and by adhering to the principles of integrity, you create not only a successful business, but also a fair society.

LESSON ANNEXES:

