

The responsibility project



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RUNNING HEAD: The Responsibility Project Individual Ethics Essay Paper

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The Responsibility Project

Out of the short films on the Responsibility Project website, the film chosen for this paper was the one on Greyston Bakery. Two issues facing the Greyston Bakery are external societal pressures and the bakery's legal and ethical obligations. The reasons for the underlying issues for the organization and employee decisions concerning the two matters are also explored in the film. Possible solutions to end conflict are given in the film as well. The Greyston Bakery is not alone in facing the outside pressures when deciding on legal and ethical issues. This example shows how an organization can attempt to solve these diverse problems that face many businesses.

Geyston Bakery is a bakery that contributes to the community through profits (Liberty Mutual 2012). A popular item sold is the brownie which is used in the social enterprise help a social and profit mission (Liberty Mutual, 2010). One problem facing the bakery is the open hiring. The bakery uses an open hiring to hire individuals in the community. Any one that applies, no matter an individual's past history, will receive an open position in the bakery. People are only turned away if the bakery is already fully staffed. Open hiring can impact the community in a positive way. All individuals in the community can get job experience, learn a marketable trade, and receive a paycheck that goes back into the community. Lower employment rates can result from this practice. The community can prosper as members of the community get back on their feet through a job.

Another issue is the funded community development. Profits from the bakery are given to the Graceland Foundation (Liberty Mutual, 2010). In turn, the

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Graceland Foundation helps out community programs. A few of these programs are housing, healthcare, and childcare in the community. (Liberty Mutual, 2010). The programs that Graceland Foundation provides help the local community, not some far away community. The bakery gets support, but receives more business due to the programs supported. Childcare helps both parents be employable. Housing programs can provide shelter for families. Healthcare will allow for preventative measures that will save the community in medical bills for issues that can be corrected. Greyston Bakery is helping their community be a better place and setting an example for other businesses to help their communities.

The actions of open hiring and supporting community programs are relevant in the way organizational and personal decisions are made in the bakery.

These goals are the primary focus of the ethics and legal obligations on the bakery. A problem with these two goals is time and resources. Without enough time invested in these programs, the outcome might be failure.

Resources are another issue. If resources are not managed properly, then a profit will not be made. If a profit is not made, the bakery will fail. The bakery failure would impact the community in a negative way. The job rate would be lowered and the programs will not be supported.

Any personal or organization decisions that create change can be risky. Risks can have a positive impact, or on the other hand, a negative impact.

Decisions regarding the bakery will impact the open hiring process and the community support. Risks can be good for the business. For example, expansion can be good if the expansion creates a better or larger profit. On the other hand, a personal decision by a manager to keep the bakery open despite warnings of the hourly pay rate ratio showing a loss can make profits

dwindle. All business decisions can be good or bad, no matter how risky. However, no or limited change at the bakery can stagnate the business. This type of decision would impact the open hiring and community support programs. The bakery's success is what funds these two projects. Decisions must be made to create the most successful bakery that is possible. A look at the external social pressures also must be undertaken. Every organization has ethics that are shaped by external social pressures. External social pressures are legal, community, media, and anything outside the organization that will shape organizational ethics. Community pressure on the bakery could come from the actions of the employees at the bakery in regards to customer service. If an individual comes into the store and complains to the manager about a rude employee, the manager might make the decision to reprimand or even let the employee go. Since the bakery helps the community, the employees should represent that ideal. Legal external pressures come from government regulations. Taxes, the number of people occupying the bakery at one time, fire laws, health department codes, and so forth are some of the laws the bakery must follow. If the bakery does not follow these laws, fines or lawsuits can be filed against the bakery. This would definitely put a damper on the two goals of the bakery's community support.

The film about the bakery shows that there is a relationship between the ethical and legal issues facing the bakery. If the bakery does not abide by the law, severe consequences can be levied. Business can be lost if the bakery does not follow the laws, but a set of internal ethics as well. Internal ethics can be ever changing, but must be made in order to run the business more efficiently. For example, the bakery can have the ethic of giving a

receipt to every customer in order to show every transaction. This is not a law, but can be considered to right in order to have transparencies in every transaction. Customers can look at the receipt and see exactly how much they are charged for every item. While legal issues are not flexible, an organization's ethics can be. Ethics can be changed to fit the organization. Not every organization has the same ethical goals. For example, Subway lists ingredients for people to be healthy. This bakery does feel this is an issue. The Greyston Bakery was reviewed on the Responsibility Project website. This film showed the two goals of the Greyston Bakery were open hiring and various community programs. In order to complete these goals organization and personal decisions are made. External social pressures, legal, and ethical issues impact these two goals. External pressures like laws, media, and the community impact the bakery's organizational ethics. Decisions made by the organization and personal employees are guided by the organization ethics. These ethics are shaped by the external social pressures. The bakery has to have these ethics in order to complete their two goals. The bakery's success depends on the ethical choices made.

References

Liberty Mutual, (2010). Greyston Bakery. Retrieved September 9, 2011 from: <http://responsibility-project.libertymutual.com/films/greyston-bakery>