

White collar and corporate crime

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Why does white collar and corporate crime tend to go undetected, Or if detected not prosecuted White collar and corporate crimes are crimes that many people do not associate with criminal activity. Yet the cost to the country due to corporate and white collar crime far exceeds that of " street" crime and benefit fraud. White collar and corporate crimes refer to crimes that take place within a business or institution and include everything from Tax fraud to health and safety breaches. Corporate crime is extremely difficult to detect for many reasons. One major reason is that many people do not realise a crime is being committed as corporate crime is often seen as a victimless crime. At face value this may seem to be the case but if you look deeper you will see that this is not true. Every year the FBI estimates that 19, 000 Americans are murdered every year compared with the 56, 000 Americans who die every year from occupational disease such as black lung and asbestosis (Russell Mokhiber 2000). Deaths Caused by corporate crime are also very indirect so it can be very difficult to trace the problem to the corporation. Another reason it can be difficult to detect corporate crime is that directors within a corporation are unlikely to report the criminal activity of their colleges for the fear that it will hinder their own career success and could even lead to them losing their jobs. Within a company illegal practices could be seen by many as the " in thing" and the people working within that environment may not see what they are doing as morally wrong. The issue of the lack of media coverage of these types of crimes must also not be overlooked. Many newspaper editors would chose to run a story about a violent assault or brutal murder over a story involving a corporate crime. This is a major factor contributing to the publics ignorance or corporate crime. Even if

corporate crime is detected it can be very difficult to prosecute and when prosecuted is often only very lightly punished. Many cases of corporate crime are punished with fines of only a few million pounds which is often far less than the cost of recalling a certain product or abiding by the correct health and safety or environmental regulations. Many large businesses can afford the very best legal aid available and it can be very difficult for an individual to take on a large corporation. Not only can a corporation afford the best legal aid they can also afford to carry out their own research in an attempt to prove their case. A good example of this was when Ford submitted false evidence in court about the amount of pressure needed to activate the hand break on their cars when it was found that the Ford cruise control system was faulty. This led to Ford winning their case. The general public is not aware of the cost of corporate crime, and there are thousands of cases that go undetected. Of the crimes that do go detected only a few are prosecuted and an extremely high percentage of those cases are punished very leniently. The vast majority of prosecutors do not have the resources, know-how, legal authority and most importantly political drive to secure a corporate crime prosecution.