

Whistleblowing practices



Whereas whistleblowing is important to the public interest, it can bring governments and companies down and ruin lives and finances of many people, if not practiced well. Whistleblower should, therefore, know the best practices he/she should follow to prevent such harm. Motivation is a key factor to consider in whistleblowing. Whistleblower has to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. In some cases, whistleblowers go to the public for financial or professional gain. Whistleblowers should ensure that they are not driven by financial gain, public recognition or revenge. They should ensure that they have checked and complied with all whistleblowing regulations before blowing the whistle.

A claim becomes a fact only when there is sufficient evidence which shows that an act was committed. It is a good practice for whistleblowers to ensure that they have collected the detailed evidence that can prove their claims. Enough evidence strengthens claims and makes the public more likely to believe the claims.

Although, whistleblowing is good, it can at times cause harm and insecurity to people. Some acts or claims can cause the security threats to people or a country. Whistleblowers should, therefore, evaluate whether their actions can present serious harm or cause insecurity to people. If an action can cause serious harm or insecurity, whistleblowers should find other ways of solving the problem, instead of going public.

It is the ethical responsibility of whistleblowers to remain pure and not be involved in any corrupt acts, by which they are blowing the whistle. This will make them stand out in future impunities they will be reporting. The public

may not trust individuals who blow whistles, in cases they had been implicated before.

Whistle blowing, being critical to whistle blowers, should be practiced anonymously. This prevents threats and humiliations that whistle blowers face. A good example of an anonymous whistle blowing website is Wikileaks.org which allows people to place their information anonymously. In November 2010, for example, Wikileaks revealed information that was embarrassing to America's states. The information came from over two hundred and fifty thousand leaked Embassy cables (Hobby, 2011). The whistle blowers of such information have not been known.

It is important to protect the rights of people who are alleged of corruption or illegal practice, when blowing the whistle. This is because even if they are proved innocent, they suffer psychologically due to the process of investigations and public awareness. Though, they may sue whistle blowers for the damages, they may not completely avoid the stress they may be going through.

Even though whistle blowers strive to disclose the corrupt deals in both public and private sectors, there have been obstacles that prevent successful unveiling of the truth. Regulatory institutions, so far, have not received enough resources and manpower to manage the whistle blowing cases successfully. This makes the cases to either take long to complete or remain unattended. Moreover, regulators who handle such cases are either inexperienced or do not understand the value of whistleblowing. They, therefore, do not give such cases much attention needed.

Regulators of whistle blowing cases are often appointed by politicians. This makes it possible for politicians to manipulate whistleblowing cases and hide the truth. They would obstruct cases that may jeopardize their political ambitions and finance and support cases that would increase their popularity while demining their opponents. Furthermore, whistle blowers face high risks while blowing their whistles. Most of the whistles blown are done by subordinates to their bosses. This poses the potential risks of job loss, demotion, or even death to whistleblowers.

Conclusion

Whistleblowing can cause both harm and good to both whistle blowers and the general public. Whistle blowers, therefore, remain in dilemma in determining whether to blow their whistles or not. Though, there are laws protecting them, they should follow the best whistleblowing practices or reforms that save organizations and protect public interest.