

Businesses are completely incompatible with virtue ethics assignment

[Art & Culture](#)



Finally, the last approach is the social contract theory that is based on the ideas of John Rawls. This approach suggests that employees and other stakeholders are given a voice as to how a business operates. Some businesses are seen as ethical because they have an ethical code and they follow it. The most common example of a business that is ethical is The Body Shop. This business is seen as ethical because it is concerned with treating the environment and its employees well. On the other hand, some businesses can be seen as unethical because they use child labor as a form of cheap labor, a modern example of such a business is Primark.

Virtue ethics suggest that for someone or something to be morally good and virtuous they have to possess the good virtues. In the business world the virtues that are suggested to exist are courage, fairness, honesty and compassion. Aristotle said if we or a business have these virtues then we achieve our purpose. In many ways businesses are seen as compatible with virtue ethics. The virtues provided are guidelines as to how people and businesses should aspire to be. This means that a framework is provided to try and help guide people to be virtuous, and to ensure a stable and positive relationship between the employer and employee.

Virtue ethics unlike utilitarianism for example doesn't concentrate on the amount of good that can be produced within a society but how people can achieve that good in order to become better people. Kant says 'In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.' This means that even if a person thinks of doing good towards another person they are seen as being unethical and therefore not following through with the virtues. Another reason as to why businesses are

<https://assignbuster.com/businesses-are-completely-incompatible-with-virtue-ethics-assignment/>

seen as compatible with virtue ethics is because out of all the ethical theories, virtue ethics is the most modern.

This means that with the modern world of business virtue ethics is most parallel, this is because it is adapted to the modern day. Also, as the virtues are present in modern times as well as in the past, employers will know what traits to have when dealing with their employees. Virtue ethics is also concerned about achieving the good (the supreme good) is very important for an individual but also for the community, but it's more important for a community to achieve the good rather than an individual.

This could mean that businesses are seen as compatible with virtue ethics because if a firm seeks to achieve the good within a community then the maximum amount of good is created within a community, which means it is better. There are many areas of concern within business ethics, whether it is weightlessness, globalization or the relationship between employers and employees. In the case of weightlessness, the virtues are very important. If the whistle-blower holds good traits and holds the good virtues then they can be seen as a reliable person to trust.

Some of the virtues that a whistle-blower should possess are honesty, strong sense of justice, integrity and compassion. If the whistle-blower uses these virtues then they are seen as reliable and it means that they did what they believed was right. On the other hand businesses can be seen as incompatible with virtue ethics. Firstly, the main issue that everyone can see is that virtues can't be applied to a physical matter such as a business as it is more agent based as it is inside the individual.

<https://assignbuster.com/businesses-are-completely-incompatible-with-virtue-ethics-assignment/>

This is seen as a weakness because the other theories such as Kantian ethics provide a firm basis and give specific duties that people must carry out in order to achieve the highest good. Also, virtues only provide a guideline which means that it's not specific. Virtues can be seen as a personal matter instead of a communal. This means that virtues are something that an individual themselves should seek to achieve, it can't be applied to a wider community because everyone has a different idea of what daemonic is. Some people, like Milton Friedman, live that a business only exists to make money.

This would mean that some firms wouldn't see the need to be virtuous as they believe that if the business is making a profit then that is all that matters. This could be seen as unethical because in order for a firm to make a large profit they might exploit their workers and treat them unfairly. This would mean that the business owners or employers wouldn't be using the virtues and can be seen as damaging the working environment. To conclude, I believe that businesses can be seen as compatible with virtue ethics because if we seek to gain virtues within the business world then we can improve the relationships between employers and employees.

There are theories that are seen as more incompatible than virtue ethics, for example, utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is seen as incompatible because it only considers the needs of the majority. This means that the needs of the majority consumers are considered over the needs of the minority of exploited workers. This is seen as unethical because even if the workers are

exploited utilitarianism would say its right because the majority are pleased with the outcome.