

Downsizing prices
due to lowered
production expenses.



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Downsizing has both positive and negative aspects.

In most cases I believe that the business benefits most. When downsizing occurs a company is able to cut costs and reorganize, in essence becoming more efficient. This newfound efficiency in the long run benefits everyone because companies are able to provide quality products at lower prices due to lowered production expenses. Certainly the employees who are dismissed in the process of downsizing do not immediately (if ever) benefit from the process. Having your employer view you as expendable is a tough blow to take, both to the ego and to the pocketbook. Being laid off as a result of downsizing can have its benefits, however. I always try to view things from an optimistic perspective.

A door closing can be a sign that a person should look in another direction, because most likely another opportunity is awaiting. This is not always the case, as we saw in the events that occurred in conjunction with GM's offshoring jobs from Flint, Michigan to Mexico. People in Flint were left with seemingly no options toward which to turn. The decision to downsize would be an extremely difficult one.

Circumstances surrounding the company would be vital considerations, as downsizing should not be taken lightly. Many people are affected, and proper steps should be taken to ensure as seamless of a transition as possible. I agree with points brought up in chapter three of *The Heroic Enterprise*, one being that services should be provided to newly unemployed people to help them stay on their feet. Morale of remaining employees must also be maintained, providing assistance with what could possibly be additional

workloads and responsibilities due to the department downsizing. Private business can and does have a role in public education.

It is definitely in the best interest of private companies to get involved with school systems, as this will provide better qualified human capital for them in the future. If people get the education and training they need while in school, companies will have less training to worry about (and pay for themselves) in the future. Private schools must obtain their own funding since it is not provided by the state, as in the case of public schools. It does not make sense, however, for companies to only contribute to these private sectors. Only focusing on private schools severely limits the potential labor pool that will exist when these children grow into working (at least hopefully working) adults. We know there is a great discrepancy between the educations provided to students in most private schools, versus those in public school. As we saw in the PBS special about Ohio public schools, however, there are also drastic differences between public schools.

These extremes need to be lessened. It would not be appropriate to take away from those children who are exposed to great possibilities, great tools and a plethora of available activities in their school environments. There must be something done to bring the bottom level schools up to par, though. Children in poor schools, exposed to decrepit buildings and measly materials are being shorted in terms of their education.

This in turn has a detrimental effect on their future possibilities. Children who begin with great potential learn that they are not valued enough to be well educated in poor school systems. The big question here is funding. In most

cases the dollars spent per pupil in suburban schools are much greater than the spending per pupil in inner city or rural schools. The American way implies that all people are created equal, so how can this be? Why does one child deserve less than another because of where they live? The answer is that they do not, that all children deserve the same treatment and opportunities. Unfortunately, making policy to solve this problem seems to be a difficult task.

One final issue raises questions in my mind as well. What do we do when spending is increased and the results still do not follow? This may be the case in looking at Columbus public schools. Funding has been increased and graduation rates are still much lower than desired. The problem may be bigger than funding. Money in education is extremely important but other equally, if not more, important factors play into the situation.

It takes everyone to educate a child: parents, teachers and administrators. I am not saying that good parents, teachers and administrators are not present in the poorer school districts, but I do think that the best qualified candidates for these jobs are going to be drawn to better equipped areas. It is a double-edged sword of a problem. Business is concerned with health and safety. The question is, to what extent are they willing to go to promote it? When do other business interests intervene and become more important? The health and safety of a company's employees should be a top priority, for without them, business of any kind certainly could not succeed. One positive, showing that business does care about health and wellness, is the statistic from chapter six of *The Heroic Enterprise* that "fully 90 percent of useful drugs come from corporate research." The majority of the drugs, therapies and

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medical devices that alleviate pain and suffering in the world are a direct result of business funding.

Private industry is the largest source of funding for medical research (more than half) and this says a lot about the intentions of these businesses.

With the costs of health care and medications rising so, however, it is hard for individuals and families to see and appreciate the role of private businesses in the field of health. Good benefit packages can be hard to come by. Some people can't find accessible providers in their area.

A procedure deemed necessary by many may be rejected by insurance companies as non-necessary. In light of problems like this it is hard to appreciate the efforts that private businesses make to support the health of American citizens. There are a number of progressive corporations that put the health and well-being of their employees at the forefront of the priority list. Providing opportunities for employees to be healthier takes the willingness of the employer to take risks in the market. I think it is wonderful that socially responsible corporations are making strides to better society as a whole.

The pharmaceutical industry, for example, many times gets a bad wrap. It seems to the general public that exorbitant profits are made on drugs that barely cost a penny per pill. When you think about it though, research that develops new life-saving drugs is outrageously expensive as well.

Pharmaceutical companies are not non-profit organizations, and it takes quite a bit to recoup research and development costs. I for one am willing to pay a bit more at the drugstore if it means that there may be a new cancer fighting

drug on the market in twenty or thirty years. If my dollars could in any way help find a cure, then I am for it.

The issue of health insurers, investor-owned hospitals and private managed-care companies seeking profits at the expense of patient care was discussed in *The Heroic Enterprise* as well. This debate may be very valid, but my experiences with for-profit facilities has been nothing but wonderful. My husband recently had surgery at a for-profit surgery center and I was awed at the care we both received. Not only was he taken care of, but throughout the process I really was too. It was a much different atmosphere than my experiences with traditional hospitals.

I do not intend to imply that care there was bad, but it just was not as comprehensive. The workers, although nice and competent, always seem overworked. This was not the case at the surgical center, and it seemed to me that much good is coming from the profits of that company.