

Briefing paper:
corporate culture,
image, identity,
reputation



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Corporate Culture, Image, Identity, Reputation CORPORATE CULTURE,
IMAGE, IDENTITY, REPUTATION Microsoft Corporation Redmond, WA 98052-
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20th October 2012

To: Microsoft Communications leader

From: PR Manager

Subject: Policy Consequences of Campaign Contributions

Microsoft Corporation is faced with a rapidly changing landscape that has seen the entry of new digital information technologies, which has created a playing field of radically democratized information access and unprecedented transparency in the production and dissemination of information (Bolton, 2007). Recently, the question pertaining to whether political contributions can be considered functional bribes has come up. With increased monitoring of campaign donations has come a question regarding the true nature of campaign donations. According to conventional wisdom, donors expect something for their contributions; therefore, Microsoft employees have to be careful when giving contributions. This is the premise of this memo. However, congressional studies have failed to link contributions to favors. Employees should contribute to like-minded candidates. Of course, some candidates may choose to policy positions in anticipation of payoffs in contributions. In this case, there is no real distinction between accepting like-minded voter money and accepting bribes. However, studies show that an incumbent's voting record is hinged on personal ideology, party, and constituent interests.

The question then becomes; if contributions do not aim to buy favors, then why is so much spent on politics? Microsoft Corporation spends
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approximately ten times on lobbying as its employees spend on political contributions. The reason I talk about employees is that the U. S. campaign regulations do not allow corporations to give to political campaigns since 1907. Therefore, contribution from Microsoft refers to contributions from employees of this corporation. Political expenditure by Microsoft employees have tended to be a fixed proportion of the corporation's net revenue and are not dependent on policy agendas. This should clear the air on contributions being a bribe equivalent.

Therefore, Microsoft employees should indulge in campaign contributions in the knowledge that they are not akin to bribes. The reason for this is that federal laws limit contributions to candidates for federal office. Influence peddling and bribery are considered illegal, and; therefore, money exchanges for campaign promises cannot be enforced. Additionally, since legislation is collective, mass bribery would be needed in order to influence the legislative policy. In addition, competing interests in elections make the costs of attempted majority buy-out, too expensive.

In the year 2008, total campaign spending for federal elections amounted to approximately \$3 billion, with contributions to candidates for individuals accounting for around 80% of this total. Employees should view political contributions as a primary motivation geared towards supporting candidates of like-minded ideologies and not attempts to influence their positions. Additionally, the contributions from our employees will add to the driving down of the contribution's margin value and thus hamper any attempt to influence politicians.

Legal and political decision makers have for a long time considered the role of political contributions to be self-evident. Consequently, this has resulted in <https://assignbuster.com/briefing-paper-corporate-culture-image-identity-reputation/>

pervasive and widespread misconception about the likely benefits and costs of organizational reform proposals for campaign finance. However, political institutions, just like economic institutions like Microsoft have been subjected to scientific enquiry, with the consensus being that money does not have undue influence on the determination of policy outcomes or elections.

Therefore, campaign finance reforms at other organizations have been exaggerated. Honesty and candor from the managers at Microsoft will allow us to make the right decisions as we move forward, rather than distorting of the facts (Collins, 2011).

Thus, we have a strong belief that the recent reforms in campaign finance aimed at business organizations are ill informed. Exposure to advertising for campaign purposes allows voters to be more knowledgeable concerning their candidate's position, which increases voter turnout and is a desirable form of marketing for our organization as sponsors. Finally, by giving contributions, the corporation's employees will be helping to increase voter awareness, as well as participation, which can only be good for the corporation's image.

Copy to;

David Seymour: Microsoft HR Manager

Karen Brady: Corporate Responsibility Department

Reference

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