

BUSINESS, SOCIETY & ETHICS

Prudence & Egoism

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

- Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*.

Questions

1. If you had to boil it down to one or two sentences, what does Rand claim is the purpose of your life? What is her argument justifying this?
2. While Rand does not specifically talk about business in this excerpt from *Atlas Shrugged*, this book and her other writing have been extremely influential on how many business professionals understand the purpose and goals of business. Based on your answer to the previous question, what might be the purpose of business according to Rand?