

# BUSINESS, SOCIETY & ETHICS

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## Business Law & Ethics

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

- Weinstein, B. (2007, October 15). If It's Legal, It's Ethical... Right? *Bloomberg Businessweek*. Retrieved August 16, 2016, from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2007-10-15/if-its-legal-its-ethical-right-businessweek-business-news-stock-market-and-financial-advice>.
- *Optional*: Cannon, C. (1996). Tylenol's Rebound. In T. Donaldson & A. Gini (Eds.), *Case Studies in Business Ethics* (4th ed., pp. 29–32). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall., C. (1996).

### Questions

1. According to Weinstein, why is ethics different from the law?
2. Why does Weinstein believe that we should live according to ethics?
3. Weinstein presents several examples of practices that are unethical but were once legal. What are these? Can you think of something that is currently legal but also seems unethical?
4. One possibility that Weinstein does not consider is whether something could be ethical but illegal. Do you think this is possible? If so, can you provide an example? If not, why not?
5. Weinstein mentions that in 1982, seven people in Chicago died from tainted Tylenol capsules (Tylenol has the same medicine as Panadol). How did Johnson & Johnson, the makers of Tylenol, respond to this? (For more details, see the optional reading by Cannon.) Why does Weinstein believe this shows that businesses should strive to go beyond merely what the law requires of them and be ethical?