

Business Beyond Borders

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

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 position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Donaldson, T. (1996, September-October). Values in tension: Ethics away from home. *Harvard Business Review*, 74(5), 48-62.
Optional: Zoepf, K. (2013, December 23 & 30). Shopgirls. *The New Yorker*, 58-67.

Questions

As you read, keep these questions in mind:

1. A royal decree in 2011 allowed women in Saudi Arabia to work in retail stores. The Hai'a (the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice) regularly prevents implementation of this decree because they believe it encourages immoral intermingling of men and women. (For more details, see the article by Katherine Zoepf.)
What does this reveal about the moral standards of Saudi culture when it comes to women working outside the home?
2. According to Cultural Relativism, right and wrong is solely a matter of social/cultural acceptance.
What reasons does Thomas Donaldson give for rejecting the application of this theory to business ethics?
3. According to Ethical Imperialism, right and wrong is objective, universal, and unchanging across all societies and cultures.
What reasons does Donaldson give for rejecting the application of this theory to business ethics?
4. What does Donaldson propose for businesses to ethically operate across multiple cultures? For instance, how should a business respond when there seems to be a conflict about moral standards (A) between two cultures or (B) within a single culture?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

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.