ETHICALSYSTEMS.ORG
Business Integrity Through Research

Who We Are

- Founded in March 2014 as a 501(c)3 non-profit research collaboration housed at the NYU Stern Business and Society Program

- The only collaboration of the leading social and behavioral scientists who are among the top experts in the world on designing ethical organizations

- A group with a shared conviction, backed by research, that good ethics is good business

- Dedicated to widely disseminating our findings (not keeping them proprietary) and providing open access

The Problem

Companies are increasingly the target of scrutiny for criminal conduct and ethical failures. Despite strengthening internal efforts to comply with legal and regulatory requirements, financial sanctions and compliance costs continue to impact the bottom line. Compliance departments have grown, but the headlines and the penalties don't reflect these investments.

At Ethical Systems, we believe that good ethics makes compliance easy. Research has shown that companies with an ethical culture have higher productivity, profitability, and attractiveness to talent. To profit from ethics, companies need to take a systemic approach and sustain their commitment.

At present, companies don't have easy access to evidence-based strategies and tools to achieve an ethical culture. As a result, they rely on common practices and anecdotal advice. Ethical Systems will change this. Through our collaboration with the leading researchers, Ethical Systems bridges a long-standing gap by connecting businesses with innovative solutions to make ethics easy.

Our Approach

- Break bottlenecks: Businesses need better access to quality, unbiased research on what works to improve ethical outcomes. Researchers need access to data to develop methods to help strengthen ethical performance in companies.

  We bring top researchers to companies to break this bottleneck. Through relationships such as the Business Ethics City Lab in Omaha, NE, we will create a replicable model for research in companies. Companies will benefit by maximizing their investment in a values-based culture.

- Set Standards: Our collaborative research process is developing standards for defining and measuring ethical culture in organizations through academically vetted assessment tools.

  By equipping companies with resources to strengthen their internal culture, Ethical Systems is a partner in improving their reputation and bottom line. Measuring the impact of an ethical culture is sometimes referred to as the "holy grail" of business ethics, and we have in place the right team to tackle this challenge.

- Convene key actors: Ethical Systems has become a leading voice in sharing research-driven ethics strategies. Our thought leaders and staff regularly speak at companies, associations and conferences to discuss ethical systems design and our work is widely disseminated through our website, newsletters, social media, and growing network of partners.

  Our bi-annual conference is an interdisciplinary opportunity to bring academics and business leaders into complementary discussions, serving as a bridge between these distinct communities.

Recent Press

Bloomberg

The goal of Ethical Systems…is to prod CEOs and working stiffs alike to ask themselves this straightforward question: "Why don't you follow your own values?"

The New York Times

Ethical Systems…is the first to pull together extensive research and resources on the subject of business ethics with the aim of making the vast trove available to schools, government regulators and businesses—especially their compliance officers.

Forbes

Ethical Systems…recently held a gathering of Academic and Business luminaries to discuss "Ethics by Design." Among the many dynamic conversations was exploring the role leadership plays in unwittingly promoting ethical misconduct in organizations.

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