

Organizational Wrongdoing

Organizational Wrongdoing is an essential companion to understanding the causes, processes, and consequences of misconduct at work. With contributions from some of the world's leading management theorists, past theories on misconduct are critically evaluated, and the latest research is introduced, expanding the boundaries of our knowledge and filling in gaps highlighted in previous studies. A wide range of unethical, socially irresponsible, and illegal behaviors are discussed, including cheating, hyper-competitive employee actions, and financial fraud. Further, multiple levels of analysis are considered, ranging from individual-to organizational field-wide processes. By providing a contemporary overview of wrongdoing and misconduct, this book provides solid and accessible foundations for established researchers and advanced students in the fields of behavioral ethics and organizational behavior.

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Organizational Wrongdoing

Key Perspectives and New Directions

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Foreword

In the 1987 film *Wall Street*, written and directed by Oliver Stone, the main character Gordon Gekko says “Greed, for lack of a better word is good. Greed is right; greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit.” This rationalization of wrongdoing – exemplified by Enron, Arthur Andersen, WorldCom, and so on, and some very recent examples as well (e.g., Libor rigging of inter-bank interest rates by banks, VW car emissions scandal) – makes this book a timely reminder of misconduct in the workplace and its consequences for individuals, businesses, and society. The volume editors, Donald Palmer, Kristin Smith-Crowe, and Royston Greenwood, have put together the latest research by some of the most prominent academics and scholars in the field, to highlight “a wide range of unethical, socially irresponsible, and illegal behaviors” engaged in by senior executives and others in a variety of organizations for personal gain, or to enhance their promotion, or to cover up their incompetence or lack of goal achievement, and so on.

The book explores some of the following issues: the limitations and imbalances of theory and research on organizational wrongdoing, workplace morality, market enablers to wrongdoing (an historical review), trust and mistrust, a boundaries perspective of professional misconduct, social networks and organizational wrongdoing, compensation and employee misconduct, the consequences of misconduct, the media portrayal of wrongdoing, and other very important topics.

Although business wrongdoing has been around since trade began, through the Industrial Revolution to the conglomerates of today, the “big data age” and media scrutiny have more quickly highlighted corporate corruption. Now that the light is able to shine on these events, we are more able to explore organizational wrongdoing and business ethics than in the past. This volume provides the science and informed debate on where we go from here in creating more ethical

workplaces. As Plato said, “there are not many very good or very bad people, but the great majority are something between the two.” We need to create more ethical organizational cultures for the majority.

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