

Original Version:

In my career as leader of a multi-national micro-lending institution, creating an organization in which ethics are central to organization's purpose will be likely prove to be one of the most challenging and personally important tasks that I will face. I will have to clearly define corporate ethical standards and instill them in my employees through training and incentives. I will also have to develop and refine a checks-and-balances system to ensure that corporate ethical standards are adhered to.

Another challenge I will prepare myself to tackle will be negotiating the differences between my own clearly established moral codes and those of the emerging markets in which the firm will operate. To do so, I must be able to quickly discern when to consider an international standard tolerable and when to maintain an unyielding position based on my own strong moral compass.

In my experience, there have been very few dilemmas where choosing the morally correct course of action was difficult. For example, I recently made a decision to do what was right for Schwab's business even when the decision had the potential to negatively impact my own reputation and career. I had distributed research reports which were to be used widely and throughout the firm to quantify and prioritize marketing and sales opportunities. Later, I discovered that the research vendor had made a mistake calculating the data in the report.

Basically, I could reissue the reports, admitting a professional mistake to hundreds of colleagues or I could choose to say nothing. The choice was mine alone; no one else was aware of the errors. Approaching my manager with my mistake and, subsequently, writing the coverletter that would accompany the reissued reports was challenging but I made the decision to reissue the reports quickly. Contrary to my concerns, correcting my mistake actually brought increased credibility to the integrity of my department and myself.

Comment [EA1]: An article is necessary here, so I have inserted one in the revised version below.

Comment [EA2]: "Multinational" is one word.

Comment [EA3]: This is a good reference to your Career Essay. However, in this Ethics Essay, I recommend that you open the essay with a more direct answer to the essay question of when you faced an ethical challenge. Later, we can slot this reference to your Career Essay, so as to reinforce the goals you explained there without coming off as redundant.

Comment [EA4]: This is a weak phrase, undermined by your use of the passive voice. I have revised the phrase to make it more dynamic.

Comment [EA5]: This is a split infinitive, which should be eliminated.

Comment [EA6]: You should never end a sentence with a preposition like "to." I have revised it below.

Comment [EA7]: Overall, this is an adequate introductory paragraph, but it fails to grab the reader's attention with dynamic phrasing and bold demonstrations of your ambition. Ultimately, such Career essays must "pitch" your career goals to the admissions committee, and make them not only believe that you are capable of achieving them (thereby becoming a successful alumnus who will represent their institution) but also get them to root for you to succeed. I have revised the introductory paragraph below to make it more dynamic, and get the reader onto your side early.

Comment [EA8]: Your use of a gerund (an action noun ending in -ing) is acceptable, but not terribly active. In the revised version below, I have made it more dynamic and active.

Comment [EA9]: This is a weak introduction phrase, and you tend to use these as a crutch throughout the essay. Other examples include "In my experience," "For example," "Basically," and "Contrary to my concerns." While using one or two is not necessarily a bad thing, repetitive use tends to grow boring, and risks losing the reader's attention. I have removed several instances in the revised version below.

Comment [EA10]: Again, this is a split infinitive.

Comment [EA11]: This is a waste of a sentence; it adds little to your narrative and delays your reader from getting to the important heart of the essay. I have deleted it in the revised version below.

Comment [EA12]: This should be two words.

Comment [EA13]: Again, you have an over-reliance on the verb "to be," which I have reduced in the revised version below.

Comment [EA14]: This is an awkward construction, as you have two abstract nouns ("credibility" and "integrity") back-to-back, which can confuse the reader. The phrase "to the integrity of my department and myself" is also awkward and ambiguous, as you do not make it clear whether the credibility was brought to 1) the integrity of y... [1]

Revised Version:

Terror gripped me as the full implications of my oversight dawned on me. In my role as Senior Marketing Manager at Charles Schwab & Company, I discovered that one of my research vendors had made a critical mistake in calculating certain data that served as the backbone of my report on prioritizing marketing initiatives. Making matters worse, I had failed to detect the error before distributing the report to top-ranking executives throughout the company. I recognized with dread that I could either keep quiet about the mistake in the hopes that it would go undetected, or own up to my mistake and rectify it before it could damage the company.

Rather than remain quiet, I made the difficult decision to re-issue the reports. I wrote the cover letter that accompanied the revised versions, acknowledging my error and summarizing how the correct data would alter the previous report's conclusions. I knew that doing so risked endangering my advancement at Schwab, but I knew that I could not compromise my own ethics, even to advance my career.

I will likely face many such moral dilemmas in my career as the leader of a multinational micro-lending institution. The emerging markets in which my firm will operate will likely exhibit very different ethical standards, and I will have to negotiate these differences while following my own moral compass. I will have to define my organization's ethical standards clearly, and ensure that my employees follow them by providing the proper training and incentives.

My experience at Schwab will help guide me through such challenges, for my rigid adherence to a strict ethical code actually helped my career instead of hampering it. Contrary to my fears, my decision to correct my mistake actually lent me increased credibility throughout the organization, as executives came to know that they could rely on my integrity and honesty.

Comment [EA15]: This is a far more dynamic introductory sentence, as it immediately grabs the reader's attention and gets them actively involved in the essay. Right away, the reader wants to know what your mistake was, its implications, and how you planned to fix it. Contrast this with your more bland original introductory sentence, which merely reiterated the career plan you outlined elsewhere in your Career Goal essay.

Comment [EA16]: Your essay benefited from a structural revision. By moving the anecdote into the first paragraph, you not only do a better job of grabbing the reader's attention, but you also follow the critical rule of "Show, Don't Tell." Rather than simply say that you have a strict ethical code, you put the reader into a scenario where you actually demonstrated it, giving yourself additional credibility.

Comment [EA17]: I have streamlined this passage, where you present your dilemma and your two possible courses of action. In general, good writing is clear writing, and it is almost always preferable to use as few words as possible so that you do not lose the reader's attention.

Comment [EA18]: Note how some structural revisions to the sentences describing the situation has made your course of action more personal and descriptive. Your previous version made it seem like the situation simply happened to you, whereas this version emphasizes the proactive measures you took to fix the situation.

Comment [EA19]: You are right to include this reference to the planned international operations of your firm, as top MBA programs have begun placing increasing emphasis on recruiting and training students with a global perspective.

Comment [EA20]: I have revamped this conclusion paragraph by tying a reference to your Schwab experience back in. Referring back to your introductory paragraph ties the entire essay together, as if tying up the loose strings for the admissions committee reader so that they understand the overall message of your essay.

This is an awkward construction, as you have two abstract nouns (“credibility” and “integrity”) back-to-back, which can confuse the reader. The phrase “to the integrity of my department and myself” is also awkward and ambiguous, as you do not make it clear whether the credibility was brought to 1) the integrity of your department and 2) yourself, or to 1) the integrity of your department and 2) your own integrity. I have revised it below.