

Summary: This case discusses poor **ethical reasoning** and **decision making** by managers at B.F. Goodrich after brakes it designed failed 1968 test flights. In 1969, a former B.F. Goodrich employee, Kermit Vandivier, accused B.F. Goodrich of falsifying test reports in an attempt to quickly secure an Air Force contract rather than accurately report the brake failures and redesigning the brakes. If he had not decided to become a **whistle blower**, prompting calls for a government investigation, B.F. Goodrich's ethical misconduct could have endangered many lives. This case also discusses the company's **corporate culture** that prompted the managers to engage in unethical actions.

This is a good summary (or *identification of the ethical dilemma*) because:

1. It answers the questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why?, as shown below.
2. It is concise (101 words, including 4 "B.F."s). It summarizes the key points **without repeating** the case (101, not 1001 words).
3. It uses business and ethics **terminology** such as **ethical reasoning, whistle blowing, and corporate culture.**
4. It is fact-filled and avoids extraneous information such as:

"I *feel* they should have learned to tell the truth when they were children".

Your feelings and what the managers learned, or did not learn, as children are **not relevant** facts in the case. It's not a case in child development.

This case discusses poor *ethical reasoning* and *decision making* by managers at B.F. Goodrich after brakes it designed failed 1968 test flights. In 1969, a former B.F. Goodrich employee, Kermit Vandivier, accused B.F. Goodrich of falsifying test reports in an attempt to quickly secure an Air Force contract rather than accurately report the brake failures and redesigning the brakes. If he had not decided to become a *whistle blower*, prompting calls for a government investigation, B.F. Goodrich's ethical misconduct could have endangered many lives. This case also discusses the company's *corporate culture* that prompted the managers to engage in unethical actions.

1. It answers most of the questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why?

Who (did what)?

Managers at B.F. Goodrich engaged in poor ethical reasoning and poor ethical decision-making.

What (exactly did they do)?

The managers falsified test flight data about B.F. Goodrich brakes (i.e. lied). Falsifying data put lives at risk.

Where?

Corporate offices.

When?

Mr. Vandivier blew the whistle in 1969. B.F. Goodrich falsified reports following 1968 tests.

Why?

B.F. Goodrich managers wanted to quickly secure a government contract.

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES ARE FROM ACTUAL STUDENT PAPERS FROM SOME YEARS AGO.

EXAMPLE: NEEDLESS VERBOSITY

OR 1001 WORDS TO SAY TO NOTHING

Conscience is the awareness of a moral or ethical aspect to a person's conduct with the urge to prefer right over wrong. Everyone has a conscience. We have free-will. Knowing what is right and what is wrong, however, is determined by our conscience. In our world today we have seen many individuals making the wrong decisions and this is due to not listening to their conscience.. Looking at consciences from a business perspective we can look at history and see that there have been many business men and women who have ignored their consciences and in return they have had to face the consequences.

Goodrich Co. is a prime example of employees in the corporate world not listening to their. Magazines were claiming that Goodrich was a major American Corporation and in fact they were. Goodrich had plants operating in many states across the United States and even in foreign countries, but, we will look into depth at a not so impressive one story building in Troy, Ohio.....

EXAMPLE: REPEAT THE CASE VERBOSITY

OR THE ANSWERS MUST BE IN THERE SOMEWHERE

Today, B. F. Goodrich Co. is what we like to call "a great American company." It has operations in the United States and Canada, Brazil, and Europe. However, in 1967 the company faced an ethical challenge as they positioned their bottom line before the safety of U.S. soldiers. In 1967, LTV Aerospace Corporation requested bids on wheels and brakes. Goodrich lost LTV's purchases previously for near a decade and now submitted a bid that was doing the job at a near loss so LTV could not turn it down. Goodrich previously lost LTV's business due to a flawed brake, so they anticipated providing LTV with a four disk brake weighing only 106 pounds, which was the lightest probable weight. Although bidding at a loss to constitute for their past fault is an example of good business ethics, they did expect to profit eventually. This would mean Goodrich would have any future business for replacement parts on the brakes for this aircraft and in turn, create a better bottom line for the company. John Warren, a graduate of Purdue was named project engineer for the A7D, and he, assigned Searle Lawson to produce the final production design.....

THIS EXAMPLE ALSO SUFFERS FROM POOR GRAMMAR AND STYLE.

EXAMPLE: REPEAT THE TEXTBOOK VERBOSITY

OR SHOW THE PROF I READ THE TEXTBOOK WHILE WRITING 1001 WORDS

Business ethics is defined as the study of good and evil, right and wrong, and in the case of business, just and unjust actions. To be ethical in business means to adhere to certain ethical customs, such as supporting truth telling, honesty, protection of life, respect for rights, fairness, and obedience to law. Ethics plays a part in all aspects of life, be it in everyday social life, be it in volunteer organizations, or be it in business life. Society has progressed as a whole to encompass ethics in all aspects of life. The case of B.F. Goodrich Co. shows the ethical dilemma between employees and management over the deliberate alteration of experiment data.....

EXAMPLE: OFF-TRACK VERBOSITY

OR I DON'T KNOW SO I'LL WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE

When thinking of business ethics, most people would associate the meaning of business ethics with the ethic in terms of understanding the difference between wrong and right. But in reality without looking in a dictionary for these two words, can mean something totally different depending on the person. And what I mean about that is that even though business ethics and ethics are presumed similar by definition with the only difference being that one surrounds business in general one cannot presume that there the same. Ethics deals more with a single persons feeling or thoughts on a particular issue while Business ethics deals with a number of individuals that share different feels, opinions and thoughts that revolve around what's best for the business of company's regardless sometimes of whether it's wrong or right. And this case is a prime example of the differences between ethics and business ethics.

THIS EXAMPLE ALSO SUFFERS FROM POOR GRAMMAR AND STYLE

USE GRAMMAR-CHECKING AND SPELL-CHECKING SOFTWARE

EXAMPLE: GENERALITY AND VERBOSITY NUMBER 1

OR SORT OF DISCUSS THE SORT OF GENERAL PROBLEMS, KIND OF

Ethics in business is an essential element for keeping customers as well as employees safe, both physically and legally. Sometimes it can be hard for employees to uphold ethical standards. This may be especially true for young or new employees. When the new young employee feels there is no one to turn to, or when senior management is trying to avoid the negative consequences of admitting a mistake. The chain of command at Goodrich is to blame for this huge mess brought about by one faulty brake system. Each member involved is connected to each other and as the issue is brought to each member of the corporate ladder, they fail one by one to uphold any sort ethical integrity for the company. They each seemed to use the "don't ask don't tell" policy. In the end some sort of justice is brought to the situation, although if justice was upheld from the beginning could Goodrich avoided all the embarrassment of having bad publicity and calls for a government investigation?.....

THIS CASE NEEDS TO BE MORE CONCISE AND PRECISE IN GETTING TO THE *WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY.*

EXAMPLE: GENERALITY AND VERBOSITY NUMBER 2

OR SORT OF DISCUSS THE SORT OF GENERAL PROBLEMS, KIND OF

Ethics play an important part in today's business workplace. Managers and employees often face difficult and challenging situations regarding whether decisions made are considered ethical or unethical. However, ethical behavior is not always clearly defined. People have to use their own judgment and principles to resolve a problem. Even though some decisions may be considered unethical and immoral, they can be perfectly legal. However, some decisions can be both unethical and illegal. Managers and employees must be aware of all the legal requirements when executing a decision that may be borderline ethical/unethical. Today, many companies have their own code of ethics for all employees to follow. Unethical business practices can lead to changes in the industry and passage of new laws and regulations. The B.F. Goodrich Company is one example of where ethics play an important role in decision making.

THIS CASE NEEDS TO BE MORE CONCISE AND PRECISE IN GETTING TO *WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY.*

EXAMPLE: TAKING THE CASE TOO PERSONALLY
OR I WISH I WAS STUDYING PSYCHOLOGY AND FEELINGS

Reading about this case really bothered me. It just really got to me because sometimes bosses force you to do something that you know is wrong by threatening the thing that you need or want. There is a way to stop this from happening but sometimes it can only hurt you even worse. That is by going over your boss's head to their superiors, but there is an order you must go in. If they refuse to listen to you and make you do something that you know is wrong.

**THIS CASE NEEDS TO FOCUS ON THE CASE. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU.
GET MAD AND VOTE. ALSO USE SPELL-CHECK (E.G. THEIR, NOT THERE).**

EXAMPLE: MAKING THE CASE PERSONAL
OR I WISH SOMEONE WROTE A CASE ABOUT ME

I believe I am an ethical person with strong morals, principles and values. As children, we are taught the difference between right and wrong. I certainly know that my parents tried to teach me the difference, and I believe that most of us are taught morals, principles and ethics. All parents want their children to grow up to be ethical adults. As college students graduate, they are excited to begin working in the field of their choice. When the college graduate realizes that the company they are working for is not ethical, they are disappointed and even discouraged to continue working there.....

**THIS CASE NEEDS TO FOCUS ON THE CASE. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU, OR YOUR PARENTS, OR HOW EXCITING
MANY PEOPLE ARE WHEN THEY GRADUATE, ETC.**

EXAMPLE: USING OVERLY STRONG LANGUAGE

OR INJECTING YOUR PERSONAL BELIEFS INSTEAD OF RELEVANT THEORY

The main ethical issue presented in the B.F Goodrich case “Why Should My Conscience Bother Me?” is one that involves the deliberate falsification of important test data and statistical information, regardless of the cost, in order to keep a business deal. Certain B.F Goodrich employees were prepared to do whatever was necessary to cover up mistakes and avoid the blame for those mistakes.

The potential damage to stakeholders as a result of these actions is undeniable. When employees at B.F. Goodrich decided to fake tests and falsify information, they were setting the company up for certain public failure. B.F. Goodrich executives made it clear at the beginning of the case that they wanted to make the best brake possible regardless of cost because they had a reputation to uphold and a business relationship to repair with LTV. When certain employees failed to act ethically, the reputation of B.F. Goodrich was certain to be compromised.

THIS CASE NEEDS TO AVOID USING OVERLY STRONG LANGUAGE SUCH AS THE “UNDENIABLE”, “IT IS CLEAR”, OR “CERTAIN”. PRECISELY STATING THE *WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, AND WHY* IN THE CASE WILL ACCURATELY PRESENT THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS. OUTCOMES ARE SELDOM UNDENIABLE, CERTAIN, OR CLEAR, BUT B.F. GOODRICH’S UNETHICAL ACTIONS CREATED RISKS FOR THE COMPANY.

EXAMPLE: GAMESHOW VERBOSITY 1

OR LET’S SEE IF I CAN JAZZ THIS UP A BIT AND USE QUESTIONS FOR AUDIENCE INVOLVMENT

How can the safety of millions be brushed aside just to pad hundreds of people’s pockets? I mean, after all, what is the price of an innocent human beings life? B.F. Goodrich was faced with this ethical dilemma in 1967. First allow me to give you a small yet meaningful history of B.F. Goodrich and this situation presented in 1967...

THESE TRY TO MARKET THE CASE AS IF IT WILL BE SHOWN ON TV. Do NOT ask questions in your reports. (AND WILL NEED TO ATTRACT ADVERTISERS).