

Does God Impact Your Bottom Line?

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Vol. 2: Issue 6: Summer 2009

IT IS ALMOST NEVER COOL to say “God” or discuss religion at work. Corporate protocol dictates that religion and politics are off limits. It may be okay to discuss sex, gender, nationality and race, yet this is not the case regarding religion or spirituality. However, if corporations forbid references to God, then how will moral and ethical standards be set? Who will keep the workforce accountable for their actions toward others and the company? The law has failed to prevent abuse in the workplace. It is difficult to prove. This begs the question: by adding God to the bottom line, are companies any more likely reach their goals or desired profit margin?

The Chick-Fil-A Example

According to Hoovers, Chick-Fil-A is a company with 50,000 employees, 1,400 restaurants in nearly 40 states. It is closed Sundays. Who would have ever thought that Chick-Fil-A, a company founded in deep religious beliefs, by putting God in their bottom line could result in a company becoming one of the largest fast food chains in the nation with sales topping \$2.6 billion in 2007? On the contrary, Starbucks has closed over 600 stores in the U.S. and profits fell 28% in early 2008. KFC and McDonalds are tampering with their food services, trying to improve profits by adding healthier choices, while Chick-Fil-A maintained a steady, profitable growth rate.

The Moral Imperative

It makes sense for a company to promote high moral and ethical values for a number of reasons.

- (1) Employee retention increases when employees feel valued and have a sense of work-life balance.
- (2) When employers are sensitive to and value their employees’ beliefs, unions become much less important because employees feel they are treated and paid fairly. Additionally, the strategy of “Doing unto others as you would have them do unto you,” focuses employee attention on an important ideal: accountability to do the right thing for the company and its customers. It allows both salaried and non-salaried employees to feel more valued, and to participate in the universal plan by honoring a value system that includes God in the equation. By adding God to the bottom line, companies create better work life balance, which reduces lawsuits, increases productivity and minimizes theft, cost of insurance claims and sick days.

That Day of Rest

Medical science has proven that a substantial number of Americans are sleep deprived, overweight and stressed. Even non believers should not object to observing the Golden Rule or having an extra day to rest to spend time with family, catch up on personal planning and allowing time to destress. Moreover, in omitting the principles of God from the bottom line, companies must develop business models which would inevitably incorporate some forms of the Golden Rule but could miss capturing its true es-

sence, one of which is to respect the company’s assets as you would your own. Before Chick-Fil-A, everyone believed that food service providers had to be open seven days a week, and many 24/7 in order to produce profits. What if Chickfil-A’s CEO, S. Truett Cathy, had not insisted on maintaining his Baptist values when deciding his business model? What if he had never challenged the decisions that excluded God from the bottom line equation? Would it be prudent for employers to consider the importance to their bottom line by adopting a “God-based strategy” like Chick-Fil-A’s and acknowledge God’s Golden Rule?



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