

Built an empire: business ethics game – Notes for Educators

Open the game <https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/bridge-games/> to see the complete educational material.

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About the educational material

The educational material was created with the Erasmus+ project *Bridging Integrity in Higher Education, Business and Society* (BRIDGE, project no. 2020-1-SE01-KA203-077973) as a part of the project output 2 “Bridging academic and research integrity”. The educational material, other project outputs, and more information on the project are available at <https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/bridge/>.

Use and adaptations of the educational material

Authors welcome adaptations of the material, especially translations! If you are interested in translating the material into your language, please contact us at bridgeinfo@academicintegrity.eu and we will provide you with source text. The Bridge project will then be happy to assist you with further sharing of your translation.



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Name of the Material

Basic information

- **Target audience:** Higher education students studying business ethics or related fields.
- **Study/research field:** Business Ethics, Business Management, Ethics in Leadership.
- **Length:** Flexible, depending on the duration of the game session or the number of scenarios used.

Purpose of the educational material

This educational material aims to engage higher education students in practical business ethics applications through the interactive game "Built an Empire: business ethics game." The game presents ethical scenarios that simulate real-world business dilemmas. Students will practise critical thinking, decision-making, and ethical reasoning as they navigate through these challenges. By playing in teams, students will collaborate, communicate, and debate to reach a consensus on the most ethical choices. The game promotes active learning, friendly competition, and reflective discussions on the complexities of business ethics.

What is included in this educational material?

Game Scenario Cards: A collection of 20 business ethics scenarios, each with a thought-provoking dilemma and suggested Right Answers: Provides possible right answers for each scenario based on ethical principles and best practices.

Game Instructions: Clear instructions on how to conduct the game, including the role of the moderator (teacher), team setup, scoring mechanisms, and how to move forward on the game board based on correct answers.

Game Board: A visual representation of the game board (physical or digital), where teams advance based on their correct answers.

How to use the educational material?

- Divide students into two teams.
- Introduce the game and its objectives, emphasising the significance of ethical decision-making in business settings. As the moderator (teacher), present each scenario one by one to both teams. Allow teams time to discuss the scenarios and to collaborate to determine the most ethical choices.
- Teams provide their answers, and the moderator (teacher) decides if the response is correct. If correct, the team advances on the game board. After each scenario, facilitate discussions between the teams to explore their reasoning, ethical considerations, and potential alternative solutions. Encourage the teams to reflect on their decision-making process, consider the ethical challenges they encountered, and evaluate the outcomes of their choices.
- Continue presenting scenarios, scoring responses, and advancing teams on the game board until all scenarios are covered. At the end of the game, conclude with a debrief session, summarising key insights, reinforcing ethical principles, and acknowledging exemplary ethical reasoning.

- Declare the winning team based on their progress on the game board and their demonstrated understanding of business ethics.
- By playing as two teams in a friendly competition, this educational material creates an interactive and dynamic learning environment that encourages active participation and peer collaboration. The game stimulates critical thinking and ethical discussions, preparing higher education students to navigate complex ethical challenges.
- The scenarios:

1. Scenario: Your team has worked collaboratively on a research project, but one member claims sole authorship of the final report. How do you address this situation?

Possible Right Answer: Advocate for fair acknowledgement and recognition of all team members' contributions, emphasising the importance of giving credit where it is due.

2. Scenario: While presenting your company's research findings, you realise an important citation was mistakenly omitted. What action should you take?

Possible Right Answer: Acknowledge the oversight immediately, and provide the proper attribution during the presentation or in any subsequent materials.

3. Scenario: Your colleague proposes adding your name as an author on a research paper you had minimal involvement in to enhance your academic reputation. How do you respond?

Possible Right Answer: Politely decline the offer and encourage your colleague to include only those who made substantial intellectual contributions.

4. Scenario: During an important business presentation, a team member includes data from an unpublished research study without the author's permission. What do you do?

Possible Right Answer: Immediately remove the unpublished data from the presentation and inform the team member about the importance of respecting intellectual property rights.

5. Scenario: You discover that a colleague in a different department is plagiarising content from external sources for their reports. How should you handle this situation?

Possible Right Answer: Report the plagiarism to the appropriate authorities within the organisation to uphold ethical standards and respect copyright.

6. Scenario: Your company's management offers financial incentives to employees for publishing articles in reputable journals. How might this affect the integrity of research?

Possible Right Answer: Express concerns about potential conflicts of interest and emphasize the importance of maintaining research integrity over financial incentives.

7. Scenario: You are responsible for reviewing and approving research findings before publication. A report with unfavourable results is submitted, but management insists on altering the conclusions. What should you do?

Possible Right Answer: Refuse to alter the conclusions and explain the importance of maintaining research integrity and reporting unbiased findings.

8. Scenario: Your company's marketing team is planning to launch a social media campaign based on fabricated success stories from customers. What is the most ethical response?

Possible Right Answer: Reject the campaign idea and advocate for truthful and authentic customer testimonials to maintain the company's reputation and credibility.

9. Scenario: You are a content creator, and your supervisor asks you to copy and reuse content from a competitor's website without proper attribution. What should you do?

Possible Right Answer: Refuse to engage in plagiarism and suggest developing original content or seeking permission for any external material used.

10. Scenario: You are reviewing research grant applications and notice a proposal from your close friend. How can you ensure an unbiased evaluation of their proposal?

Possible Right Answer: Declare the conflict of interest, recuse yourself from reviewing the application, and ask another impartial reviewer to evaluate it.

11. Scenario: Your company is under pressure to meet quarterly financial targets, and some team members suggest misrepresenting revenue figures to investors. What should you do?

Possible Right Answer: Reject the idea of misrepresentation and emphasise the importance of transparency and ethical financial reporting.

12. Scenario: A vendor offers your company management member an expensive gift in exchange for awarding them a lucrative contract. How should you handle this situation?

Possible Right Answer: Decline the gift, report the vendor's unethical offer to management, and follow the company's anti-bribery policy.

13. Scenario: Your team is preparing a report, and a member suggests copying and pasting text from various sources without citation to save time. What should you do?

Possible Right Answer: Encourage the team to avoid plagiarism and instead allocate sufficient time to properly cite and attribute sources in the report.

14. Scenario: Your company's board member is investing in a competitor company secretly. What is the most ethical action to take?

Possible Right Answer: Disclose the board member's conflict of interest and ensure their removal from any decision-making related to the competitor to maintain impartiality and transparency.

15. Scenario: Your company is conducting a market research survey to gather insights from customers. A team member suggests manipulating the survey results to present a more positive image of the company's products. How should you respond?

Possible Right Answer: Reject the suggestion of manipulating survey results and emphasise the importance of conducting honest research to make informed business decisions.

16. Scenario: During a team meeting, a team member presents an innovative idea that significantly improves a project. The team leader, however, claims the idea as their own without acknowledging the contributor. How should the team member respond?

Possible Right Answer: Respectfully assert ownership of the idea and request proper credit for their contribution with the team leader. If the team leader does not respond appropriately, approach his manager, fostering a culture of recognition for all team members' ideas.

17. Scenario: A senior executive claims credit for a project's success, ignoring the significant contributions made by a junior team member. How can the junior team member address this situation ethically?

Possible Right Answer: Communicate directly with the executive, politely asserting their role in the project's success and advocating for fair recognition of all team members' contributions.

18. Scenario: A colleague asks you to cover for them by providing false information about their attendance to a mandatory training session. How should you respond to this request?

Possible Right Answer: Refuse to provide false information and encourage the colleague to take responsibility for their actions, maintaining personal integrity and honesty.

19. Scenario: Your company has developed a groundbreaking technology that is eligible for a patent. However, a team member suggests keeping the technology secret and not filing for a patent to avoid disclosure to competitors. How should you handle this situation ethically?

Possible Right Answer: Emphasise the importance of protecting intellectual property through patent filings to gain legal rights and recognition for the innovation, ensuring the company's long-term competitive advantage.

20. Scenario: A colleague asks to borrow your work for an important presentation without proper attribution or acknowledging your contribution. How should you respond?

Possible Right Answer: Politely decline the request and emphasise the importance of originality and proper citation to avoid plagiarism and give credit to the rightful creators.

***Please note that ethical decisions can be complex and context-dependent, and students may come up with various answers based on different perspectives. These scenarios aim to encourage discussions and critical thinking about business ethics and the importance of upholding principles such as acknowledgement, authorship, contributorship, avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, and managing conflicts of interest and biases in professional settings.**