# BUS 1160: Working in a Professional Environment

## Week 4 Overview:

Business organizations need a certain level of competitiveness to stay in business. They need to “outsmart” their competition, develop niches, and exploit opportunities. To do this, leaders and employees must maintain a level of confidentiality that protects the company’s tactical and strategic advantages. Not doing so can be very costly, but doing so can prove to be difficult, as well.

Companies have certain powers over employees, and certain laws have power over companies. These checks and balances, hopefully, help exude ethical behaviors from all parties. Treating people the same; however, can be quite difficult. Some people are faster, smarter, and more passionate than others—but does that make them better workers? Possibly. But most companies are made up of all sorts of kinds of people. This chapter will help you realize that exploiting the qualities of these differences is what actually makes organizations stronger.

**Ethics**

Ethics is a moral standard of right and wrong. The problem is that the “standard” varies from organization to organization, industry to industry, and culture to culture. For example, paying a waitress more for doing a good job is considered tipping; however, paying a police officer for doing his job could be considered bribery. Here, the ethical intent may be the same, but the impact could be construed to be quite different.

Ethics is also about truth and trustworthiness. These are learned through our values and beliefs, our practices of which form our character. But these too can be elusive through a façade. Bernie Madoff is a good example of someone who was very charismatic and came across as being trustworthy and truthful. His ethical compass, however, was quite askew.

**Power**

Is power finite or infinite? Depending on which you choose, may guide your actions as a leader and manager. Coercive, reward, and connection power are all based on how you exercise your legitimate power (power given to you). Charismatic, information, and expert power all come from within our selves. Some people have more than others, but these forms of power cannot be given from one person to another.

**Diversity**

When a person walks into a room, what is the first thing you notice about them? Is it their race, gender, age, physical features, height, weight, smell, clothing, or something else? Which are attractors and which are detractors? What prejudgments are made before there is any interaction? Yes, we are all different, but learning to work with our differences makes us more aware of who we are and what we are all capable of doing.

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