

## Chapter 13

# Whistle Blowing

### ABSTRACT

*Whistle blowing brings to the notice of the world wrongdoings and immoral acts. It is seen as an act of defense for proper action for any misconduct, which is at play between individual coherence and organizational values. Whistle blowing is an important way to prevent and deter fraud, waste, and abuse in organizational work environments. When employees are feeling uncomfortable with wrongdoing, which necessarily arises in organizations, their sense of morals also come into effect, which compels them to make any wrongdoing or unethical act public. In essence, the interplay of policies and its discourse that make it mark in organizational realms figure within that morality consideration; morality permits individual to act morally and reasonably. This chapter explores whistle blowing.*

### INTRODUCTION

Whistle blowing is the disclosure by organization member whether former or current employee on any illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices to outside party or person within an organization so that action can be taken in the right order of things. From an ethical point of view, the root of whistle blowing and the object which makes whistle blower and their acts is the ethics being compromised. This means that the strength of character can vary depending on the will of individual and their reason to act.

### BACKGROUND

Whistle blowing is not a new term. Whistle blowing and the term attached to it is somewhat perceived negatively (Steven H Appelbaum, 2006). When we observed the realms today we feel that it is fraught with many dangers of ethical issues making inroads within the company. Fact of the matter is that "...whistle blowing is a very dangerous path to be taken by employees, as this can attract many legal and disciplinary actions (Goran Svensson, 2009). But we wonder what makes whistle blower take the risk to blow

the whistle after all? Part of it can be looked in respect ethical conflict at play. Moreover, there have been instances which showed that despite accepting the responsibility of whistle blowing, individual seems to be hesitant, especially internal auditors due to the risk of their career (Mark Keil, 2001, p. 90). For that very reason, we assume that whistle blowing and its impact is linked one or the other way with ethical consideration and the conflicting part of it.

In the organizational realms there are innumerable question of ethical issues and ethics being compromised for all the good bad and ugly reasons. Moreover, corporate governance also comes into play in such instance. According to some scholars, they held that “firm governance influence the quality of its voluntary disclosure.” (Denis Cormier, 2010, p. 576) But if there is voluntary disclosure why so the idea of whistle blowing arises?

In the organizational realms there have been many instance which shows that ethical issue are internal and can expand to the range where the world at large also have an insights. It is only through a whistle blower that the public are aware of the real thing and corruption is brought to book. (Kreikebaum, 2008, p. 87). But what brought about internal company informative insights to be disseminated into the big bad world, either through whistle blower or so? As we have said ethics is at the root of it. It is about moral conduct of any wrong doing, which generally don't need to justify an act, since every acts and action have a reason behind it whether we think it is right or wrong. (Davis). For this very reason, whistle blowing and the topic of its discussion comes into play within the organization and whistle blowing have often been thought to either be a bad influence or a rather good influence.

## **DEFINING THE MEANING OF WHISTLE BLOWING**

There are many definition related to whistle blowing. Whistle blowing can mean an act of notifying the wrong doing practices in an organization and is motivated by the desire to prevent harm to others. It also takes into account the action of an employee or employer with a privilege access to internal information in an organization. (Annette D Greene, 2004, p. 220). In the word of Near and Miceli (1995) whistle blowing can be understood as the disclosure by organization member whether former or current employee on any illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices to outside party or person within an organization so that action can be taken in the right order of things (Janet P. Near, 1995, p. 680).

According to Rocha and Kleiner (2005) whistle blowing and the word related to it have been around since the early 1970s. It relates to the wrongdoing from someone inside the company as opposed to the wrong doing by someone from outside the company (Ester Rocha, 2005, p. 80). The idea of whistle blowing is all about allegation that roots within and outside the company. Some scholars went to the extent also to define whistle blowing in term of attitudes and values (Rothchild, 1999, p. 116).

What is surprising is that some scholars and their research show that at the heart of whistle blowing situation, a loyalty conflict is the dominant part of it involving employee and employer relationship. Whistle blowing in that sense of the term is understood as an act of disloyalty which very often disrupts business and also injured the reputation of the organization (Andrea Bather, 2005, p. 5). This sound very true, as there have

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