

*Students in Junior Achievement's Business Ethics classes were invited to write an essay describing how they would approach the following dilemma if they were the CEO of a growing organization. The winner, selected from 140 entries, was Loraine Ortiz, a Junior at the Edison School of Business. Loraine, who moved to Rochester a little over one year ago from a small town in Puerto Rico, was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from Junior Achievement of Rochester and the Rochester Business Ethics Foundation.*

**Scenario:** *Two years ago you started your own company which makes and sells a biodegradable product to clean windows. In the beginning, it was just you and a part time employee and you were involved in every aspect of the business from purchasing the raw materials, to manufacturing, pricing, promoting, selling, accounting, and delivery. The market has reacted well to both the product and the concept it promotes and sales are exceeding expectations.*

*Your company is growing at a rapid pace and now employs 10 people. Projections call for 20% growth in employees each year over the next three years. You no longer are involved in every aspect of the organization and must rely on others to insure the same ethical approach to the business that you have taken continues.*

### **Ethical Decision Making**

By Loraine Ortiz, Edison School of Business

In our lives we have to make different kinds of decisions. Two kinds of decisions are professional decisions and personal decisions. When you are going to make a choice you should think if you are doing something good, right and proper. An ethical decision is when you have to make a choice and it is based on something precise. To select the right choice you should use an Ethical Decision Making Checklist.

My Ethical Decision Making Checklist (*please see below*) will give you certain steps that are necessary to make the best choice. When a boss follows the checklist it will help the business to be more productive.

In this situation my company is growing and I need to get reliable employees that I can trust. In order to have the right communication with my employees I will schedule one meeting each week to supervise what they have done. Some things that I will focus on are if they are following the procedures we set up. My company will be on the right track because I will have someone I trust supervising and making sure that the employees are working legally.

I will also have somebody that supervises the promoting area. The promotions are will be one of the most important. It will help to introduce my product to the public. No false statements will be made to make people buy the product. I will get very capable staff to make my company follow ethical procedures. The selling price will be very appropriate according to the product. I will never inflate the prices because I know that people like the product and no other product can clean windows like mine.

My priorities will be to make sure that my employees are doing what they are supposed to do without my supervision. In my business I will introduce my employees to the code of ethics. This code will include all the values and the expectations for my business.

Ethics are important to make a business better. If I have the choice to be a boss I will make sure that I'm doing the right thing for most people. Thinking of the consequences, effect and benefits of my choices will be helpful to maintain the progress of my company.

### **My Ethical Decision Making Checklist**

- Define the Problem and Choices
  - What is the dilemma?
  - What values are in conflict?
    - Honesty
    - Responsibility
    - Loyalty
    - Trust
    - Integrity
- What are my Choices?
  - Do the right thing
  - Make ethical decisions
  - What do I think is better for me and my family
- Who will be Affected by My Choices?
  - Me because I am the one who will have to pick what to do
  - My family will be affected if I pick the wrong choice
    - How? I can lose their trust and they can think that I am immature and irresponsible
- Will I Feel Guilty About Any of the Choices?
  - We can do the right thing and feel guilty
  - You can be honest but not loyal to a person
  - If you pick the wrong choice you will also feel guilty because you know that you are doing something wrong
- What if My Choice Made the News?
  - I would be proud if it was for a good thing but embarrassed if it was for the wrong choice
- What is the Most Ethical Decision?
  - The most ethical decision is the one that will not bring any bad consequences; to do what you think is better

## *Lorraine Ortiz Acceptance Speech*

Good Afternoon:

My name is Lorraine Ortiz and I am a junior on high honor roll at the Edison School of Business. I would like to thank the Rochester Business Ethics Foundation and Junior Achievement for this honor. I know there were a lot of participants and I am excited to be the winner.

Last year I took Business Ethics with Mr. Strom and Ms. Felton. The course helped me to make decisions in my life. I now know how to evaluate a situation, estimate my choices, ask for advice and then choose my best option. In the future I would like to become a criminal attorney because I like helping people and making others responsible for their actions.

I am from a small town in Puerto Rico called Cayey and I came to New York one year ago. The reason why I came here is because my parents wanted me to get a good education, learn more English and get a good job. That is why this award is so special to me.

In closing I would like to thank my mother who is here today. She doesn't speak English. She has always supported me and showed me how to be a good person. All the stuff I am doing is to make her proud and to let her know there is a reason for us to be here.

Thank you.