

Are My Practices Biblical?

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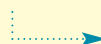


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React to the following statements.

You as a manager, or your company (if you're not a manager), might be in trouble with God if:

- Your sales strategies target weaknesses in vulnerable people.
- Your employee manual has a phrase that says, "employees may be terminated with or without cause."
- You have a high turnover rate.
- You have pay discrepancies between people in the same job which is not explained by tenure or superior performance.
- You want to "crush your competition."
- Your product or service damages the environment.
- Your employees are afraid of you or of your managers.
- You have high profit margins and low wages.
- You have high wages and lose money.
- You offer bonuses, but not to all levels of workers in the company.
- You treat one level of worker with more respect and dignity than other levels.
- You hire part-time workers as a strategy to avoid paying benefits to workers instead of as a means to handle variable workloads.
- Your advertising is "technically correct" but couldn't stand the "sniff test." ("Four out of five dentists surveyed say our toothbrush is best" when you picked the dentists to survey.)
- You lay off a large number of workers and they didn't know it was coming, but you did.
- Your business is struggling and you hide it from employees interviewing for jobs.
- You favor Christians over non-Christians in human resource matters.
- You exploit weaknesses and disadvantageous circumstances in suppliers or prospective employees in order to get their products, services or labors for unreasonably low dollars.
- Your employment practices pit workers against each other in ways that exceed healthy competition. ("The bottom two workers in each department are gone...")
- You use pricing as a way to destroy a competitor's business.
- You have economic models for pay scales at the lower end of the organization, but no models to determine true economic value of the senior management of your company.
- You make workers endure the "walk of shame" (having them personally escorted off the property) after a layoff or dismissal that isn't due to performance issues on the part of the employee.



Scripture Passages

James 4:13-17

Introduction

In this study we're going to use a different approach. To prepare for this study we're going to ask you to consider your present job as you answer the following questions. Rather than a generic study that offers you principles, we want this study to highlight for you some of the places where you can serve God right now.

A useful question to ask ourselves about our workplace policies and practices is "Would God approve...."

Remember, our objective in this set of five studies is to become molders and mentors—shaping policy as God grants us authority and skill to do so, and shaping lives as He grants us that responsibility in the lives of our workers, too. So far, in making the shift from a worker who goes along in the culture—making few waves in order to assure personal success (i.e., climbing the ladder)—we've addressed the effect that competition has on our hearts and effectiveness. We next learned that for a Christian, work exists as another means to serve God by tending His creation, and therefore we must constantly ask what effect our work is having on the environment, the moral and ethical climate of the culture, the spiritual lives of those around us, as well as their physical and emotional well-being. Then we learned that Christians should be on the cutting edge of creatively addressing the problems facing our culture. And in lesson four of this set we discovered that leadership exists as a tool to serve God and not as a reward or as a means to serve ourselves.

Now the rubber meets the road. How are we doing?

In Depth

For each of the following statements, imagine yourself doing a PowerPoint presentation to God in your board room. Write out your responses to the right of each question, based on your observations of your present workplace.

EXAMINING YOUR HUMAN RESOURCE MANUAL...	
Does my human resource manual serve as a guide to assist employees or as a protection from litigation for my company?	
Does my human resource manual introduce mercy as a first step in employee/employer relations?	
Does my human resource manual introduce principles of redemption into employer–employee relations?	
Are there portions of my human resource manual that address issues of conflict resolution consistent with the principles of Scripture as identified in lesson seven (“Fighting the Wrong Fight!”) in this series?	
Is there anything in my company’s hiring practices I’d be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my company’s disciplinary procedures I’d be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my compensation for entry-level workers I’d be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in the compensation differentials between senior managers and lower-tier workers I’d be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in the wording of a human resource policy I’d be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Are actual company practices consistent with the written policies of this human resource manual? If not, what changes are necessary?	

REGARDING MY COMPANY'S OPERATIONS...	
Is there anything in my company's advertising I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my company's collection practices I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Are there any sales practices I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my company's acquisition of resources I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Are there any goods or services my company produces I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in the way my company produces its goods or services I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in the relationship with a customer after a sale I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there any aspect of my pricing structure I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is the level of my compensation something I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my public relations I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	
Is there anything in my communications to workers I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?	

<p>Is there anything in my communications to investors I'd be reluctant for God to see? If so, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Do my company's goods or services add value to society in ways that honor God? If not, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Do any of my company's goods or services encourage or enable people to violate God's moral and ethical laws? If they do, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Do any of my company's goods or services, when used as intended, encourage or enable people to violate state or federal laws? If they do, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Do my accounting practices go beyond the letter of the law and meet the standards of openness and truth-telling described in lesson eight ("Truth as an Asset") in this series? If not, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Is my company a responsible member of the community, state and nation? If not, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>Is my company a responsible member of the global community? If not, what changes are necessary?</p>	
<p>What actions does my company take in meeting the needs of the weaker members of society?</p>	

While no list can be comprehensive, the list above offers each of us a starting point for discovering the places where God's influence can and should be felt. We invite you to explore the many resources available to working Christians who want to address these issues.

Common Sense and Eternal Principles

- Just as God calls us to lives of righteousness, so too does He call us to let that righteousness influence our work lives.
- “...to him whom much is given, of him will much be required.” Luke 12:48
- Leaders are leaders because God made them so.
- Leaders who are Christians operate under a different set of metrics than do those who don’t know Christ.
- It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the wisdom to know the right thing and the strength to do it.