

Business, both domestic and international, is an essential part of our survival. Business is what keeps the economy going and is the basis for trade and competition. We thrive on business and trade and rely on it to fulfill our wants and needs. Businesses employ people who have their own specialty trades. Without trades people would be left to sew their own clothes, raise their own cattle, and care for their own crops. Any sort of industrialization wouldn't be easy to accomplish because everyone would be too busy feeding their cattle and sewing their clothes. Constantly accompanying business should be a sense of responsibility and honesty that the businessman may not seek to take advantage of the consumer.

When I first entered this business class I knew nothing about business tactics, marketing, politics, or even how philosophy had anything to do with current business trends. I was naïve concerning any sort of big business and had no idea of the complexity of how business in its most raw form even worked. After having taken this class I consider myself to be more informed and involved in business and in politics. I recognize that if I want to make it in this world I'm going to have to learn how to conduct business and market myself to this very competitive world in which I live. My mind has been opened to the complexities of the business world and I have been given the freedom to consider my own business philosophies and ideas. In short, I have learned a lot about business and myself this semester by studying both ancient and modern philosophies that relate to business.

Cicero (106-43 B.C.?) once stated, "When we are weighing what seems to be expedient in friendship against what is morally right, let apparent expediency be disregarded and moral rectitude prevail" (Cicero 106-43 B.C.?). I couldn't agree any more. Business and business practices have the responsibility to the client and must be engaged in caring about the people to whom they are marketing. Business is not just about making money, even though that is one incentive for going into

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the field. It should be more concerned about providing for the customer and not trying to manipulate him or her in order to gain a profit.

The world in which we now live is very competitive and it is absolutely vital for each person to compete in order to survive. As one of the four aspects of Capitalism that we have learned in this class, competition is a huge part of business and profit in this economy. As Charles Darwin proposed in his book *The Origin of Species* (1859), a certain "natural selection" occurs in which the strongest or most-fit species is allowed to survive. Although he was a biologist and studied animal species, this relates to business in that each company must compete in order to survive in this economy and must endure if one wishes to keep the shop doors open for another day. Darwin (1859) also touched on the fact that it is not only present but natural that such a selection should be made because it allows for the weak to die off and for the strong to carry the seed to create a new (and hopefully stronger) generation. In business, it is only fair that the weak must fail. For whatever reason if the weak were unable to survive in the economy, the stronger company must prevail and should be rewarded with the ability to stay in business, while the weaker should be allowed to go belly-up.

This applies directly to the philosophy of Laissez-Faire. It is my belief that the government should have a very minimal influence in business and that it should not intervene unless it can be proven that not doing so would cause the entire economy to collapse. If it were that each company were allowed to conduct business as it would please and then be able to call upon the government to bail them out in times of economic strife, this economy would be no different than that of a Communist nation. The government should take care of politics, social and civic matters and leave business matters to businessmen. Philosopher Adam Smith, in his book *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), referred to a term called the "invisible hand." The idea of the invisible hand is that things naturally take care of themselves; that no one person oversees the workings or dealings of a process from start to finish in order to ensure that the process may be carried out in any specific

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fashion. This further enforces the idea that the government needs not to interfere with business because things will be taken care of. Smith (1776) goes on to say that, "Government regulation is not good for business" (Smith 1776). Amen.

Marketing is yet another very important and large aspect of business. Billions of dollars are spent yearly on marketing and advertising in order to create wants and needs in the consumers. If a business desires to succeed, it is necessary that it markets itself well and that it promotes its products as often as possible using as many media as can be used to advertise. Along with this, it is necessary that these companies be honest about their products and not persuade the consumer to suppose that they be better than they actually are. As Thomas Aquinas (1265-1274), wrote, "It seems foolish for anyone to do what prevents him carrying out his work. But if a man states the defects of the goods he has for sale, he prevents the sale" (Aquinas 1265-1274). While it would be absolutely stupid to sit down with a potential homebuyer and lay out all of the defects of house, it is the responsibility of the seller to allow the consumer to do their own research to make sure that the house will suit their needs. Otherwise the seller is being sly, irresponsible, and deceitful (lying by omission). Business people must be honest in their dealings in order to succeed in the long run.

Conclusively, I wish to proclaim that it is the responsibility of the businessman or businesswoman to care for the needs of his or her business, not of the government. If a company wishes to succeed, it must needs be competitive and work harder than the competition in order to survive. Business is a driving part of our current economy, but those who conduct business must be honest in their dealings instead of twisting their words in order to manipulate consumers. I stand behind the great Cicero in asserting that, "...no cruelty can be expedient; for cruelty [even manipulation and dishonesty] is most abhorrent to human nature" (Cicero 106-143 B.C.).

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