

Paper –Marketing Management

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Topic- Ethics in Marketing

Ethics are the standards of behaviour generally accepted by a society. Ethics go beyond laws, which establish the minimum rules a society agrees to follow. The main difference is that it is possible to behave legally but still be unethical. Marketing ethics are the area of applied ethics which deal with the moral principles behind operation and regulation of marketing.

Ethical considerations in marketing centres around issues like the values which marketers infringe on-like honesty, privacy, transparency; whom they affect-like consumers, competitors, public or society as a whole, and how marketing activities are carried out-marketing research, pricing, promotion and distribution.

Marketing people have a responsibility as part of corporate social responsibility, (CSR), to improve community wellbeing through discretionary business practices. Therefore, marketers must be aware of ethical standards and accepted behaviour. This awareness means that marketers must recognise the viewpoints of three key players the company, the industry and the society. Since these three groups almost always have different needs and wants, ethical conflicts are likely to arise. Ethical conflicts in marketing arise in two contexts. First, when there is a difference between the needs of the three groups-the company, the industry, the society-a conflict may arise. Secondly, an ethical conflict may arise when one's personal values conflict with those of the organisation. In either case, a conflict of interest is a possible outcome.

For example, marketers today face ethical dilemmas pertaining to tobacco and liquor advertising, and green marketing.

Standards for ethical marketing guide businesses in efforts to do the right thing. Such standards have four functions

1. To help identify acceptable practices.
2. Foster internal controls.
3. Avoid confusion.
4. Facilitate a basis for discussion.