
From: Cunningham, Jean
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 2:44 PM EDT
To: Edmondson, Amy
Subject: Re: am assuming you got Len's notes too

I'm of two minds.

To be fair to Ben, the issue [REDACTED] raises is one that could be raised about David Yoffie, too -- that David sits on the board of (and receives money from) one tech company but writes about others. This is what the COI policy was meant to address, and the system that we have devised at HBS for addressing the issue is work product disclosure. So long as Ben (or David) identifies those relationships, we leave it up to the reasonable reader to determine whether and how that relationship/interest influenced the writing/output.

But if you step back from the specific incident and look at the broader question -- is Ben acting in ways that are ethical, does Ben's work enhance the reputation of the faculty and the School -- it points to ongoing questions, and further emphasizes the bifurcated response that the FRB identified last week. You could take that very scenario and describe it to an NOM colleague, and they would defend to the death why Ben was on the right side.

And this is what I think is unique and challenging... much in the same way that Ben has been described as unable to see in anything other than black and white, there seems to be very little middle ground when characterizing his activities. Those who are his fans are those who trust his motives and are less concerned with the means than they are with the outcomes. But Lauren is representative of a group that are very concerned about the means and the shadow that Ben's work casts over them.

At any rate, what strikes me in having this forwarded to the FRB is that it's actually outside the mandate of the current FRB review... to the extent that it requires any sort of untangling or a bit of investigation/leg work to determine whether there was wrong-doing (and, if not, disillusion Lauren), I'm not sure that's what the FRB is tasked with doing. So more wondering if there's any interim action that needs to happen. I'm happy to bounce that question off Paul, too.

I'm here until 3:30 or so if it's helpful to talk. My office phone has died, so I can be reached via cell at 978.888.8621.

Thanks!

From: Amy Edmondson <aedmondson@hbs.edu>
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 1:21 PM
To: Jean Cunningham <jcunningham@hbs.edu>
Subject: Re: am assuming you got Len's notes too

I don't know, frankly. What do you think? Happy to jump on the phone.....

Amy C. Edmondson

Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management
HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL
Boston, MA 02163

Author of Building the Future: Big Teaming for Audacious Innovation (Berrett-Koehler, 2016);
Teaming: How organizations learn, innovate and compete in the knowledge economy (Jossey-Bass, 2012)

From: "Cunningham, Jean" <jcunningham@hbs.edu>
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 1:11 PM
To: "Edmondson, Amy" <aedmondson@hbs.edu>
Subject: Re: am assuming you got Len's notes too

All set here. Am drafting today and hope to have a version to you by tomorrow.

Perhaps we might talk at some point about how to think about/incorporate the [REDACTED] email? I want to be sure I'm thinking about this the same way you are (including whether the FRB is the appropriate "receiver" of this).

Thanks!

From: Amy Edmondson <aedmondson@hbs.edu>
Date: Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 4:01 PM
To: Jean Cunningham <jcunningham@hbs.edu>
Subject: am assuming you got Len's notes too

But let me know if not, and I can send....

Amy C. Edmondson
Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management
HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL
Boston, MA 02163

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