**FLEXTRONICS BUSINESS ETHICS CASE WRITING COMPETITION 2013**

##### Letter to the MBA Students of Chinese Business Schools

Dear MBA students,

Looking back over the past two decades, we find that the world’s economic situation has undergone tremendous changes, including China’s; the financial crisis brought on by risky subprime lending, as well as other financial situations that have engulfed the world into becoming a serious economic crisis. While China’s GDP had risen rapidly, surpassing that of Japan’s to become the world’s second largest economy; it has also been exposed to greater problems. More than ever, we urgently need an open, fair and mutually beneficial and ethical business environment to reduce the social transaction cost in order to guarantee a healthy business environment for maintaining China’s sustainable development after the world economic crisis.

Business ethics and commercial law govern individuals and enterprise organizations in different levels to create an organic, mutually beneficial and healthy order within the business environment. Business ethics and commercial law also play an important policing role to create an organic and mutually beneficial environment in the different levels of business community.

In combining the external “public opinion” and the internal “self-restraint”, business ethics acting as a safety mechanism for various stakeholders within the business community to create the long-term benefits and mutual benefits to the whole business community. It can be said that business ethics is a kind of “ethical consensus” that can act as useful and necessary supplement to commercial law, and provide important conduct guidelines for a virtuous and sustainable business environment. A well-known Chinese private entrepreneur, Feng Lun, once indicated in his book *Yeman Shengzhang[[1]](#footnote-1)* that in the early days of the economic reforms, countless entrepreneurs committed some form of “original sin” while developing their business. During that early era of market economy, both of the entrepreneurs and consumers have paid a heavy price for lack of mature commercial laws and business ethics.

In recent years, the legal system of the Chinese business community has been set up and gradually tweaked with the enactment of a series of commercial regulations; however the ethical behavior of Chinese business community is still alarming. The “QQ-360 Conflict”, Alibaba’s “Spirit of the Contract”, Sanlu’s “melamine milk”, Shuanghui’s “chemically enhanced lean meat”, DaVinci Furniture’s “fake imported goods” and the startling high-speed train derailment. One after another, these horrific business ethics cases have reminded all of us that in the contemporary business environment, Chinese companies still have deficiencies and shortcomings in the areas of business ethics and corporate social responsibility.

So, how should one establish the environment for responsible business ethics? Although within the notion of “barbaric yet free growth”, a number of methods can be used to slowly create and form business ethics such as through the chamber of commerce, industry consensus, media supervision, visionary entrepreneurs or case analysis, this process is long and can be very expensive.

In fact, as an up-and-coming market economy, we can choose a shortcut to learn the business ethics of a developed market economy – the Business School. For nearly 30 years, the Business School has brought to China a new means of professional management education. Many aspects such as business technology and commercial law enhance the overall quality of China’s future entrepreneurial managers, but at the same time business ethics education can assist entrepreneurial managers in creating their own ethical views on business. Case scenarios of business ethics can help entrepreneurs to ponder in advance what course of action to take when their companies or the entrepreneur themselves are faced with “ethical dilemmas”.

For these reasons, the education of the Business School and the students of the Business School are the next generation of business leaders who will carry the burden now. Not only will they explore the economy and manage it themselves, they should also strive to establish an ethical environment for the business community and a burden of corporate social responsibility. This is also the aspiration of the Tsinghua Center for Leadership Development and Research to work and cooperate with the Flextronics group to host the “2013 Flextronics Business Ethics Writing Competition”.

Benefiting from experience and learning from the mistakes of predecessors, each and every business ethics case provides many opportunities for future business managers to think and get a grip with “ethical conflicts”, before they consider any decision when such issues present themselves. One after another, the successful and failed business scenarios allow us to gain more experience and to learn lessons from them. They also allow us to avoid mistakes and to sustain a healthy growth together with the superior and flourishing development of modern China.

As students of the Business School and future business leaders of China, let’s learn from and ponder deeply the business ethics class; analyze and discuss in depth of the Business Ethics Writing Competition; and then shoulder the responsibility and take on the task of maintaining a healthy business environment.

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” In the future business environment of China, everyone must genuinely practice responsible business ethical behavior in every decision regardless of the significance. We must put serious thought and consideration into every aspect of our decisions and behavior in business. Dear students, let us work and strive together for creating a responsible business ethics environment in China.

Flextronics 2013 Business Ethics Writing Competition Review Committee

Dec 30, 2013

##### Competition Principle

All business ethics case teams must have an original and real case and have full copyright for that case.

##### Case Content (select from one of the following, no word limit)

* Ethical choices of the individual in the business environment
* Strategic options for a business organization in the business environment
* In-depth research and information gathered on a public incident related to business ethics

##### Team

* Each team cannot exceed four people, individual entries are also accepted
* There are no limitations on the number of teams that can participate from the same school or college

##### Prize

Team honors: Recommendation to be included in the Tsinghua SEM and Harvard Business School case database.

* First Prize Category: One winner, prize money of 20,000RMB
* Second Prize Category: Two winners, prize money of 10,000RMB
* Third Prize Category: Five to seven winners, prize money of 5,000RMB

**Agenda**

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| **Content** | **Timing** |
| Registration | Dec 30, 2013-Jan 19, 2014 |
| Case writing and submission | Jan 20, 2014-Feb 28, 2014 |
| Initial case screening | Mar 1, 2014-Mar 12, 2014 |
| Release of cases short-list | Mar 14, 2014 |
| Final refinements of the cases | Mar 15, 2014-Apr 06, 2014 |
| Presentation and award ceremony | By mid of Apr, 2014 |

1. 野蛮生长 – translates to “Brutal Growth” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)