Being Your Best Self Project – Part 3

Moral Intent

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## Introduction

The chosen article offers a comprehensive look at an ethical issue that has been in the news since the #MeToo Movement (Tippett, 2018). Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace is a prevalent issue at present. An example of this could be seen in the article “Female Microsoft employees accuse the tech giant of discrimination and of ignoring cases of sexual harassment in a 90-page leaked email thread shared among staff” (Ardehali, 2019). This article was published in a well-known newspaper, the Daily Mail UK on April 5, 2019, and raises awareness about a highly prevalent ethical issue in today’s global business market.

## Discussion

The mere idea that 90-page long email thread could be circulated around a Microsoft office and then released to the media, with the women detailing how the management wouldn’t pay heed to their complains is an issue in itself. However, the bigger issue is how the management had been treating the situation in the past and how they will continue to treat it once they have thoroughly investigated the claims, as they promised.

The human mind is a funny thing. It finds ways to placate itself and turn the other cheek when things take a turn for the worse. This is exactly the problem with most corporations in terms of its HR and PR departments. The HR that is responsible for the human capital of the organization often chooses to practice moral muteness, rationalization, justification and distraction to keep loss aversion at bay. On the other hand, the PR department is usually hard at work to maintain the public image of the firm and a scandal of sexual nature can deeply harm the company’s reputation (Noe et al., 2017). In these situations, the HR would rather distract the individual with a complaint and give justifications as to why they cannot take an action. Sometimes, they just simply proclaim that the complaint doesn’t have any evidentiary support. If all else fail, the use rationalization to make sense of the entire situation is also a tool frequently employed by them. The could rationalize the situation with statements like if you have been dressing up for the office, have been casually flirting with your coworkers and seeking attention of all those around you, you must expect for someone to take things to the next level, one where you may not like what happens to do. This form of distraction and the moral muteness of those witnessing it is the main issue here.

While most people are better aware of the situation now, the idea of practicing moral muteness about the people that you know or are higher up in the organization’s hierarchy is still very much the go-to method here. It isn’t that they are not ethically or morally right, especially in regard to their moral intent. However, it is just that they do not believe in needlessly rocking the boat as they did before. They know the legal implications of consent and how forcing themselves on someone can have a potentially negative impact on their life (Joshi and Jain, 2018). If one analyzes the situation with Microsoft, using moral muteness, over justifications and distraction leading to creation of a festering wound within the women. It has not only affected the present female workforce and had then believe that the HR couldn’t help them in any way, but also made women feel unsafe about applying to the company. Additionally, when the contents of the email threat were sent to *Quartz* and then leaked to the public, it was time for some serious damage control.

## Conclusion

Microsoft, upon seeing the email thread online, has vowed to look into the claims that were made and see to the fact that appropriate actions are taken. However, following moral ethics, that teach you how to differentiate between the right and the wrong sometimes becomes undermined by moral intent. If the required authorities had taken the right step, at the right time, none of this would have happened. In the end, by keeping your moral intent in check and staying within the ethical boundaries, you would be easily be able to make hard decisions without any regrets.

# References

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