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Preface

Ethics is about determining value; it's deciding what's worth doing and what doesn't matter so much. Business ethics is the way we decide what kind of career to pursue, what choices we make on the job, which companies we want to work with, and what kind of economic world we want to live in and then leave behind for those coming after. There are no perfect answers to these questions, but there's a difference between thinking them through and winging it. *The Business Ethics Workshop* provides a framework for identifying, analyzing, and resolving ethical dilemmas encountered through working life.

This text's principles:

- **It's your call.** Some of the book's case studies ask for defenses of ethical positions that few agree with (for example, the claim that a drug dealer's job is better than a police officer's). Exercises like this align with the textbook's aim: provoking reasoning freed from customary divisions between right and wrong. In the end, no one completely resists their own habits of thinking or society's broad pressures, but testing the limits sharpens the tools of ethical analysis. These tools can be relied on later on when you face decisions that you alone have to make. The aim of this book is to help make those decisions with coherent, defensible reasoning.
- **Keep it mostly real.** Ethics is an everyday activity. It's not mysterious, head-in-the-clouds ruminating but determining the worth of things around us: Working at an advertising agency is exciting—actors, lights, cameras, and TV commercials—but do I really want to hock sugary breakfast cereals to children? Should I risk my reputation by hiring my college roommate, the one whose habits of showing up late and erratically to class have carried over to working life? These are the immediate questions of business ethics, and while any textbook on the subject must address broad, impersonal questions including the responsibilities of massive corporations in modern societies, this book's focus stays as often as possible on ordinary people in normal but difficult circumstances.
- **Be current.** The rules of ethical thinking don't change much, but the world is a constant revolution. The textbook and its cases follow along as closely as possible, citing from blog posts and recent news stories. As a note here, to facilitate reading some of these citations have been slightly and silently modified.

- **Let's talk about our problem.** Case studies are the most important components of this text because it was written for a discussion-intensive class. Ethics isn't something we know; it's something we do, and trying out our reasoning is the best way to confirm that it's actually working.
- **Options.** Unnamed Publisher's unique publishing model makes it easy for instructors to customize *The Business Ethics Workshop* to suit their courses' particular needs. This textbook is composed of stand-alone chapters that may be compiled in any sequence. It should be noted, however, that the standard arrangement of applied ethics textbooks is followed in the core text: Specific ethical theories from the history of philosophy are developed in the initial chapters. Subsequent chapters unite the theories with questions in the economic world.