

FOREWORD

YOU ARE ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES—you picked up this book! The favor you can do for yourself is to run to the checkout stand (or click and point on-screen), invest your hard-earned money, and buy it. Here's why:

On each and every page you'll find out why we all from time to time have acted in unethical ways. Perhaps knowingly, perhaps not. At the end of the day, it all boils down to how acting unethically ultimately effects or infects our self-esteem and self-worth.

ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL, Erin's cell phone rang (go figure). Her best friend had just broken up with her boyfriend, and she asked Erin to skip the first class of the day to comfort her. Reluctantly, Erin agreed, and they met at the local coffee house. Erin, a 4.0 GPA student and senior class president, was promptly busted, which led to a three-day suspension and a request from the school principal to step down from the position of class president because of her unethical behavior. On top of that, her parents pulled her cell phone for four weeks and grounded her for the same period of time (four weeks is like a lifetime to a teenager).

AN ETHICAL TRAP OF SORTS

What happened to Erin on her way to school happens to each and every one of us each and every day—we find ourselves in a trap of

sorts. What really matters is how we respond to traps, a response that will make either deposits or withdrawals in our self-esteem bank account and either honor ethics or put them at risk. And as with a well-run, fiscally responsible business, operating in the black versus in the red make the difference in future wealth, stability, growth, reputation, success, and happiness.

Erin's response to her girlfriend's request created a withdrawal—a consequence. Erin's response to that consequence has the power to create either yet another withdrawal or a deposit. Yep, another “trap” has presented itself!

Let's say Erin responds with, “How unfair! What a bust! What an over-reaction! Suspension! Forfeit my presidency . . . after all my hard-work campaigning? And what gives with my parents? Four weeks without a phone! My friends will forget I exist!” And as Erin begins to rebel and fails to see her part in what *she* created, she has just encountered another ethical trap (there are forty-five, to be exact, which you'll be learning all about in the chapters that follow).

This book will not teach you how to be ethical. Instead, and more important, it will educate you to recognize the day-to-day ethical traps that we all face, analyze them, and give the practical, usable information you need to respond in a way that supports good intention, fair decisions, and abundant wealth. Whether you're a CEO, a layperson, an executive, or a manager, knowledge of the traps described in this book will give you chance after chance to make substantial deposits in your self-esteem bank account.

Oh, one more thought: after you read this book, give it to the people you love the most and have them read it. You'll be glad you did.

Anthony Parinello,
author of Think & Sell Like a CEO