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Without a doubt, this has been an unforgettable year. There is no need to rehash names or events, for they are by now embedded in our memories as well as in our hearts forever. Our heroes now come from amongst our own ranks: the common man. From the struggle in mid air to spare the lives of those on the ground, to the unselfish climb into the guts of a burning building that would ultimately claim the supreme sacrifice. No hesitation. No second thought. In the face of despair, your neighbors, your friends, and what once may have been strangers, have showed us what we are... or should be made of as Americans. Without a doubt, more heroes will come from our war fighters abroad and at home, for our struggle is not over yet.

With the holidays upon us, the gift of life with which we have been blessed must not be taken lightly. These holidays are not about bright lights, shopping, and symbolic themes. Not at all. That is part of our economic recovery effort and it should be honored as a means to demonstrate our commitment. Our celebration has taken a new significance. Along with our religious devotion, we must also celebrate the courage, determination, and sacrifice of those who held on tightly to our way of life to the very end. An untimely end at that. We must celebrate the fact that in spite of these events, we have been brought together as a nation. Bruised?... perhaps. Startled?... certainly. But never, ever defeated. Indeed, we are blessed to be where we are.

ALC is honored to be a part of the current struggle to preserve freedom, both at home and overseas. And this honor we owe to our employees. We could not have asked for a more dedicated team than the one that currently supports us, for without them our climb would have been steeper. All of us at ALC celebrate their commitment. Their dedication. Their strength. And amidst our celebration, we also pray for peace and strength to move forward with our lives.

I sincerely hope that all of us conclude this year with a little more patience and understanding. I know that we are now closer to each other as a nation than we have ever been. Let us pray that this feeling carries on in perpetuity. ALC would like to wish all of its employees, associates, and friends the happiest and safest of holidays and may the New Year bring peace and stability back into our lives.

God Bless.

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From Maryland to the World

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At Ground Zero



The dust appears to be settling in midtown while work at the Pentagon is now nearly forgotten. Thanks to the benevolence of the media which every now and then finds something else upon which to feed its ratings, our breakfasts, lunches, and dinners are no longer garnished with the gruesome images that permeated our airwaves uninterrupted for two-months. One could comfortably state that things are beginning to fall in place, or otherwise "back to normal." Indeed they are. Just consider the following: while still faced with imponderables brought upon us by terrorists, and fighting a War at home as well as abroad (because unless some of you have been in deep hibernation since September, there is a permanent heightened state of alert right outside of our front doors), our special interest groups, our

legislators, and a good dose of media frenzy have found a way to affect our reborn patriotic awareness by injecting doubt, jeopardizing security, and ultimately focusing on opinion rather than action. Yes, we are back to normal indeed.

Beyond the atrocious loss of lives (if that alone does not startle some of you) the economic fallout of September 11th should be more than sufficient to keep us focused and hard at work on the immediate need to achieve domestic security at any cost. Instead, some folks have chosen to question our ways, triple-check our means, and make darn sure that both parties in Congress get their share of opinion on whether the Federal Government should monitor, regulate, arbitrate, supervise or simply operate our airports. It is beyond me that this modern day Pearl Harbor can still generate opinions other than the determination to fight fast and hard in order to eradicate terrorism.

So, here we go again. As we always do, surreptitiously prompted to forget by shrouding reality with absurdity. In fact, the vast majority of people today could barely tell us the difference between Iran and Iraq, let alone the reasons that got us into a conflict with these countries in the first place. Lack of awareness, coupled with poor memory and unconscious complacency have always (and may forever) cripple our way of life. True, nobody wants War. That should be, and effectively is, the final recourse to end an otherwise catastrophic conflict. And, we'd better believe that this one is not a simple standoff. This is purely catastrophic. We are not simply striking back, we are struggling to preserve peace and life. And not just within our borders, but globally.

It is, therefore, mesmerizing to see advocates against War addressing their point in a unilateral fashion. Not only we have sustained one of the greatest losses of life in peacetime, but amidst the short-order economic devastation that came as a result of it, America still has fingers pointed at it for trying to eradicate a global illness. From under rocks now come the media philosophers, Pulitzer-price writers, and political profiteers by the bus load to perpetuate the plunder of our national tragedy. Wouldn't it be nice to re-route their bus across the ocean, and right into the source of the conflict? Yes, it would. However, this is America. And she stands for the very things that allow just about everyone to take a shot at its way of life, its decision-making power, and its attitude towards conflicts. Perhaps knowing that such is the case, we should work hard at protecting rather than abusing. Preventing rather than revealing. And learning, rather than forgetting.

Of course, this is just our opinion. What's yours?

For comments e-mail to: [The Editor](#)

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Work Ethics?



Ethics (Greek ethika, from ethos, "character," "custom"), principles or standards of human conduct, sometimes called morals (Latin mores, "customs"), and, by extension, the study of such principles, sometimes called moral philosophy. Ethics, as a branch of philosophy, is considered a normative science, because it is concerned with norms of human conduct, as distinguished from the formal sciences, such as mathematics and logic, and the empirical sciences, such as chemistry and physics. The empirical social sciences, however, including psychology, impinge to some extent on the concerns of ethics in that they study social behavior. For example, the social sciences frequently attempt to determine the relation of particular ethical principles to social behavior and to investigate the cultural conditions that contribute to the formation of such principles.

Philosophers and psychologists, on the other hand, have attempted to determine goodness in conduct according to two chief principles, and have considered certain types of conduct either good in themselves or good because they conform to a particular moral standard. The former implies a final value, or summum bonum, which is desirable in itself and not merely as a means to an end. In the history of ethics there are three principal standards of conduct, each of which has been proposed as the highest good: happiness or pleasure; duty, virtue, or obligation; and perfection, the fullest harmonious development of human potential.

And why this introduction? Because a group of employees brought the matter to the attention of the Editor as a means to touch upon the issue of "ethics" for the sake of understanding. As it turns out, though we have looked, and looked, and looked for it... we cannot seem to find much of it these days. Naturally, we will only concentrate on that standard of conduct that applies to the commercial world: duty, virtue, or obligation. Since the horrific events of September 11, we have witnessed and heard more opportunistic behavior than ever before. Sort of a bargaining chip that usually is pulled out at the eleventh hour, and always under strenuous circumstances. A hostage situation... if one can imagine such aberration after what our country has gone through in the past three months. Without a doubt, our effort to achieve "globalization" may be working against us and potentially changing our way of life in America.

Is this a culture-related phenomenon? Doubtful, albeit arguable. We all see many things in a different light. However, duty, virtue, and responsibility (or obligation, in the case of a written contract for instance) have always remained a constant for those of us reared in the United States. It is as incontrovertible as freedom itself. Still, is it possible that different nationalities view ethics in a different light than Americans do? You bet. The culprit: opportunity. In the face of opportunity, the vast majority of people who have not been indoctrinated properly in the values of duty, virtue, and responsibility in America, reject ethics as something applicable to "someone else." Usually, these individuals find a clear and even moral justification to their opportunistic behavior. In all cases, one must follow the money trail. And money eliminates preference for one behavior over another. Obviously, a person lacking motivation to exercise preference may be resigned to accepting all customs and therefore may develop a philosophy of false prudence. He or she then lives in conformity with the moral conduct of the period, place and society that surrounds him or her... as it is perceived by him or her.

Therefore, it is not only possible but certain that ethics at the global level is a matter of perception. Corporate America has always relied on ethics as a driving force. In spite of having started with a handshake, and later replaced by contracts, there are no further negotiations, bargaining, or carpet-bagging once the ink is dry. And never, under any circumstances, bargaining will be accepted where national security is at stake. However, we should get used to the idea that there is always a chance that a gun may be held to our heads at any given time... usually at the most inopportune of times. Underhanded?... no question about it. Frustrating?... absolutely. A good lesson?... irrefutably.

Nevertheless, if it is any consolation, a new wave of awareness is rushing towards us. And this wave carries with it the values of the past, as well as simple parameters: acceptance or rejection. In a nutshell, if one accepts the responsibility then that person must abide by the rules as written. Who knows, perhaps there is still time to take America back to where and what it was. We believe that there is.

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ALC will be introducing 360 by 360 spherical images for presentations and training (*feel free to scroll the photograph on the left with your mouse. Whenever a thicker arrow pointing upwards appears, click on it and it should take into the adjacent room of our headquarters. If your viewer does not allow you to scroll, ask us for an uncompressed sample via e-mail*)

In addition to its fast-growing Video, DVD, and 3-D Animation services, ALC is now working on interactive technology capable of delivering stunning photographic presentations via rotating images in CD-ROM or DVD. Very soon, the company will introduce a complete line of applications for its newly-developed service. ALC interactive imaging technology, alone or combined with other digital media such as audio, video and animation, offers many compelling applications for multiple markets including real estate, e-commerce, travel and hospitality, entertainment and security and monitoring. It provides the leading immersive, 360 by 360 technology. This echnology creates interactive, full motion/direction images by combining two 185° film or digital photographs taken

with a fisheye lens into one 360° by 360° spherical image.

The software automatically compensates for any minor error in camera placement and corrects the distortion inherent in these photographs. The resulting image can be viewed in any direction, up-down, left-right, and horizon to horizon. The viewer can easily navigate the image by moving a cursor inside the image or using the navigation bar. Whether one chooses a full 360° by 360° view or a 180° by 360° view, this type of imaging captures and delivers more information in a single scene than traditional image capture. And it is all captured in context. Because of its simple capture and maximum field of view, it is the most cost-effective way to capture and document a full scene or environment.

Many markets are widely adopting images to create a more compelling interactive viewing experience that increases buyer confidence and immerses the viewer in the photographed scene. Security, observation and visual documentation companies are also using this technology to benefit from the easy capture, quick seaming process, and full 360 x 360 views that can help them execute an emergency plan, document a hazardous waste area for safe off-site viewing, allow for more accurate training and maintenance exercises in a classroom environment, or simply offer reference material to employees or on-base residents and their families.

ALC is currently working with law enforcement in order to launch a series of security training DVD's that will offer clients the flexibility of either using the material directly from the DVD (in any player or computer with no zone restrictions) or simply "drag-and-drop" the material directly onto their websites for immediate applicability through the Internet.

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Fun Stuff



For those of you who do not know the value of a cross-cultural translation, try these:

1. Coors put its slogan, "Turn it loose," into Spanish, where it was read as "Suffer from diarrhea."
2. Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer Electrolux used the following in an American campaign: "Nothing sucks like an Electrolux."
3. Clairol introduced the "Mist Stick", a curling iron, into German only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure. Not too many people had use for the "manure stick."
4. When Gerber started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the U.S., with the beautiful Caucasian baby on the label. Later they learned that in Africa, companies routinely put pictures on the label of what's inside, since most people can't read.
5. Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno magazine.
6. An American T-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market which promoted the Pope's visit. Instead of "I saw the Pope" (el Papa), the shirts read "I saw the potato" (la papa).
7. Pepsi's "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" translated into "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave", in Chinese.
8. Frank Perdue's chicken slogan, "it takes a strong man to make a tender chicken" was translated into Spanish as "it takes an aroused man to make a chicken affectionate."
9. The Coca-Cola name in China was first read as "Ke-kou-ke-la", meaning "Bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax", depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 characters to find a phonetic equivalent "ko-kou-ko-le", translating into "happiness in the mouth."
10. When Parker Pen marketed a ball-point pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to have read, "it won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you". Instead, the company thought that the word "embarazar" (to impregnate) meant to embarrass, so the ad read: "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant."

Job-search specialist Robert Half reports that the following bon mots recently appeared on actual resumes:

"I am extremely loyal to my present firm, so please don't let them know of my immediate availability."

"Qualifications: I am a man filled with passion and integrity, and I can act on short notice. I'm a class act and do not come cheap."

"I intentionally omitted my salary history. I've made money and lost money. I've been rich and I've been poor. I prefer being rich."

"Note: Please don't misconstrue my 14 jobs as 'job-hopping'. I have never quit a job."

"Personal: I'm married with 9 children. I don't require prescription drugs."

"Number of dependents: 40."

"Marital Status: Often. Children: Various."

"Here are my qualifications for you to overlook."

REASONS FOR LEAVING THE LAST JOB:

"Responsibility makes me nervous."

"They insisted that all employees get to work by 8:45 every morning. Couldn't work under those conditions."

"Was met with a string of broken promises and lies, as well as cockroaches."

"I was working for my mom until she decided to move."

"The company made me a scapegoat - just like my three previous employers."

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

"While I am open to the initial nature of an assignment, I am decidedly disposed that it be so oriented as to at least partially incorporate the experience enjoyed heretofore and that it be configured so as to ultimately lead to the application of more rarefied facets of financial management as the major sphere of responsibility."

"I was proud to win the Gregg Typing Award."

"High voltage telephone answering."

"Extensive prof reading skills."

SPECIAL REQUESTS & JOB OBJECTIVES:

"Please call me after 5:30 because I am self-employed and my employer does not know I am looking for another job."

"My goal is to be a meteorologist. But since I have no training in meteorology, I suppose I should try stock brokerage."

"I procrastinate - especially when the task is unpleasant."

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:

"Minor allergies to house cats and Mongolian sheep."

PERSONAL INTERESTS:

"Donating blood. 14 gallons so far."

SMALL TYPOS THAT CAN CHANGE THE MEANING:

"Education: College, August 1880-May 1984."

"Work Experience: Dealing with customers' conflicts that arouse."

"Develop and recommend an annual operating expense fudget."

"I'm a rabid typist."

"Instrumental in ruining entire operation for a Midwest chain operation"

"Your requirements match the responsibilities of my present job precisely, so I will be glad to do do again."

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