



Reasoning with Ethics

MAY 11, 2020

A Project of The School for Ethical Education | www.ethicsed.org

Ethics in action creates character.

Use this blog to:

1. Lead class discussions in social studies, civics, ethics or advisory classes.
2. Teach students skills to analyze cases with core ethical values.
3. Recognize skills in support of SEE's Tri-Factor Model of ethical functioning.

[Visit the online Ethics Blog.](#)



Business Ethics during COVID-19

As the largest private delivery service in the US, Amazon has many challenges. The challenges have only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approximately 600 Amazon employees have contracted the virus and there are complaints that working conditions in distribution

centers are spreading the virus, a complaint that Amazon refutes and reports a \$4 billion investment in strategies to resist COVID. Individuals who have organized protests on working conditions have been fired, while Amazon cites their efforts to implement healthy working procedures and disinfecting plans for each of their warehouses.

The size and scope of Amazon's challenges are only shared by a handful of national employers. Every employer will be faced with choices related to running their business in the new world of COVID-19. A big challenge is the health risks of operating in the COVID world versus the certain bankruptcy of staying shut down. Every businessperson will also need to choose how much to invest in new COVID-required procedures and safety practices versus procedures in the pre-COVID world

Students are asked to consider if these business questions are limited to economic questions, or do they have an ethical basis. If there are ethical questions associated with reopening and running a business, what core values might guide an ethical outcome? Is there any ethical support for increasing health risks in a business continuing to operate or reopen?

Supplemental Link

CBS News story: <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/amazon-workforce-safety-60-minutes-2020-05-10/>

