

Ethics of Emotional Intelligence in Organizations

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According to Richard Sennett, concepts such as flexibility, decentralization and control, work ethic and teamwork in the New Economy have led to disorientation and emotional and psychological undermining of the individual, stating that "a regime which provides human beings no deep reasons to care about on other cannot long preserve its legitimacy." (Sennett 2000) He defines the New Economy as the new form of "flexible capitalism".

According to Willmott, the purpose of corporate culture is to win the "hearts and minds" of employees: to define their goals by managing what they think and feel, and not just how they behave. (Willmott 1993) It is claimed that the strengthening of corporate cultures provides the key to ensuring the "unusual effort on the part of apparently ordinary employees," (Piereson 1983, xvii) Transforming them into "winners", "champions" and "everyday heroes". Willmott

paraphrases Harvey (Harvey 1991) by stating that "within a broader context, corporate culturism can be seen to form an important ideological element within a global restructuring of capital, labor and product markets that involves a movement away from the '5 dollars a day' logic of Fordism towards the contingent, fluid organizing philosophy of 'flexible accumulation'". (Willmott 1993) Corporate culture expects and asks employees to internalize the new values of "quality", "flexibility" and "added value" - to adopt and value them as their own people. Within organizations, corporate culture programs, human resources management and total quality management promote a corporate ethos that demands loyalty to employees because it excludes, silences or punishes those who question its belief. (Willmott 1993)

Critical analysis explores how employees are determined to think and feel about their activity, how managers offer employees "a mission as well as a sense of feeling great." (Staw and Cummings 1981) Wilkinson et al. notes that corporate culture programs (and HRM/TQM) are trying to "immerse employees in the "logic" of the market". (Wilkinson, Allen, and Snape 2013) According to Thompson and McHugh, employees "are encouraged to perceive their performance and utility to the enterprise as their responsibility." (Thompson and McHugh 1990, 241)

Corporate culturism systematizes and legitimizes a control mode by which employees' consciousness is modeled, thus becoming an environment of new type totalitarianism. This is how *doublethinking* is promoted, a term coined by George Orwell in his dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, (Orwell 1990) by simultaneously affirming and denying the conditions of autonomy. Respectively, employees are suggested that identification with corporate values ensures their autonomy. According to Willmott, if in Orwell's *Oceania*, "freedom is slavery" and "ignorance is force", in the corporate culture world "slavery is freedom" and "power is ignorance". By strengthening corporate cultures, employees' lack of control over the means of production

(Edwards 1979) is compounded by a (more systematic) lack of control over the means of choosing the value and formation of identity, (Willmott 1990) individualizing and segmenting capitalist market relationships. (Peters 1988)

For Weber, the alternative to expanding corporate culture is the deliberate choice and refinement of the values that guide individual action. A paradoxical consequence of the consolidation of the corporate culture is a degradation and distortion of communication, through an instrumentalism induced by the employees (Anthony 1990) that can turn into skepticism regarding the values of the corporate culturalism. Many employees may find that their professional lives turn into a vicious cycle. Corporate culturism thus reproduces the conditions of demoralization and degradation for which it is presented as a remedy.

The objection to the philosophy of corporate culture is that corporate culturalism consists in eliminating pluralism and the associated conflict of values in order to facilitate the social process of emotional and intellectual struggle for self-determination. In the name of moral renewal, corporate culture programs celebrate, exploit, distort and drain the declining cultural resource of democratic values. The well-socialized and self-disciplined corporate employee "is expected to have no private emotions and no respites from enthusiasm . . . the speculations which might possibly induce a skeptical or rebellious attitude are killed in advance by his early acquired inner discipline." (Orwell 1990, 220) Corporate culture threatens to promote a hypermodern neo-authoritarianism that is potentially more insidious and sinister than its bureaucratic predecessor. (Willmott 1992)

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