

FOREWORD

Time is short. Everyone is busy. But please take time to read this book. You won't regret it. That is, if you're asking yourself how in God's name could Enron have happened. Or if you wonder if it could happen to your company—or even to you personally. “What!? Me, a Ken Lay or Jeff Skilling or Andy Fastow? You've got to be kidding! I'd not dream of doing those things. I'm ethical, not a crook.”

But let Denis Collins show you how easy it is to slide off the ethical pathway and find yourself taking the low road—*without even noticing it!* Most business decisions at Enron were just that—how to grow the company, manage people, keep costs low, make shareholders happy. Nothing much “ethical or unethical” about that—no special advice needed beyond good business judgment. Besides, anyone in doubt could always check the Enron Code of Ethics, one of the best around.

So what went wrong? Follow the story yourself to find out. Collins leads you step by step from the beginning, through the glory days, and to the final crash of one of America's most famous corporations. As the story unfolds, put yourself in the shoes of CEOs Lay and Skilling, CFO Fastow, Arthur Andersen's David Duncan, even whistleblower Sheron Watkins, and all the other actors in this long-running ethics tragedy. *What would you have done? Or done differently? Or more ethically?* That's what Denis Collins asks you

to do. Could you—or would you—have made better decisions? Then, take a private moment and honestly ponder your own personal answer. You may wind up being more sympathetic with the Enron bad guys than you first thought.

But the author of *Behaving Badly: Lessons Learned from Enron* offers you a way out of the all-too-human dilemma of facing an ethics crisis at work—one that makes ethics work for the company and everyone involved. You could call it the Denis Collins Business Ethics Toolkit—a simple, logical, ethically sound way of thinking one's way through the kinds of ethics issues that led to Enron's downfall. Don't be put off by its simplicity or ease of use. He has spared you the fuzzy jargon sometimes found in ethics primers. It's the kind of talk used every day in most companies. It's practical. You can put it to work in your own job and company. You'll be glad to have it—and to share it with fellow workers.

Collins himself has had direct hands-on experience in the workplace, so he understands how ethics can look to a decision maker. I guess you could say he's on your side. That's the side the angels are on, isn't it?

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