Business owners struggle with making ethical decisions. Often, decisions that are best for the business fail to follow legal and moral ideals. As new small business owners, my partner and I soon encountered an ethical dilemma regarding the hiring of a marketing manager for our restaurant mobile menu application. Ethical decision-making requires finding the best option that brings a successful outcome to the business and that provides the least amount of harm to the stakeholders. The decision must reflect my moral values of integrity and fairness and obey the law. My partner and I should be in agreement because we agreed to make all business decisions together. We must decide if our business would benefit more from hiring one of two applicants: a highly qualified one or a less qualified one who will bring in additional start-up capital. Using both Joseph L. Badaracco Jr.’s framework for a decision and the eight steps of ethical decision making framework, I will hire the more qualified applicant. This applicant will be the most beneficial addition to the company, and create an ethical rule to hire qualified people as opposed to those who bring an unrelated benefit.

Personal values help us make ethical decisions because they are values we hold ourselves to each and every day. The three main values that I use to help make ethical decisions are empathy, integrity, and fairness. Empathy is important when making decisions because I can consider the stakeholder’s feelings and be aware of the effects of my actions on each person. I also value integrity, or standing up for what is right. Lastly, my belief in fairness guides me to treat others without favoritism. These three values will contribute to successful decision-making not only in life, but also in the business world. I will consider these values when I decide which marketing manager to hire.
My partner and I need to decide if it is morally right to hire a less qualified employee because of an outside financial benefit. If the less qualified applicant were to be hired, it would be partially because my partners’ grandparents promised extra start-up money to hire her. Although this applicant has similar religious beliefs as my partner, and desires to connect our workplace to the community, our customer revenues would not increase without a qualified and experienced candidate communicating directly to them.

In order to make an ethical decision, one must understand the critical facts of the situation. Our mobile application business needs a marketing manager to increase sales. I am responsible for the money that we are using to start up our application. The money we have came from the following: my personal savings account, money earned from previous internships, and a gift that my partners’ grandparents gave us. My partner and I agree that for our mobile application to be successful, we will need to acquire additional capital and hire a marketing manager. The first applicant has marketing work experience. She also knows many of the restaurant owners to whom we would market. The second applicant has little experience and could help the business establish “good will” in the town. If we hire this applicant, we will bring in $50,000 in extra capital from my partners’ grandparents because they value her similar religious beliefs.

Each stakeholder will experience both positive and negative effects regardless of the applicant we choose, but we need to choose the option that causes the least amount of harm. The stakeholders for this decision include: my partner, my partners’ grandparents, the qualified applicant, the less qualified applicant, our business, and me. Each person and our business will be affected based on our choice, and neither of the options benefits everyone. In short, no option is best for everyone involved, but there is an option that determines the best net-net consequence.
My decision will not only have a positive or negative impact on the stakeholders, but also on the business. If we chose the first and more qualified applicant: it can create conflict with my business partner; my partner’s grandparents would not provide additional startup money; the more qualified applicant would get the position that they deserve; and the second applicant would have not gotten the position; I would have chosen the applicant that I prefer; and our business would have an experienced marketing manager who would help increase our sales. If we hired the second applicant: my partner would get his first choice; my partner’s grandparents would gift us with $50,000 in startup funds; the more qualified applicant will lose the position; and the second applicant would assume the position of marketing manager. By hiring the employee because of extra capital, the business would be avoiding the intent of laws against hiring discrimination without actually breaking the law. With these funds, our business would remain a going concern but could eventually fail because our sales never increase.

My decision is to hire the first applicant because of the fourth consideration in the Joseph L. Bardaracco Framework: “What will work in the world as it is?” The goal of adding a marketing manager employee is to increase our sales, something this applicant will do immediately. Sales and marketing are important in the early stages of a business. If our business does well, there will always be future investors who will want to help us. Our business has a smaller chance of failing if we have an excellent marketing manager. The first applicant’s qualifications are what we are looking for and the process of deciding on this applicant compliments my moral values of integrity and fairness. Although denying extra capital has risk involved, it is more beneficial than accepting hiring incentives and donations because every dollar brought in by the marketing manager will be invested towards sales growth. The hiring of this applicant will help us stay consistent with the hiring processes of other businesses. The
second applicant would create “good will” in the community that could help increase future sales, but that is not the primary goal of our business at this time.

By considering both what will work best for our startup and all the relevant risks involved, the decision meets the terms of the Badaracco framework. It also ensures that the business will conduct itself in an empathetic, fair, and integrity-filled manner. This decision therefore does not include any favoritism towards the applicants; it was made with an in-depth analysis of each option within the issue. The choosing of the qualified applicant will mean that we are choosing the best net-net consequence, and we will not have used the second applicant merely for the capital bonuses. Overall, this is the best choice for the business.

My decision also adheres to Kant’s duty-based ethics that stress that people should not be used as a means to an end and a business should act in a manner that can set a precedent for the company. In this ethical issue, if the less qualified applicant were hired, the business would be using her to get extra money from my partner’s grandparents and taking a risk on her lack of experience. Hiring based on extra benefits instead of the skills an applicant possesses creates an unfair practice that cannot ever become a general rule of behavior for others. It is more ethical to hire someone who has all of the qualifications needed for the job that they are applying for. The Badaracco framework and Kantian ethics work well together. Badaracco advocates for finding all of the facts of the case and Kant sets a general rule that can be followed by our business for future hiring. In this dilemma, we contemplated facts and stakes of the decision in question. My partner and I decided on the first applicant because doing so would establish a sound ethical rule to hire qualified people as opposed to those who bring an unrelated benefit. Although the company needs money and the qualified applicant cannot immediately bring that to the company, my decision will improve the credibility of the business.
Following the Badaracco framework and the Kantian ethical view to hire qualified applicants allows businesses to build rapport with customers by ensuring top-notch service and products. Using these methods to hire the qualified applicant will help increase the sales of our mobile application to restaurants around the area. We can use these methods to ensure that our business will benefit the community and future investors.
Works Cited


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