



The Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics: Mission, Program and Approach

Dr. Martin von Brock, Chairman of the Management Board
Waldemar Hötte, Member of the Management Board

Wittenberg, September 21, 2018



About the Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics

Our Starting Point: Ideas Matter



1517



An idea
changed the
world.

1998



„We need an
economic
reformation.“

3

No to an economy of exclusion



*Just as the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, **today we also have to say “thou shalt not” to an economy of exclusion and inequality.***

Such an economy kills.

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium (2013)

4

Classical Dualismus



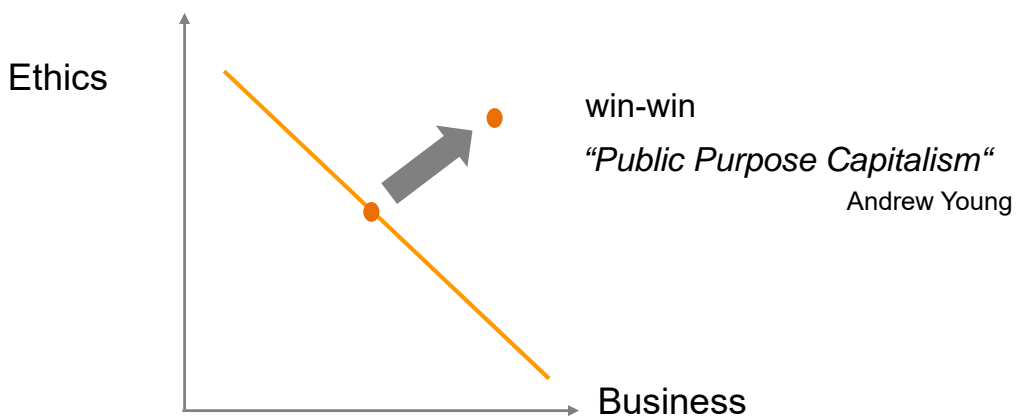
Ethics

- Solidarity
- Sharing
- Common Good
- Dignity

Business

- Self Interests
- Individual Profit Seeking
- Competition
- Merit

Overcoming dualism



Our Mission: Successful Business Needs Ethical Leadership

We offer orientation for ethical leadership in practice

- as a nonprofit and independent think tank,
- with a global perspective,
- based on a sound scientific conception.



Our Program

Program & Credentials

Seminars	Dialogue	Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wittenberg Leadership Seminar ▪ Wittenberg Autumn Academy ▪ Academy for Energy and Acceptance ▪ Ethical Challenges in the life of a diplomat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Code of Ethics for the Chemical Industry ▪ Code of Responsible Conduct in Business ▪ German Business Initiative for Sustainable Value Chains ▪ Ethical Foundation of Management Remuneration ▪ Israel- Jordan Business Talks ▪ Code of Ethics for the Private Sector Uganda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiation of four endowed chairs for business ethics ▪ Doctoral Program "Ethics & Responsible Leadership in Business" ▪ Support of teaching and research
<h3>Individual offers</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corporate Trainings ▪ Values management/ Code of Conduct ▪ Concepts, (Case) Studies 		

Partners

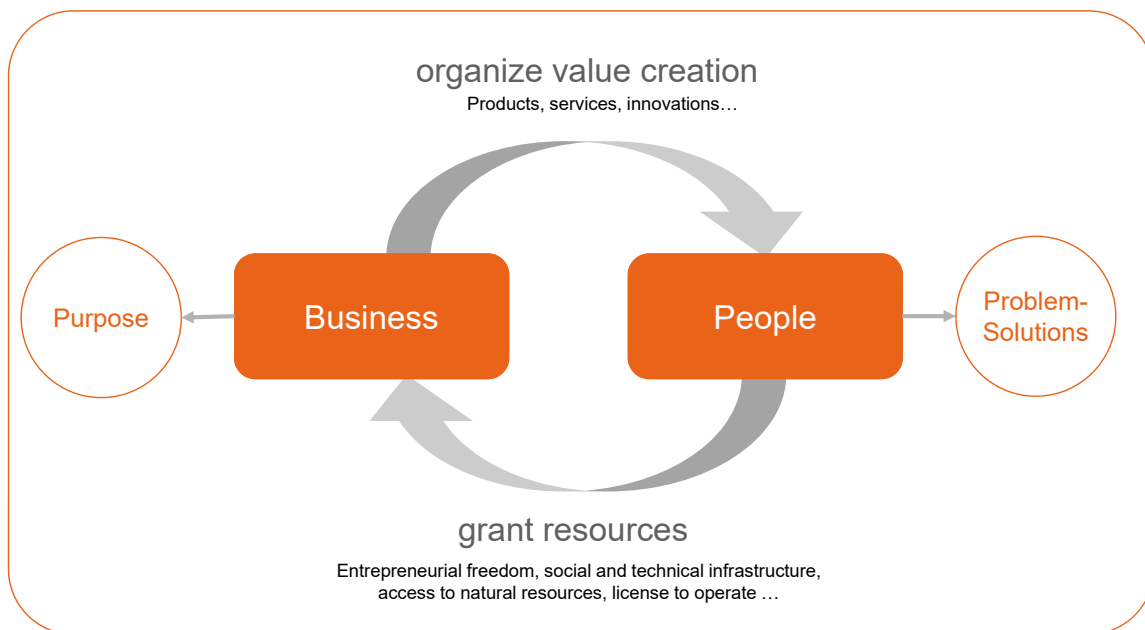
Our Approach to Ethics

Our Guiding Idea (I)

Society is a cooperative venture
for mutual advantage.

John Rawls

The Ethics of Business



- ▶ Businesses are built on cooperation for mutual advantage.

11

Guiding Idea (II)

Society is a cooperative venture for mutual advantage.

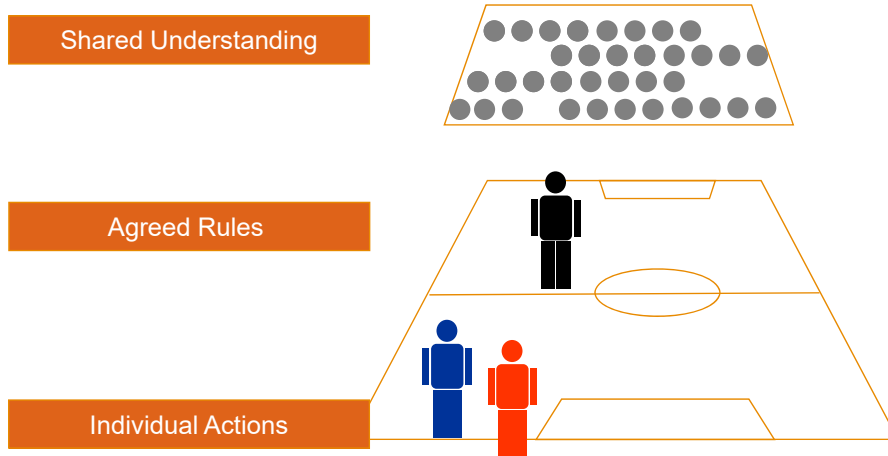
It is typically marked by *a conflict* as well as by *an identity* of interests.

John Rawls

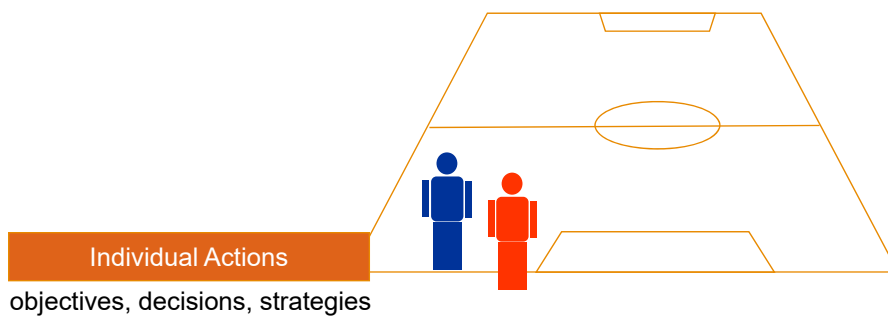
- ▶ Cooperation must succeed in the light of conflicts and competition.

12

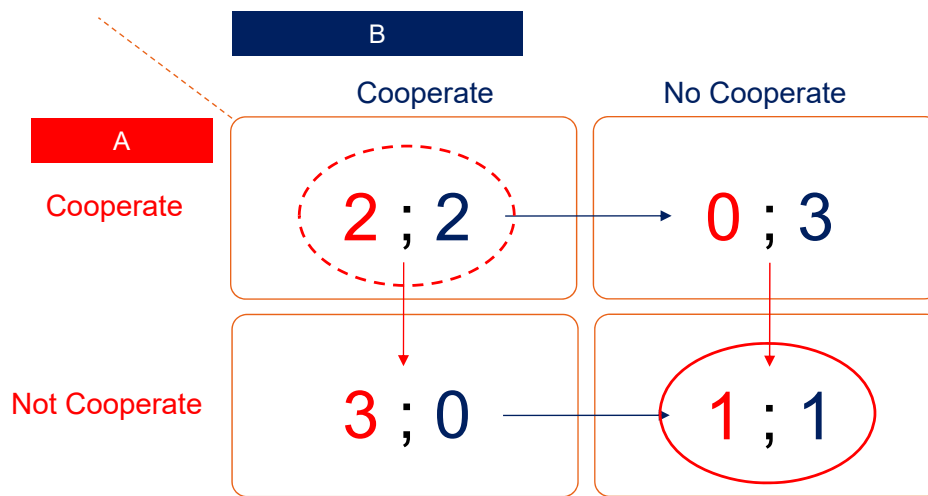
The Reality of Business



The Reality of Business: Individual Actions and Competition

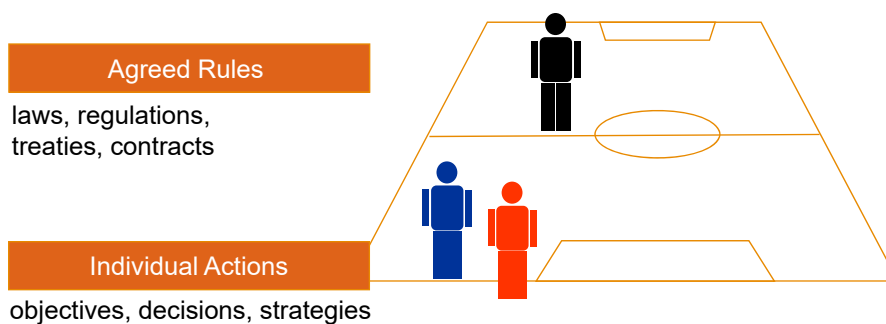


Problem I: Conflicts of Interest

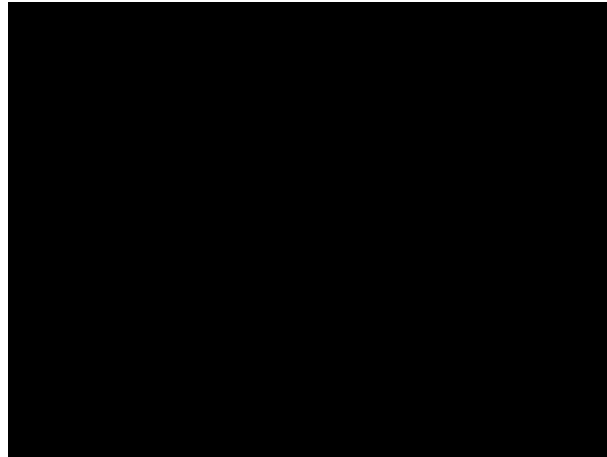


► Cooperation is dependent on *Trust*.

The Reality of Business: Common Rules



Problem II: The Limits of Rules



- ▶ Rules are necessary, but not sufficient for cooperation.

17

The Limits of Rules: Examples



Corporate Governance
& Integrity Culture

*How to use liberties
given within the rules?*



Innovation
& Acceptance

*How to use liberties
when rules are missing?*

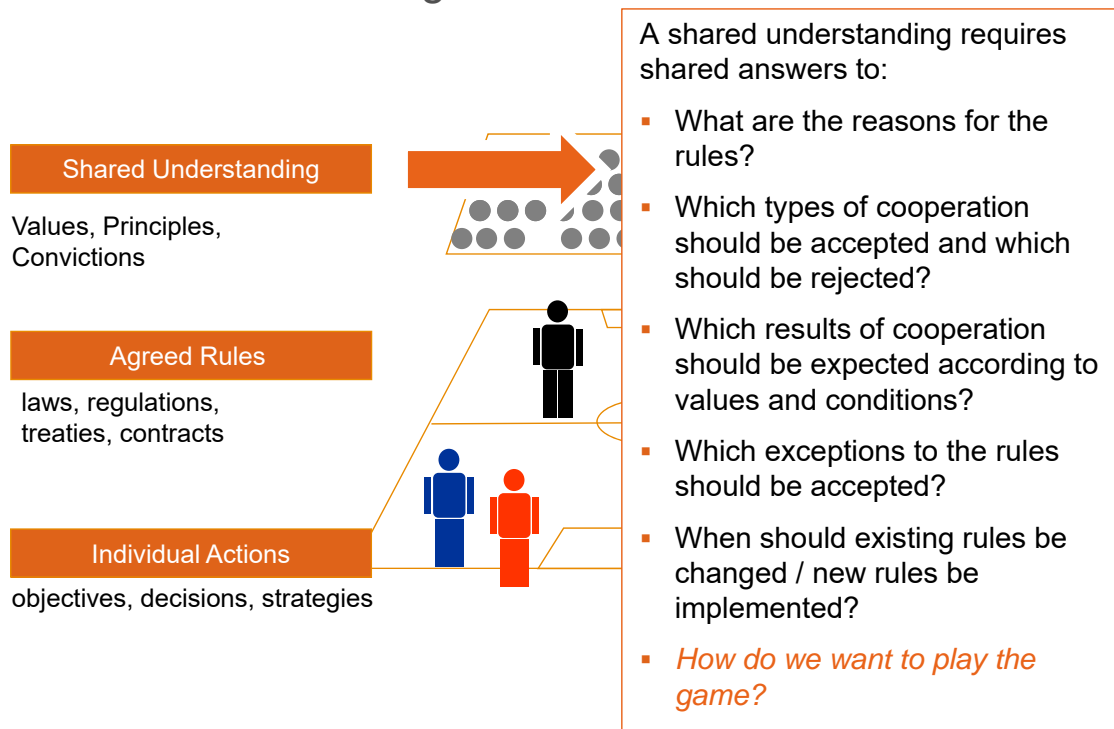


Global Cooperation
& National Authorities

*How to solve conflicts
without authorities?*

18

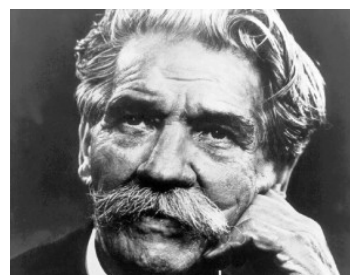
The Reality of Business Shared Understanding



19

How to Shape a Shared Understanding: The Role of Leadership

„Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.“
Albert Schweitzer



“The more powerful you are, the more your actions will have an impact on people, the more responsible you are to act humbly”
Pope Francis



By offering Ideas, Leaders substantially influence the Understanding of the Game



„Yes, we can.“



„America first.“



“German reunification and European integration are two sides of the same coin.”



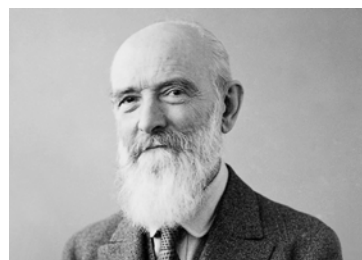
„Brexit means Brexit.“

By offering Ideas, Leaders substantially influence the Understanding of the Game



„We are doing God`s work.“

L. Blankfein, Goldman Sachs



„I would rather lose money than trust.“

R. Bosch, Bosch

A Proof Point for a Shared Understanding: The Golden Rule



“In everything do to others
as you would have them do
to you.” *Matthew 7,12*

- This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.” (*Hinduism*)
- "Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing." (Thales, one of the seven sages of *Greece*)
- “Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourselves.” (*Islam*)
- “Tzu-kung asked, »Is there a single word which can be a guide to conduct throughout one's life?« The Master said, »It is perhaps the word shu. Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.«” (*Confucianism*)
- “If you neighbor's jackal escapes into your garden, you should return the animal to its owner; this is how you would want your neighbor to treat you” (*African proverb*).

Our Modern Interpretation of the Golden Rule:

Long Version

Invest
in the conditions
of social cooperation
for mutual advantage.



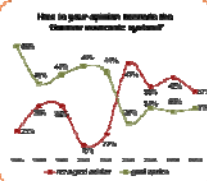
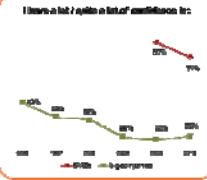
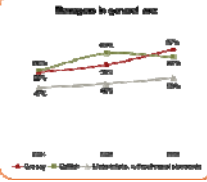

Short Version

Invest in trust.

Example: The Code of Responsible Conduct for Business

25

The Code of Responsible Conduct in Business was developed to regain trust.

(1) Situation	(2) Initiative	(3) Approach
<p>How do your operations measure the "Consumer movement against?"</p>  <p>How do you rate / explain a list of incidents for:</p>  <p>Response to personal use:</p> 		<p>Public trust in <i>the</i> economy is on a low level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Why) Is it relevant? 2. How can trust be (re)gained?

26

Idea: Offering a shared Understanding of Responsible Business

Maxim: Business must serve the good of the people.

Signatories of the Code

- ① commit to
 - Problem solutions for a better life (good products)
 - Chances to earn a living and to participate in society (good jobs)
 - Contributions to social infrastructure (taxes, fees & charity)

- ② demand
 - Fair competition on markets with a chance on profit
 - Personal achievement and personal responsibility
 - Definition of value by demand and supply

- ③ promise
 - ✗ No (trust undermining) profits to the disadvantage of third parties
 - ✗ Redundancies are the last resort
 - ✗ Management remuneration has to reflect the situation of the workforce
 - ✗ Violation of rules will be discouraged and pursued and punished.
 - ✗ Companies` interests will be represented openly and transparently
 - ✗ Quality of life of coming generations will be respected.

27

The Code has a clear Unique Selling Proposition.

Formally:

- **Personal commitment** of business heads
- Companies of different industries, sizes and of different legal forms
- **Developed by companies**; no political initiative, no result of “contracted work“

In terms of content:

- Illustration of **values** and their exemplary **application in situations of conflict**
- Clear and comprehensible **standards of responsible conduct**

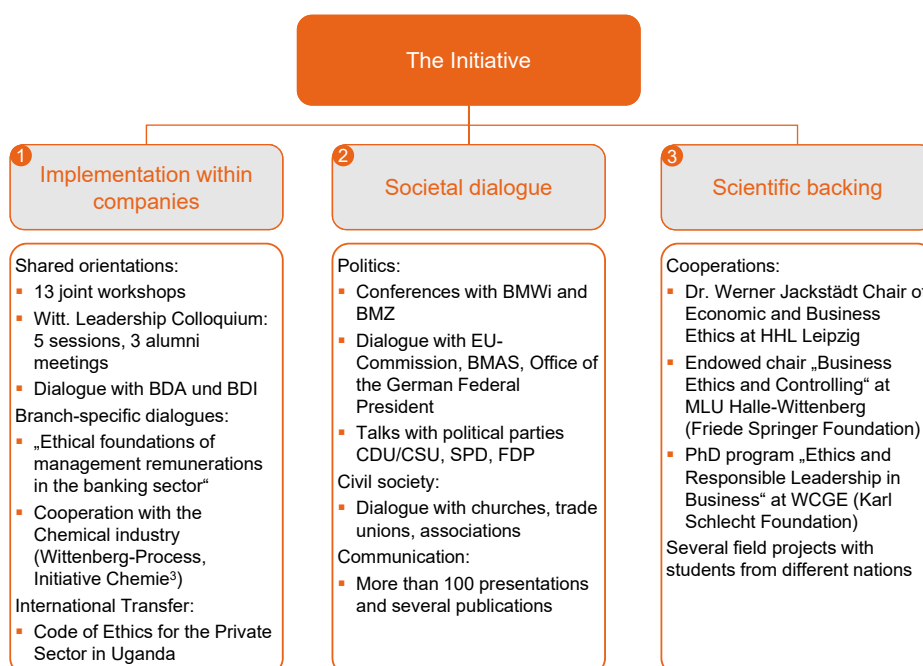
The Code is not about single actions, rules or topics, it is about a common leadership philosophy; with the Code, business decision makers outline their “Understanding of the Game“.

28

Members of the Initiative



Activities within the Code's Process





Thank You!

Hope to see
you again in
Wittenberg.

Contact

Dr. Martin von Broock
Chairman of the Management Board
martin.vonbroock@wcge.org

Waldemar Hötte
Managing Director
waldemar.hoette@wcge.org

Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics
Schlossstrasse 10
06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg
Germany

Tel. +49 (0) 34 91 / 5079 110
Fax +49 (0) 34 91 / 5079 150
E-Mail info@wcge.org
Internet www.wcge.org

