

# Chamber hosts ethics talk

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Do you ever check your personal e-mail at work? Are you sometimes late for work? And should you intervene if you overhear a co-worker gossip about another colleague?

Local business owners and university employees got a dose of self-awareness and perhaps a hint of bad conscience when they scrabbled with those questions Wednesday.

About 20 of them met for a workshop on business ethics arranged by the Mt. Pleasant Chamber of Commerce. And

the participants' employees can expect to answer the same questions over the coming weeks.

"I'm going to do a meeting with staff," said Jim Zeh, general manager of Buck's Run Golf Course. "I'll probably use some of this because I have kids who are handling cash. I've got a lot of trust in them."

"People come to Buck's Run to have fun, and I always tell them to take care of customers like you would want to be taken care of. Ethics influence how you act, talk and react."

The workshop featured

Carolyn Bennett and Kathy Methner from Middle Michigan Development Corp.

The two speakers talked about the importance of doing the right thing and making the ethical choice even when it's not in people's self-interest. They also asked participants about specific ethical dilemmas.

"I hope that they take home just an awareness that ethics is important in business," Methner said. "Businesses operate more efficiently if they're trustworthy. People

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prefer to do business with ethical companies. You know they're on time, deliver a quality product, demand a fair price for their services and that they're dependable."

Other reasons business owners should care about ethics are that lying, cheating and stealing affects their bottom line negatively, the speakers said. On the other hand, if employees are ethical, it can help create an efficient, productive and positive work environment and affect revenues.

However, attending business owners didn't mention hopes of higher numbers on the bottom line as their reason for coming.

"The bottom line is not my top priority," said Maria Blake, owner of Ready Maid cleaning service. "It's important that we're honest and fair. It's very important to me to re-think what's going on as far as the image of the company. People have to know they can trust us. I'm going to create a staff meeting and revolve it around this so the girls can be more informed."