

National College of Ireland

Project Submission Sheet

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Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland
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(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Abi Hickey

Student Number: x22492444

Degree for which thesis is submitted: BAHBMD

Material submitted for award

(a) I declare that the work has been composed by myself.

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(d) ***Either*** *I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

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Bachelors honours in Business

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Signature of research student: Abi Hickey

Date:05/07/2025

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What is the importance of ethical leadership and corporate governance in today's business environment?

1)Abstract

As my topic for my thesis, I have chosen Corporate Governance and Ethical Leadership. Organisational behaviour and decision-making are greatly influenced by corporate governance and moral leadership. The importance of these two ideas and how they affect organisational sustainability and success will be covered in detail in this abstract.

Corporate governance is the set of policies, procedures, and guidelines that regulate how a business is run. It includes the interactions between different stakeholders, like as shareholders, management, staff, clients, suppliers, and the general public. Good corporate governance increases stakeholder confidence by ensuring responsibility, transparency, and equity in the organisation's activities.

On the other side, ethical leadership entails setting an example and basing choices on moral standards and ideals. Setting a good example for the company and encouraging a culture of moral behaviour, ethical leaders place a high value on honesty, integrity, and respect in their dealings with others. Executives and managers may foster trust and loyalty among staff members, clients, and other stakeholders by exhibiting ethical leadership.

Since both contribute to an organisation's overall ethical atmosphere, corporate governance and ethical leadership have a mutual relationship. While moral leadership establishes the standard and expectations for moral behaviour at all organisational levels, a strong corporate governance framework offers the framework and tools for encouraging ethical behaviour. When combined, they establish a culture of honesty and responsibility that is important to sustained success.

The significance of ethical leadership and corporate governance in promoting organisational success and sustainability will be examined in this dissertation. It will look at how these two

ideas affect stakeholder relationships, risk management procedures, and decision-making processes inside businesses. This study intends to demonstrate the advantages of incorporating sound corporate governance and ethical leadership practices into organisational culture through the analysis of case studies and empirical research.

This dissertation will also look into the difficulties and barriers that businesses have when putting ethical leadership and efficient corporate governance into reality. It will examine how company culture, CEO earnings, board composition, and regulatory frameworks influence ethical conduct and governance procedures. This study intends to offer useful insights for organisations looking to improve their governance and leadership processes by highlighting best practices and ways for overcoming these obstacles.

This dissertation will make the case that ethical leadership and corporate governance are critical to the long-term survival of an organisation. Organisations may increase stakeholder trust, reduce risks, and generate value for all parties by cultivating a culture of honesty, openness, and responsibility. This research intends to add to the continuing discussion on corporate governance and moral leadership in the business sector by thoroughly examining these ideas.

2)Introduction

What is Corporate Governance?

The structure that guides and manages companies is known as corporate governance. It is "the direction, management, and control of an organisation," according to Cadbury. It has to do with corporate governance, namely, how directors and shareholders interact. Corporate governance looks at how a company is managed to achieve its objectives. The management of a firm should be guided by the best interests of all parties, particularly shareholders.

It is important to consider all parties engaged in a business's operations, such as employees, the general public, lenders, and suppliers, and to examine all factors that affect them, not just financial ones. Realistic consideration should be given to any social and environmental issues about the operations. While other parties affected by a corporation's decisions are not protected by company law in the UK, shareholders are. (CRS, Ethics, and Corporate Governance)

One of the most crucial elements of investor and community relations is communicating a company's corporate governance. The investor relations website of Apple Inc., for instance, provides information on the company's management team and board of directors, as well as committee charters and governance documents such as the company's bylaws, articles of incorporation, and stock ownership requirements.

Great corporate governance is the goal of most successful businesses. In the opinion of many shareholders, a company must not only be profitable but also demonstrate outstanding corporate citizenship by moral behaviour, environmental consciousness, and other robust corporate governance practices. Furthermore, by improving a company's public image, more loyal customers may be attracted and retained. (Investopedia, 2015)

What is Ethical Leadership, and why do ethics play a big part in business operations?

Ethical leaders and managers make decisions based on what is right for the larger good as well as what is best for their interests and financial gain.

Although profits are important, ethical leaders take into account not only income and company growth but also the requirements of communities, consumers, and employees when making business choices.

Ethical leaders inspire their team members to follow suit. They encourage the growth of an open, honest, and cooperative workplace where everyone is at ease voicing their opinions. They can also help organisations draw in and retain outstanding talent. Professionals are searching more and more for companies with CEOs who try to act morally. Generation Z, which will make up 25% of the workforce by 2025, has greater standards for ethical leadership than other generations.

According to Michael McCarthy, presenter of the "Happy at Work" podcast and lecturer in the Professional & Executive Development division of the Harvard Division of Continuing Education, "Gen Z is not going to negotiate." They do not compromise their strong principles and ideals out of fear of retaliation or a need to simply make ends meet.

Before making critical business decisions, a company's management must consider ethical concerns. This determines the company's long-term performance.

Principles of Ethical Leadership:

1. **Respect:** Respect means valuing other people's skills and contributions. Whereas in the past, it could have been one-way, with leaders requiring respect from their employees, respect is mutual in an ethical workplace. Mutual respect, when both parties appreciate and support one another's efforts and feel at ease addressing issues and challenges, is the foundation of healthy working partnerships. Positive work environments created by healthy connections result in increased productivity. Business executives, both current and future, should think about mutual respect as employee expectations continue to shift. "I suggest that the present leadership respect Gen Z.. "They have principles and values, so your organisation will be better," said McCarthy. "They will not tolerate the outdated hierarchy that lacks respect for one another."
2. **Accountability:** Leaders with high moral standards accept accountability for their deeds. They make judgments based on honesty and stick by their work. They also lead

by example, discuss challenges openly, and refrain from placing blame for their failings on others.

3. **Service:** Leaders make moral decisions by considering what is best for their clients, team members, and the community. Since they are always at the forefront of ethical leaders' thoughts, these shareholders usually have a strong feeling of obligation. By volunteering and taking part in charity initiatives, they give back to their communities and encourage their employees to do the same.
4. **Honesty:** Leaders who are open and honest win the respect of their companies and customers. To build and maintain trust, leaders must be adept communicators who handle issues honestly and transparently. Leaders must be forthright and honest so that people may utilise the facts they have to make the best decisions, regardless matter how important or unpopular the subject is. Honesty and transparency help enhance a brand's reputation, which cultivates long-term customer loyalty.
5. **Justice:** Justice is more than simply following the law; it's about ensuring that everyone gets what they are entitled to. Ethical leaders prioritise fairness and expect their employees to treat customers and each other with the same respect. By their actions, they establish equitable work environments where everyone is respected.
6. **Community:** Since ethical leaders view their organisations as communities, they consider all stakeholders while evaluating the situation and reaching conclusions. Adopting this viewpoint allows them to integrate fairness and inclusion into their decision-making process and promote collaborative work cultures among teams.

(Professional & Executive Development, Harvard Division of Continuing Education, 2024)

3)Literature Review

As part of my literature review, I have chosen to use Enterprise Rent-A-Car as a model, as I believe they are a prime example of adhering to ethical leadership and possessing an effective corporate governance framework.

Corporate governance and ethical leadership are essential to preserving the profitability and image of Enterprise Rent-A-Car, a business renowned for its strong corporate culture and customer-centric approach. Building trust with clients, staff, and other stakeholders may be achieved by Enterprise Rent-A-Car by upholding the highest ethical standards and

encouraging openness in decision-making procedures. The emphasis on staff empowerment and development is another crucial component of Enterprise Rent-A-Car's ethical leadership. The organisation invests in training, career growth opportunities, and mentorship because it views its personnel as its most precious asset. Enterprise Rent-A-Car increases employee engagement and a sense of belonging by cultivating an inclusive and diverse culture, which boosts job satisfaction and productivity.

Effective corporate governance procedures also guarantee that the resources of the business are handled sensibly and in the best interests of all parties involved. Enterprise Rent-A-Car may reduce risks and improve long-term sustainability by establishing a culture of responsibility, putting strong internal controls in place, and having a diverse and independent board of directors.

Enterprise uses resources such as The Hub to create a line of communication with its employees as a one-point access to all information and communication, which reduces communication barriers.

Another example of ethical leadership was the case with Johnson & Johnson, poisonings from Tylenol cyanide in the early 1980s. The only thing that linked the seven cyanide poisoning deaths was that they had all taken extra-strength Tylenol. The pills were found to contain cyanide throughout the inquiry. Leaders at Johnson & Johnson took swift action, halting all production and advertising and removing all Tylenol products from the market, including 31 million bottles valued at over \$100 million. Despite being expensive, their prompt choice prioritised the welfare of their clients and prevented fatalities. After working with police to detain the offender, they created the first ever tamper resistant packaging. They were open and honest with the public about their efforts to prevent a recurrence of this disaster. Due in major part to the prompt action and open customer care of Johnson & Johnson's ethical leadership team, the Tylenol brand recovered from the event.

Here's another example. During a snowfall at John F. Kennedy International Airport in 2008, JetBlue kept customers detained on the tarmac for over five hours. JetBlue had to cancel nearly 1,000 flights over the next five days as a result of the delay. The CEO of JetBlue responded by writing a letter of apology to consumers. He also instructed his team to create a bill of rights for consumers that detailed their rights to information about flights and

compensation in the case of cancellations or delays. In addition, the CEO took part in a public apology tour, accepting full responsibility for the disaster instead of attributing it to bad weather.

His openness and responsibility won the trust of passengers, who continued to support the airline.

Employees at Wells Fargo, one of the biggest banks in the US, established millions of unauthorised accounts to reach aggressive sales objectives, according to information made public in September 2016.

This pervasive fraud was caused by a workplace culture that encouraged people to act unethically and valued quantity over quality. Leaders of the company denied being aware of fraudulent activities. Despite facing severe financial penalties, the bank lost the trust of its investors and consumers due to its lack of responsibility. In the quarter after the incident, they recorded a 50% reduction in profits.

These instances highlight the value of ethical leadership in a corporate setting since Johnson & Johnson may have lost business if they hadn't assisted with the cyanide poisoning inquiry because they might have been seen as untrustworthy and indifferent to their clients.

Furthermore, JetBlue's CEO, instead of attributing it to bad weather, the CEO publicly apologised, demonstrating his concern and gratitude for his clients. It contributed significantly to the large number of cancelled customer flights. It demonstrated his appreciation for his customers rather than his concern for money. This led to many loyal customers continually flying with this airline.

In comparison to Johnson & Johnson and JetBlue, which pay close attention to the circumstances in an ethical manner, you have Wells Fargo Bank. According to their fraud scam, they created thousands of unauthorised accounts in order to reach sales goals. Employees were compelled to act unethically because of the unpleasant and excessively competitive work environment it produced. Because the bank's leaders denied ever knowing about anything, this resulted in a 50% decline in profits because of their negligence. (V Kirk, 2019)

When problems arose, Johnson & Johnson and JetBlue addressed the situation and all of their responsibilities in the most ethically responsible manner. When Wells Fargo heads denied knowing of any unethical activity occurring within the company. Johnson & Johnson and JetBlue have both shown proactive moral leadership in their pursuit of outstanding ethical compliance.

These examples show why ethics within a corporate environment are essential to the success of a business. Ethics is a core principle companies must have and can distinguish a company between a sink or swim ordeal. JetBlue and Johnson&Johnson are examples of swim as they dealt with the situation by being upfront, honest and taking accountability for what happened, whereas Wells Fargo Bank’s main operators denied and ignored all claims of being involved, which led to many loyal clients leaving the bank and going elsewhere.

As part of ERAC’s ethics movement, they focus on the gender pay gap. They can review internal procedures and strive for a more gender-balanced staff with the aid of gender pay gap reporting. The government mandates this gender pay gap report, which compares men's and women's incomes using company-wide averages without accounting for job titles or responsibilities.

The company values staff retention, and Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ireland encourages employee growth by, if possible, promoting from within. The business acknowledges that the data presented in this report has been impacted by this approach to employee development, as well as our prior recruiting demographics.

According to this report, the mean pay gap has reduced from 23.9% to 18.1%, which is a 5.8% decrease from the years 2023 to 2024. It is also a massive 8.9% gap decrease from the years 2022 to 2024.

The median pay gap has also reduced from 6.9% to 5.2%, which is a 1.7% decrease from 2023 to 2024. With a massive 20.8% gap decrease from the years 2022 to 2024.

Statistic	2022	2023	2024
Mean pay gap	27.0%	23.9%	18.1%
Median pay gap	26.0%	6.9%	5.2%

(1.1)

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ireland understands how critical it is to put strategic plans into action in order to keep closing the gender pay gap. Walker Vehicle Rentals, which brought in new business capabilities and innovation, but with a staff that was predominantly male, was acquired by Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ireland in April 2022 to grow its Flex-E-Rent company. They have found certain instances where their wage gap has improved throughout this reporting period. Women's mean and median salaries increased, and the gender pay gap decreased as a result of recent advancements for women in the company.

At Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ireland, for instance, women made up 43% of all professional recruits during Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24, which ran from August 1, 2023, to July 31, 2024). In FY24, women made up half of the senior operational managers in the Flex-E-Rent and Daily Rental businesses. In FY24, women made up 38% of Branch and Assistant Managers in the Daily Rental business. Branch managers were given access to a two-day thorough Management & Leadership Development Course, with 47% of the Irish participants being female. To encourage managers' career progression nationwide, they offered a domestic relocation program to promote chances; in FY24, 28% of participants were female. Employees got continuous assistance at work, such as coaching for working parents, flexible work schedules for parents, and management education on menopause and parental leave. More women were able to advance in their professions thanks to the Women in Rental Leadership Development Program. At school and university job fairs in Ireland, they worked to increase the number of female candidates for their internships, apprenticeships, and graduate programmes.

These examples show how dedicated Enterprise Rent-a-Car is to retaining and showing appreciation to their female staff. They recognise the importance of giving women the opportunities within the company and the pay that goes with it. (ERAC Ireland Limited(“Enterprise Rent-a-Car Ireland”) Gender pay gap report 2023-2024)

For a number of reasons, which have been stated, Enterprise Rent-A-Car should always act morally. First and foremost, upholding strong ethical standards fosters confidence and trust among stakeholders, including clients and staff. In the cutthroat rental automobile market, this trust is critical to long-term success. Furthermore, upholding ethical standards may improve the company's reputation and brand image, drawing in new clients and encouraging

loyalty. Happy connections with workers are another benefit of ethical behaviour, which also lowers turnover and fosters a happy work environment. Additionally, upholding ethical standards can save the business from expensive penalties and reputational harm by avoiding legal problems and regulatory violations. All things considered, by putting ethics first, Enterprise Rent-A-Car can improve society, foster a more sustainable business climate, and eventually succeed in the long run.

Regarding corporate governance, the integrity of the decisions and actions made by its team members is just as important to Enterprise Mobility's success as its financial results. They strive to always do the right thing for team members, clients, the industry, and communities, and they hold themselves to high standards in their day-to-day business behaviour. Enterprise Mobility prioritises connections with suppliers that share its values and dedication to quality, honesty, and safety. It also holds partners to high standards.

Enterprise's board of directors oversees the company's strategic decisions in regards to corporate governance and ethical leadership compliance. Along with the Ethics and Compliance division, which is responsible for keeping an eye on and upholding moral principles throughout the company. Employees in this department receive assistance, tools, and training to help them resolve moral dilemmas and make morally right judgments that align with the company's principles. Setting the standard for moral conduct inside the company is a major responsibility of the senior leadership group, which is headed by CEO Chrissy Taylor. They are in charge of establishing a culture of integrity and compliance across the whole organisation and putting rules and procedures in place that encourage moral behaviour. (Enterprise Mobility, FY24)

As part of prioritising their connections with their suppliers, ERAC does regular "doughnut drops" to their partnered body shops. This creates a friendly and appreciative relationship between Enterprise and its valued partners. This simple gesture shows that Enterprise appreciates their partners.

But why is showing appreciation to your partners important? There are many reasons why this is important. Such as:

Establish shared objectives: Determine whether you and your vendor have any common objectives, such as attempting to address an issue for your clients or investing in new technologies. Your collaboration is more likely to be successful if you and your vendor have identical strategic objectives. In Enterprise's case, with their body shop, their shared goal would be business on both ends. The body shops get business through enterprises damaged cars by repairing them to be put back on rent for future customers. Enterprise gets a repaired car that can be put back on rent to customers without being damaged. There is a constant need on both sides for each other's business. This shared goal creates a continuous flow of business between both the body shops and Enterprise.

Quality Assurance: Many firms today don't compromise on quality. Strong quality standards, including testing protocols and compliance criteria, should be outlined in a supplier agreement. Any aspect of the supplier process, from production to human error to security enhancements, can be included in quality assurance. Enterprise's relationship with the garages can be used as an example of this. As Enterprise buy their cars rather than leasing them, they own their cars, unlike many car rental companies. But they do have contracts with those garages as a buy-back scheme. Enterprise buy brand new cars, rent them within their company and then sell them back to the same garages. These contracts do have conditions, such as the cars being returned must be brought back undamaged, so the garages can get a higher resale value. This is where quality assurance comes into play. Enterprise expects to buy cars that are undamaged and in good standard of use. As many customers damage these vehicles, it is Enterprise's responsibility to repair the damage before selling the cars back to the garages. This is a win-win contract between Enterprise and the garages, as Enterprise can use brand new cars to use within their business. And the garages can lose some of their brand new stock that they, more than likely, wouldn't have sold straight away, ensuring the brand new cars aren't just sitting in a showroom. Both parties profit from contracts like this, given that both uphold their end of the contract.

(American Public University, 2023)

Enterprise Rent-A-Car uses a code of conduct as a guide for all employees, regardless of their position within the company. The integrity standards they are all required to maintain in their day-to-day business dealings are explained in the Code of Conduct. Every day, they all make choices that affect the company and their workplace. They must comprehend and adhere to the Code's principles in order to uphold a pleasant work environment for all employees,

surpass the expectations of their clients, and guarantee the company's continuous development. This is meant to serve as a roadmap for attaining and sustaining the most moral corporate practices.

Teamwork is one of Enterprise's main focuses within its company. Their "Our door is always open" statement is part of their founding values. They want their employees and customers to always come to them if there are any issues, whether professional or personal. They believe that each team member's input is essential to the accomplishment of their goal. They are committed to giving one another an environment and culture that enables them to freely exchange thoughts and criticism, work together to solve issues, and surpass their clients' expectations by delivering a positive business experience. To be more precise, they are dedicated to the respect for one another's origins, experiences, and viewpoints as well as those of their suppliers, clients, and business associates. An atmosphere free from harassment and intimidation of any kind, as well as from discrimination against workers or job applicants based on race, colour, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or any other legally protected status. This benefits Enterprise, as they have a "promote from within" structure, which ensures all employees feel valued, appreciated and safe within their professional environment, which leads to a lower turnover rate.

(Code of Conduct, Enterprise)

Enterprise Rent-A-Car's dedication to honesty, openness, and responsibility in every facet of its business operations is an example of ethical leadership. The company's emphasis on treating stakeholders, workers, and customers fairly and with respect is an example of its ethical leadership. The corporate governance framework of Enterprise Rent-A-Car is intended to guarantee that moral standards are respected across the whole company.

The Board of Directors, which sits at the top of the corporate governance structure, is in charge of monitoring the company's strategic direction and making sure that moral principles are upheld. The executive leadership team receives direction and supervision from the board, which is made up of seasoned experts from various professions.

The CEO and the senior leadership team are key in establishing the standard for moral conduct in the company. In addition to establishing a culture of integrity and compliance

across the organisation, they are in charge of putting policies and procedures into place that support moral behaviour.

Monitoring and upholding ethical standards throughout the company is the responsibility of Enterprise Rent-A-Car's dedicated Ethics and Compliance department. Employees may negotiate moral conundrums and make wise decisions that align with the company's values with the assistance of this department, which offers training, tools, and support.

All things considered, the corporate governance framework and moral leadership of Enterprise Rent-A-Car are intended to foster an environment of honesty, openness, and responsibility. The business may increase stakeholder trust, reduce risks, and maintain long-term success in the competitive rental vehicle sector by placing a high priority on ethical governance procedures.

4)Research Question and Hypothesis

I chose to research corporate governance and ethical leadership as I believe that they are the most important parts for a successful business's foundation. In today's business world, corporate governance and ethical leadership are essential because they influence how organisations behave and make decisions. Setting a good example, encouraging honesty, and maintaining moral principles inside the organisation are all components of ethical leadership. On the other side, corporate governance describes the set of guidelines, procedures, and policies that regulate how a business is run.

In the current business environment, where stakeholders are calling for businesses to be more transparent, accountable, and socially responsible, ethical leadership and corporate governance are now crucial to preserving credibility and confidence. Businesses that place a high value on moral leadership show that they are dedicated to acting morally even when faced with tough decisions. In addition to creating a nice work environment, this increases trust among stakeholders, including investors, workers, and consumers.

On the other hand, responsible and sustainable management of businesses is guaranteed by effective corporate governance. Corporate governance aids in the prevention of fraud, misconduct, and unethical behaviour in organisations by putting in place transparent structures, procedures, and supervision systems. Additionally, it guarantees that businesses abide by rules and laws, reducing legal risks and safeguarding stakeholders' interests.

Furthermore, a company's reputation may be improved and long-term success can be fuelled by moral leadership and sound corporate governance procedures. Organisations may develop resilience, adaptability, and sustainability in the quickly evolving business environment of today by cultivating a culture of integrity, openness, and accountability. In the end, moral leadership and corporate governance are not just moral requirements but also tactical advantages that support business success and the welfare of society.

I believe that in my research, I will find a lot of cross-overs in what others think is important when it comes to ethical leadership and corporate governance. Traits like integrity, honesty and emotional intelligence will be brought up a lot when it comes to defining how to lead ethically within today's business environments. I also think many will agree that having a strong corporate governance structure, such as having an ethics committee along with a code of conduct that all employees must follow, will be the foundation to a company to being lead ethically.

5)Methodology

I chose to interview those in Enterprise Rent-A-Car, as part of my research, as I believe that during an interview, the participant is encouraged to explain their experiences to the researcher and to make sense of them. It gave me first-hand knowledge of why those involved in the business think corporate governance and practising ethical leadership are important in today's business environment. Therefore, when researchers wish to learn from and comprehend the experiences of others, interviews are a suitable strategy. Researchers can get qualitative information and valuable insights into the attitudes and actions of the target groups with the use of interviews.

When preparing for the interviews, I researched three different types of interview structures: Unstructured and structured.

Unstructured interviews: Few pre-planned interview questions are often used to start an unstructured interview. It frequently takes the form of a discussion. In order to build rapport with the subject, a researcher frequently employs an informal interview style. When discussing a delicate subject, informal interviews may be quite helpful. An effective researcher can lead the discussion to prompt information from participants. It is frequently the interviewer's responsibility to keep the discussion appropriate to the study issue because the interview lacks a set format. Follow-up interviews may be required at times, which may require more time.

Structured: Structured interviews follow a predetermined framework and design. The interviewer only asks specific, pre-planned questions and follows a strict protocol. When a researcher has a lot of questions to answer, structured interviews may be helpful since they collect information in a way that typically eliminates the need for a follow-up interview. Because the pre-planned questions in structured interviews are designed to only collect the information you need, they help investigate a particular experience or phenomenon and can facilitate the interpretation of results.

Semi-structured: Semi-structured interviews are less formal than structured ones, but they follow a more defined path than unstructured ones. In this case, the interviewer can use conversational elements to elicit information from the subject while adhering to a predetermined set of guidelines for the interview's direction. In this manner, the interviewer might elicit further details from the subject on a specific element of their response. More freedom may be available with this interview technique.

There are pros and cons to all three interview structures. Unstructured interviews are a good option for my circumstances since they provide a more adaptable and open-ended approach than structured or semi-structured interviews. A more conversational exchange between both parties is made possible by unstructured interviews, which promote a better understanding of the candidate's character, driving forces, and mental processes.

The opportunity to go into regions that may not have been predetermined and explore unexpected themes is one of the main benefits of unstructured interviews. This can yield insightful information and expose details that would not have come to light in a more strictly planned interview setting. Unstructured interviews can offer a more comprehensive assessment of the candidate and their fit for the position by allowing flexibility.

Additionally, unstructured interviews can facilitate rapport building and provide a more laid-back and comfortable environment for the interviewee. Both sides may benefit from more genuine answers and an improved experience as a result. Unstructured interviews' conversational style can also make applicants feel more at ease and encourage them to open up and openly discuss their ideas and experiences.

Furthermore, unstructured interviews may be especially useful for evaluating soft skills, including interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving abilities. These attributes need a more sophisticated and individualised approach and are sometimes challenging to reach with standardised questions. Interviewers can learn more about a candidate's skills and possible fit with the company by having a conversation that flows naturally.

Unstructured interviews have numerous benefits, but it's essential to remember that they can have drawbacks. It may be more difficult to compare applicants objectively and bring bias into the selection process if there are no standardised questions or scoring standards.

Unstructured interviews also require competent interviewers who can steer the discussion, gather relevant information, and draw well-informed conclusions from the candidate's answers.

(Indeed Editorial Team, 2023)

In conclusion, in some circumstances when a more flexible and individualised approach is preferred, unstructured interviews may be a useful tool for evaluating prospects. A greater knowledge of the candidate's talents and possible fit within the company may be gained through unstructured interviews, which allow for impromptu research of unexpected themes and a more natural relationship. The advantages of unstructured interviews must be weighed against the requirement for uniformity, equity, and impartiality in the selection procedure.

Which led me to choose an unstructured approach to my interview structure.

Selecting department heads and daily rental managers as interview subjects was a thought out move made throughout the interview preparation process. These people have important roles in the company and are actively involved in everyday ethical decision-making and maintaining strong corporate governance. Department heads are in charge of monitoring how their departments are run, making sure that moral principles are upheld, and assisting their staff in making ethical decisions. Daily rental managers are essential to maintaining the company's principles and encouraging moral behaviour in day-to-day operations since they routinely engage with customers and staff. Interviewing these people can yield important information about how Enterprise Rent-A-Car actually implements corporate governance procedures and ethical standards. Their viewpoints and experiences can offer a more thorough comprehension of the ways in which moral leadership is exhibited at different organisational levels and aid in a thorough evaluation of the business's moral culture.

I carefully conducted my interview questions, which would aid me in finding out what the importance of ethical leadership is and why it's so important in today's business environments. By carefully selecting my interview candidates, I can get an insight into what "keeps the clock ticking" within businesses today, in this case, Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

As everyone's perception of ethical leadership can differ, the first question I chose to ask was, "Could you discuss how you would define ethical leadership and what principles you feel underpin the principles at Enterprise?". The purpose of asking this question was to compare and get a better understanding the ethical leadership viewpoints of different leaders in the same organisation. The goal was to have a thorough understanding of the many perspectives on ethical leadership by examining and contrasting the attitudes and behaviours of various leaders. This strategy was selected in the hopes that it would increase understanding of moral leadership concepts, stimulate critical thinking, and widen viewpoints. Examining these many points of view was thought to be a great way to dispel stereotypes, foster intellectual development, and advance a more complex comprehension of moral leadership in the workplace. By carefully examining the values and views of several leaders within the same organisation, the ultimate objective was to provide a more comprehensive and knowledgeable viewpoint on ethical leadership.

My second question was, "Could you tell me how frameworks impact ethical leadership within Enterprise and what improvements you feel could be made regarding accountability

and transparency?”. The urge to investigate the relationship between these two crucial sides of organisational management drove the study into the relationship between corporate governance and ethical leadership. The goal was to have a thorough grasp of the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between corporate governance procedures and ethical leadership practices, as well as the effects they have on organisational dynamics. The goal of this investigation was to clarify the complex relationship between corporate governance and ethical leadership, acknowledging that an organisation's culture of accountability, openness, and integrity depends on their alignment.

“What are the common dilemmas that corporate leaders face, and how do the governance structures impact the decision?” was the third question on my interview question list. An essential study to comprehend the complex nature of corporate leadership is the examination of the typical problems encountered by business executives and the impact of corporate governance frameworks on organisational decision-making procedures. The goal of asking this question was to obtain important knowledge on the difficulties and ethical dilemmas that leaders frequently face in their work. Gaining insight into these typical problems offers a glimpse into the complex decision-making procedures that influence an organisation's culture and direction. Furthermore, understanding the processes that direct and control leadership behaviour requires a close look at how corporate governance frameworks affect organisational decision-making. Setting the standard for moral behaviour, outlining accountability procedures, and guaranteeing openness in decision-making are all made possible by corporate governance frameworks. A greater understanding of how governance procedures impact leaders' decisions is revealed by examining the relationship between corporate governance and leadership issues. This investigation also emphasises how crucial it is to match governance principles with leadership ideals to promote a culture of moral decision-making and accountable leadership. Organisations may proactively create governance frameworks that promote moral leadership practices and reduce any conflicts of interest by acknowledging the influence that governance structures have on leadership choices. In the end, this investigation sheds light on the complex interrelationships among organisational decision-making procedures, corporate governance frameworks, and leadership quandaries, providing insightful information for improving leadership efficacy and encouraging moral behaviour in the workplace.

Following the “setting the standard” idea, my next question was, “How does Enterprise promote a culture of integrity and ethical behaviour among employees and stakeholders?” Examining how Enterprise implements its code of conduct for moral leadership on a daily basis offers important insights into how ethical concepts are really used inside the company. A better grasp of Enterprise's dedication to ethical leadership may be obtained by thoroughly analysing the choices, actions, and behaviours of its leaders and workers following its code of conduct. This examination enables a more thorough assessment of the plans, guidelines, and procedures Enterprise has implemented to guarantee that moral principles and values are upheld in every facet of its business operations. Seeing how Enterprise upholds its code of conduct for ethical leadership daily provides insight into the principles and organisational culture that influence decision-making at all levels. It offers a chance to evaluate how well training initiatives, communication plans, and accountability systems support ethical behaviour and promote an integrity-based corporate culture. A thorough picture of Enterprise's ethical leadership practices is revealed by examining actual cases of how moral dilemmas are addressed, disputes are resolved, and moral principles are upheld in daily operations. I hoped to gain an insight into the organisation's culture and values that influence decision-making by seeing how Enterprise upholds its code of conduct for ethical leadership on a regular basis. It offers me a chance to evaluate how well accountability systems, communication plans, and training initiatives support ethical behaviour and help the business develop an integrity-based culture. I hoped to get a thorough understanding of Enterprise's ethical leadership practices by looking at actual cases of how ethical breaches are handled, disputes are settled, and ethical principles are upheld in daily operations.

Following this question, I asked, “How does Enterprise measure and evaluate the effectiveness of its corporate governance practices in promoting ethical leadership?”. In asking this, I hoped to get a further in-depth knowledge of the link between corporate governance and ethical leadership. Understanding that corporate governance frameworks provide the structural underpinnings for ethical leadership and decision-making in an organisation, the goal of this investigation was to reveal the mutually reinforcing nature of their relationship. The goal of exploring the relationship between corporate governance and ethical leadership was to find out how these two factors support and enhance one another, eventually influencing an organisation's ethical culture and performance results. It was recognised that although ethical leadership sets the tone at the top, directing organisational principles, decision-making procedures, and staff conduct, effective corporate governance

structures offer the foundation for encouraging ethical behaviour, accountability, and transparency. It was believed that developing an organisation's culture of integrity, trust, and sustainability required an understanding of how corporate governance and ethical leadership interact. The objective was to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the crucial role these two factors play in determining organisational performance and promoting ethical excellence by looking at how they interact and impact one another. By demonstrating their mutual reliance and combined influence on organisational governance procedures and ethical standards, this investigation sought to shed light on the relationship between corporate governance and ethical leadership.

Finally, my last interview question was “How does Enterprise ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements related to corporate governance and ethical leadership?”. In order to comprehend the complicated environment of organisational decision-making and behaviour, it is essential to investigate how businesses negotiate the crossroads of legal obligations, ethical leadership ideals, and corporate governance standards. The goal is to identify the tactics and systems used to guarantee legal compliance while maintaining moral principles and encouraging efficient governance by exploring how businesses reconcile legal requirements with ethical concerns and governance frameworks. Businesses are realising more and more how crucial it is to combine corporate governance, ethical leadership, and legal compliance in today's complicated business environment in order to reduce risks, foster stakeholder trust, and promote sustainable growth. Gaining insight into how companies manage the complicated exchange between legal requirements and moral principles can help one better understand their dedication to ethical business practices and stakeholder involvement. One may learn more about how businesses maintain integrity, accountability, and openness in their operations by looking at how they connect legal requirements with moral leadership and corporate governance procedures. This investigation clarifies the tactics used by businesses to negotiate the moral and legal complexity of the corporate environment, indicating their dedication to conducting themselves ethically and in compliance with legal requirements. In the end, investigating how businesses combine ethical leadership, legal compliance, and corporate governance procedures provides important insights into how businesses strike a balance between their legal and ethical responsibilities, encouraging an honest culture and responsible decision-making in the business world.

The acknowledgement of the critical roles that strong corporate governance and ethical leadership play in promoting organisational success and sustainability has led to an investigation of the importance of these practices in today's business environment. By raising these issues, the goal is to clarify the complicated connection between ethical leadership and strong corporate governance, emphasising how crucial both practices are to negotiating the intricacies of the modern business world. A culture of integrity, trust among stakeholders, and the setting of an example for ethical behaviour are all facilitated by ethical leadership. Organisations are better able to maintain moral principles, reduce risks, and improve long-term value generation when they have a strong corporate governance structure in place, which includes rules, processes, and systems for supervision and responsibility.

Businesses hoping to prosper in a more competitive and unstable marketplace must comprehend the ways in which corporate governance and ethical leadership interact and enhance one another. Organisations may foster a culture of openness, justice, and accountability by coordinating ethical values with governance procedures. This not only improves the organisation's reputation but also fosters operational excellence and stakeholder trust. Understanding the fundamental connection between corporate governance, ethical leadership, and business success emphasises how important it is for leaders to prioritise moral decision-making and set up strong governance frameworks in order to successfully negotiate the changing opportunities and challenges of the modern business environment.

Finding important insights that highlight the crucial role that ethical leadership and corporate governance play in determining the performance and sustainability of organisations is the main goal of the study on the importance of these concepts in today's business environment. By exploring the significance of moral leadership and good corporate governance, the goal is to comprehend how these elements support the development of an honest, trustworthy, and accountable culture in contemporary companies. In an increasingly intricate and linked global corporate world, this investigation aims to emphasise the influence of moral leadership and strong governance frameworks on the performance, standing, and long-term sustainability of organisations.

6) Analysis and Findings

The study findings gathered from the interviews performed for this research paper will be compared in this section. The goal is to find recurring themes, opposing points of view, and broad trends that surfaced from the data by contrasting the insights and opinions obtained from the respondents. The goal of this comparative analysis is to identify trends, parallels, and discrepancies in the participant replies, which will improve the study and deepen our grasp of the research issue. This section aims to emphasise important results, make links between different data points, and offer insightful conclusions that support the general goals of the study by methodically comparing the information gleaned from the interviews. A thorough summary of the research insights obtained from the participants will be given by the comparative analysis of the interview data, which will also offer insightful opinions and views that will contribute to the study's ramifications and wider debate.

During my research, I found that there are five core traits of ethical leadership: emotional intelligence, ethical behaviour, ethical decision-making, employee engagement and customer loyalty.

Emotional Intelligence

Strong self-awareness of one's management style, skills, and organisational culture are requirement for leadership. Leaders need to understand the complexities and ethical issues that arise in their industry. Leaders may guide their teams through possible problems by being proactive in recognising their existence.

Ethical Behaviour

In my opinion, one of the most crucial ethical traits that leaders should have is compassion. As a current student, I am aware of the difficulties that many of us encounter. Including having to work while also focusing on studies.

Ethical Decision Making

Every day, leaders have to make tough business decisions. Each leader's identity and values are shaped by their own distinct experiences and beliefs. It's critical to comprehend how these various leadership philosophies support the organisation's moral culture. Ethical leaders are aware of the moral consequences of their choices and the effects they have on other people. Leaders who engage in ethical decision-making make choices that are consistent with their moral principles. Senior executives adhere to their own set of moral principles even in the

face of unforeseen ethical dilemmas. Their genuineness is frequently apparent, and their ideas are consistent. Mission statements, both personal and organisational, are respected and used as a reference.

Employee Engagement

Employees report feeling more content when they work in an ethical environment. People who have a leader who sets an example for them in resolving ethical dilemmas report better levels of work satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is higher, and workers in ethically run businesses are more likely to believe they are receiving fair treatment. When employees observe a leader showing ethical leadership principles, their rates of employee engagement increase. Team members respond well to a leader who embodies a mission statement in both words and deeds. These workers exhibit social responsibility in their conduct and are dedicated to their companies.

Customer Loyalty

The acts of morally upright executives assist their organisations outside as well. Ethical firms frequently achieve favourable outcomes and financial success because they encourage production. The purpose of ethical standards is to safeguard both the company and the customer. A corporation can profit financially from loyal consumers who reward the company with improved financial success as a consequence of effective leadership and business decisions. However, unethical behaviour frequently results in severe responses and negative effects on the company. Customers who respect ethical business practices keep an eye on companies to see if they share their values and aspirations for environmental sustainability.

Both internal and external partners can benefit from ethical leadership in a variety of ways. Organisations with clearly defined ethical leadership and practices have a beneficial effect on their employees and dedicated consumers. These procedures include every aspect of the company's moral behaviour, going well beyond merely abiding to the law and regulations. Unethical behaviour is not tolerated and is dealt with by leadership teams or regulatory agencies.

(Smith T, 2025)

During my interviews, I found a common denominator among every interviewee when it came to how they defined ethical leadership. The interviewees' agreement on the critical role

integrity plays as a uniting element in ethical leadership highlights how widely integrity is seen as a key component of effective leadership strategies. The consistency of opinion about the importance of integrity in ethical leadership emphasises how fundamental it is as a principle that directs moral behaviour and decision-making. Integrity, which is characterised by qualities like honesty, openness, and dedication to moral principles, is seen as being essential for building respect, credibility, and trust in leadership roles. One of the people I interviewed was the branch manager of the biggest branch in Ireland, as she has the most staff, I believe she needs to uphold and be a role model for ethical leadership the most. She defined ethical leadership as “the practice of leading with integrity, fairness and a commitment to doing the right thing, even when it is difficult”. Her answer coincides with the Head of Risk Department’s answer, where she states integrity, fairness and respect for others are what she defines as ethical leadership. Both leaders’ answers correlate with my hypothesis that I believe that leading with integrity is the foundation of ethical leadership in today’s business environment.

As I believe, having a strong corporate governance structure within a business plays a huge role in a successful business. As each participant underlined the significance of an ethics committee and a code of conduct inside the company, a recurring theme surfaced from the interviews. This constant emphasis on ethical standards and supervision procedures demonstrates a common dedication to encouraging ethical leadership and guaranteeing that moral principles are followed everywhere. The organisation's commitment to developing a culture of integrity, accountability, and moral decision-making is demonstrated by the focus placed on establishing an ethics committee and a code of conduct. This shows a proactive approach to maintaining moral ideals and principles in the workplace. A recurring thing that seemed to come up in most of my interviews was accountability. The action of holding yourself accountable for your mistakes is a prime example of emotional intelligence, which I talked about previously. The use of having an ethics captain in each branch promotes accountability. Also, having weekly meetings on updates about how the company is practising ethical leadership, Enterprise do this by sending out weekly emails on a Friday called “R.I.G.H.T Friday”. They state how to ethically run a branch on a daily basis. When it came to what improvements could be made in regards to accountability, enhanced data transparency was mentioned by multiple leaders. Releasing annual reports on how Enterprise lead using ethics, sustainability movements, and governance metrics can be an improvement made in relation to accountability.

“Balancing profitability vs ethical practices” was a common dilemma mentioned by an interviewee when it comes to leading ethically. Because of the inherent conflict between morality and financial success, ethical leadership has a huge challenge in balancing profitability with ethical actions. Upholding principles like honesty, equity, and social responsibility while also making sure the company is profitable and sustainable is the role of ethical executives. This conflict results from the pressure to fulfil financial goals, satisfy stakeholders, and compete in the market, all of which can occasionally push people to take shortcuts or violate their morals. Finding a balance between ethical behaviour and profitability necessitates negotiating complicated trade-offs and coming to tough judgements that put long-term moral integrity ahead of immediate financial benefit. The organisation's long-term performance may be jeopardised if ethical standards are compromised in the name of profit. This can also lead to legal and regulatory repercussions, harm to the organisation's reputation, and a decline in confidence. To maintain sustainable development and stakeholder confidence, ethical leaders must strike this fine balance by establishing clear ethical norms, encouraging a culture of ethical decision-making, and coordinating financial objectives with ethical principles.

The ability to handle ethical breaches internally is also a dilemma posed within Enterprise. A specialised ethics committee and the appointment of ethics captains in each branch are essential to guaranteeing that moral principles are continuously respected across the company. As leaders, ethics captains keep an eye on daily operations and assist team members in reaching morally right judgments. Their presence serves to reaffirm the organisation's dedication to honesty and responsibility at all levels. In order to keep ethical policies current and useful, the ethics committee conducts investigations, offers broad guidelines, and regularly reviews and revises them. Every employee is expected to undergo the organisation's bimonthly ethics compliance training in addition to leadership oversight. These training programs are intended to reaffirm moral values and teach staff members how to use them in practical situations. Frequent training puts moral issues at the forefront and fosters a culture in which making the correct choice comes naturally. In order to keep staff members informed and involved, these trainings frequently incorporate interactive case studies, candid conversations, and updates on policy changes. Additionally, rather than viewing compliance as a one-time need, these programmes urge staff members to incorporate ethics into their everyday tasks. The company cultivates a culture of professionalism, trust,

and respect at work by regularly reviewing ethical standards. All things considered, a thorough and proactive approach to ethics is ensured by the combination of localised leadership, centralised monitoring, and continuous training, enhancing both organisational integrity and individual responsibility.

Enterprise's motto, "Our Doors Are Always Open," which was mentioned by all interviewees, is a core principle Enterprise uses to uphold ethical leadership. All staff members will feel emboldened to express their opinions, voice concerns, own up to their mistakes, and ask for advice without worrying about criticism to the open-door approach. By establishing a friendly and secure communication environment, Enterprise promotes a culture of moral accountability and trust. This policy immediately reflects the principle of accountability, which is a fundamental component of ethical behaviour. Employees are more likely to take responsibility for their actions and resolve problems before they get out of hand when they feel comfortable approaching supervisors or leadership. This proactive strategy promotes ongoing learning and development in addition to preventing ethical transgressions. A key component of upholding integrity in the workplace is owning up to errors and growing from them. Additionally, the open-door policy upholds the business's dedication to ethical leadership and encourages a transparent decision-making process. It supports cooperation, supports a range of viewpoints, and fortifies ties between employees and management. Ethics can frequently be questioned in the complicated and fast-paced corporate world of today, which is why organisations must establish a framework that continuously encourages and supports moral behaviour. In the end, Enterprise's open-door policy demonstrates its commitment to creating a moral workplace where everyone feels heard and respected, errors are seen as chances for improvement, and accountability is acknowledged.

Enterprise examines and assesses the efficiency of its corporate governance structure through essential practices, including compliance assessments and internal audits. These systems offer an organised and impartial assessment of how effectively a business complies with its internal guidelines, industry rules, and moral principles. Regular internal audits give the company important information about its control systems, risk management plans, and operational integrity. By identifying governance flaws or gaps, these audits allow for remedial action to be taken before they become more serious problems. Contrarily, compliance evaluations concentrate especially on determining if the company is abiding by industry-specific legal requirements and regulatory norms. These evaluations aid in making sure that every division

or company unit is functioning within predetermined ethical and legal bounds. Additionally, they offer openness and accountability, both of which are critical for preserving the confidence of investors, stakeholders, and regulatory agencies. When combined, these procedures are crucial because they transform corporate governance from a collection of theoretical ideas into quantifiable, practical performance metrics. They demonstrate how a branch or department actively engages with and applies the company's values, code of ethics, and strategic objectives in day-to-day operations. Internal audits and compliance assessments mean that organisations determine if these principles are being successfully applied at every level, as opposed to depending just on high-level rules. Additionally, these procedures promote a culture of ongoing development. In addition to maintaining compliance, Enterprise may enhance ethical leadership throughout all of its activities by regularly assessing performance, recognising risks, and guaranteeing responsibility. The company's reputation and long-term viability are strengthened by this proactive strategy, which shows a sincere dedication to corporate responsibility and ethical governance. This relates to my hypothesis that holding yourself accountable is the main way of leading with ethics.

The Head of Human Resources Department, who is also the Head of the Ethics Committee, mentioned the use of having employee feedback sessions and engagement surveys as a way of upholding ethics within the company. In addition to measuring employee engagement and happiness, these surveys work as a tool for holding people and the business responsible for moral behaviour in day-to-day operations. These tools establish a forum for openness and sincere communication by giving staff members an organised means of sharing their thoughts, worries, and experiences. Feedback is particularly crucial since it points out areas in which workers might need to modify their actions or choices to better conform to the ethical principles of the organisation. It might highlight blind spots, including unintentional moral mistakes or pressure points in the corporate culture that might promote unethical behaviour. This makes it possible for managers and staff to evaluate, modify, and develop their professional behaviour. Organisational leadership may proactively address problems and make necessary adjustments to policies or training by using employee engagement surveys to find patterns and trends in ethical behaviour. Incorporating employee opinions into governance procedures ultimately strengthens an ethical and accountable culture, guaranteeing that principles are actively represented in daily corporate operations rather than only being stated on paper. Monthly personal development meetings (PDMs), which are

required to be filled out by all employees, can show what areas need to be improved and what ethical practices need to be taught more.

“While ethical leadership can be formed through differences of opinion, some laws need to be followed. Enterprise’s corporate governance structure is in charge of ensuring these laws are upheld.” This is a statement made by the Head of the Ethics Committee within Enterprise. By guaranteeing complete adherence to all laws and regulations, Enterprise's risk department plays a critical role in preserving the company's integrity and long-term success. This department is in charge of keeping a close eye on the law as it stands now and keeping up with any new developments that could have an effect on business operations. The Risk Department assists in preventing infractions that might result in major repercussions like penalties, harm to one's reputation, or even the closure of activities by keeping a close awareness of legal and regulatory frameworks. Legal environments can change rapidly in the fast-paced corporate world of today, whether as a result of revised data protection legislation, environmental restrictions, or industry-specific compliance standards. It is the responsibility of the risk department to foresee and get ready for these developments so that the company can adjust without difficulty and maintain compliance. Adhering strictly to legal and regulatory requirements is not only a formality, it also frequently determines whether a business succeeds or fails. A competitive compliance structure creates credibility and promotes a stable working environment, whereas non-compliance can result in expensive fines or a decline in consumer confidence. As a result, the Risk Department serves as both a safety net and an advantage that allows Enterprise to expand with assurance and responsibility while staying within the law.

In conclusion, my research gives support to the idea that honesty and integrity are the most crucial components of moral leadership. In any organisation, these fundamental principles form the basis for accountable decision making and reliable leadership. Enterprise's corporate governance framework, which comprises important components like the Risk Department and an ethics committee, clearly demonstrates the company's dedication to ethical leadership. These organisations play a crucial role in encouraging accountability, transparency, and compliance across the whole business. While the ethics committee offers advice on difficult moral dilemmas and upholds the organisation's code of conduct, the risk department makes sure that all laws and regulations are followed, assisting in the prevention of unethical or illegal behaviour.

7) Discussion and Conclusion

During my research, I had hoped to find what the importance of ethical leadership and corporate governance is within today's business environment. Before beginning my study, I believed that having a good corporate governance structure was essential to upholding all ethical practices. I assumed that maintaining all ethical standards established by a firm required the use of an ethics committee and a risk department as part of a corporate governance framework.

Reports like Enterprise's "Code of Conduct" and the "Gender Pay Gap Report 2023-2024" are used, together with findings from interviews, to demonstrate how reporting encourages openness. These documents, which candidly discuss workplace equity, behaviour standards, and accountability procedures, show a company's dedication to moral business practices. Such reporting promotes stakeholder trust and is consistent with the values of sound corporate governance. It demonstrates that the business is working to preserve justice, accountability, and integrity in addition to adhering to the law. This strategy prioritises moral behaviour and good governance practices, which promote long-term sustainability and enhance a business's reputation. This also connects to the Johnson & Johnson and JetBlue examples I cited in my literature review on the advantages of transparency and honesty for a company.

Using an unstructured interview method, in my opinion, allowed me to gain a more genuine and profound knowledge of the people I interviewed true thoughts and feelings on the topics I posed. Open-ended replies were made possible by this adaptable methodology, which encouraged participants to talk freely and go into further detail about their viewpoints and experiences. Because of this, the discussions flowed more easily and frequently produced ideas that would not have surfaced in a more strict, planned setting. Additionally, this approach facilitated rapport-building, which increased respondent comfort and willingness to provide candid, thoughtful responses, thus improving the calibre of my study findings.

In conclusion, I've discovered that creating and maintaining a successful company requires ethical leadership. Leaders who behave honourably, fairly, and openly set the standard for the whole firm, impacting decision-making, staff conduct, and corporate culture. Long-term success depends on a company's reputation, employee motivation, and trust, all of which are

improved by ethical leadership. But moral leadership is insufficient on its own. Even the best of plans can backfire in the absence of a proper corporate governance framework.

The foundation for directing and controlling businesses is provided by corporate governance. It guarantees that leadership choices are made with the interests of all parties involved, such as employees, clients, shareholders, and the general public. Clear policies, accountability procedures, and consistent reporting procedures are all components of a strong governance structure that support moral conduct and adherence to legal requirements. Effective governance and moral leadership work together to foster an atmosphere where ethical behaviour naturally happens during daily operations. This promotes sustainable growth in addition to reducing risks and averting controversies. Ultimately, a firm becomes more competitive, trustworthy, and able to achieve long-term success in a competitive climate when it is led by strong ethical standards, practices, and maintained and led by leaders of example.

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