



## Transparency in our Careers

Being an accountant has given me the opportunity to present stories in numerical form, showing where and when money was spent. I often say that hiding income or expenses nowadays is very difficult, if not impossible. Virtually every transaction has some sort of a finger print; some of it directly and some indirectly or circumstantial. A money trail is like walking down a smooth beach; every footprint can be examined, every stride measured, every direction replayed. We can't hide much. The sooner we get used to a transparent life, the better. With the advent of technology, society is having fewer and fewer options to hide.

The result of higher end technology is a higher level of transparency. ELD's make the answers to "where were you?" a provable position. Many carriers and operators have dash-cams recording events milliseconds at a time in super high definition. Cell phone trackers and history can be retrieved: conversations, events, duration and locations as in-disputable facts. Technology has made entire lives or certainly careers utterly transparent.

So, if drivers must live in a transparent environment should not dispatchers, supervisors, DOT inspectors, auditors and all levels of government? If drivers are told to do one thing "in private" but are responsible for another publicly... is that right? If a driver secretly recorded a threatening DOT Inspection, is that "immoral" or "unethical" towards the inspector? It's certainly not illegal because according to the laws of our land, only one party needs to know about being recorded.

Drivers (and many other professionals) live in a very transparent environment. They usually do so for self-preservation. Just look at the dash cam videos on the internet that clearly show the culpability of some four-wheelers. The available viewing time is endless. The primary reason to live in transparency is to protect oneself from those who lurk in the shadows; those who present their versions to perpetrate some type of fraud such as implicating someone else's guilt rather than owning up to their own.

Dash-cams have saved many drivers their careers. Those four-wheelers who were found guilty through digital evidence have often loathed the technology that forced accountability for their actions or communications. Hating or lashing out at the technology usually shows culpability and lashing out at those people who record events mirrors guilt or suspicion. It also displays social ignorance, arrogance and a level of personal delusion to the common-sense spectator. No adult is fooled by a toddler's tantrum in the cereal aisle and no citizen is fooled by blind denial. It is not a violation of ethics to hold me responsible for my unethical behavior; it is my responsibility to act appropriately... as though I was being recorded.

As leaders and professionals our actions must always be conducted as if we are being recorded and that those recordings will, sooner or later, be made public. I assume in our high-tech society, it probably will be. I don't know about anyone else but for me it's very sobering. I'm glad most of my youthful stupidity was pre-internet. I now only have to worry about my mature... immaturity. I analyze my response or reaction to the exposure to my immaturity, sometimes more than the immaturity itself. I usually find I'm not as mature as I think I am.

The greater our responsibilities the more transparent we must assume our actions will be. Accountability through transparency must now be viewed as the new norm. Accountability is good for those who have nothing to hide... bad for others, and horrible for some politicians.

### About the Author:

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