

Corporate Responsibility

Large corporations make up some of the wealthiest entities in the world today. Some see these corporations as engines of economic development and progress, bringing better products at better prices to a wider range of people every day. Others, however, criticize corporations for their shortcomings when it comes to social responsibility: failing to assist the less fortunate in our society, including their workers, while focusing too narrowly on profits at the expense of social welfare. Should corporations do more than simply aim to improve their profit margins? Is it important for large corporations to set aside profits from time to time in order to donate to charities and to help the needy?

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about corporate responsibility.

Perspective One

Corporations have only one responsibility: to make the greatest profit they possibly can. It is only by doing so that they can benefit their workers, shareholders, and society.

Perspective Two

Profits often get in the way of doing the right thing. Large corporations should focus less on profits and more on developing meaningful ways of helping the disadvantaged.

Perspective Three

It is important that corporations adhere to any and all laws that pertain to them. Beyond this, however, they are free to do as they please.

Essay Task

Write a unified, coherent essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on the conflict of corporate responsibility. In your essay, be sure to:

- Analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
- State and develop your own perspective on the issue
- Explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

Planning Your Essay

Your work on these prewriting pages will not be scored.

Use the space on the back to generate ideas and plan your essay. You may wish to consider the following s you think critically about the task:

Strengths and weaknesses of the three given perspectives

- What insights do they offer, and what do they fail to consider?
- Why might they be persuasive to others, or why might they fail to persuade?

Your own knowledge, experience, and values

- What is your perspective on the issue, and what are its strengths and weaknesses?
- How will you support your perspective in your essay?