



Bribery & Corruption Part 4 - Business Gifts and Bribes

What is a bribe? Bribery can be anything of value. Any sum of money or gift offered to an official could amount to a bribe if its intention or effect is to cause undue influence. It doesn't have to be large sums of money or an expensive car. And there doesn't actually have to be a transfer of funds to be considered a bribe. Under international conventions, even the **promise** or offer of a gift constitutes bribery.

Now, one of the most common areas of bribery comes in the form of business gifts and hospitality. You need to be especially careful when you give or receive them. A gift is something that is given to another person to give pleasure or show gratitude. An example of a business gift may be a memento or item exchanged between two parties as a gesture of goodwill or thanks. Hospitality is the kind and generous treatment offered to guests.

Gifts should be of nominal value, clearly related to business, and should be offered in the normal course of doing business. Be sure to consult your company's policies before offering any gift to a government official. It is YOUR responsibility to know the law! Educate yourself on your company's policies and laws before the situation arises, because ignorance is no excuse.

Remember to always consider the intention of the gift! Any gift given or received in the proper course of doing business should have nominal value or should be promotional in nature.

Acceptable gifts and hospitality include meals in the course business, items of nominal value, gifts during holidays or special occasions, moderate gifts or gift cards that have are tied to specific business events or occasions, and mementos for participating in an activity or conference.

Cash or currency is never acceptable for any reason. Also inter-city or International travel paid for by a supplier, vendor, contractor, or anyone outside the company should be avoided. And, gifts received during a purchasing decision, and gifts that are exclusive only to you under terms not available to anyone else should not be accepted.

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