

What can one afford to say or do?

We are witnessing a truly disruptive re-definition regarding this question, aren't we? And yes, I am indignant: so we have a sexist egomaniac at the emotional stage of development of a three year old, who is now trampling through the white house. You cannot blame him for having some resemblance to an Organ-Utan – it's just a pity that he doesn't have it's social competence.

Can I afford to write such sentences? Is this appropriate? And does anybody care, anyway?

The Donald just went and corrected the economic models of the whole expert community by a factor of two and then ordered that the budget is done on the basis of these figures which are true, because they're his. Wasn't there something about bankruptcies in his business career? Now he seems to feel called to higher things: anybody can ruin a couple of companies. How about the United States of America? Who is Bernie Madoff, anyway?

Anything else? He constrained the work of the press, called journalists „the lowest form of life“ (!) and enemies of the people. He looks forward to build a lot of wonderful nuclear bombs, apparently in total ignorance of the fact that it's irrelevant whether you can blow up the planet fifty or one hundred times. Let's just hope that „we have to start winning wars again“ doesn't mean...According to PolitiFacts two thirds of his statements are partially or totally wrong.

And he can afford that. Just like that. Too bad he is POTUS. That makes it difficult to position oneself, as there are very diverse interests at stake. A real test, and some people are just failing it currently:

LafargeHolcim wants to help building the wall on the mexican border. Asked about this, Mr. Olsen squirms as follows: „This is a decision of the government; we are a partner of this government...we would supply all infrastructure projects...“. I guess the communication parole was „don't mention the wall...“. Not even a hint that there might be qualified objections. As the height of cynicism even a mexican cement holding is competing. „We didn't decide this, we just supply the cement.“ I'm not impressed. Well yes, I am, but I could easily do without.

Some find that it's naive to be outraged about this. But then I ask what kind of situation this is when people showing their indignation are depreciated as a reaction. One thing, however, is obvious: the worth of a commitment to ethics appears when it comes to forgoing a part of the possible profit for the sake of integrity.

Many explained the result of the presidential election with the fact that frustration about the status quo was so big that people didn't so much care about who would be in office, just as long as it would be different. The same could happen to companies that don't care about decency and integrity. What if employees and stakeholders turn their backs? What will happen if people are ready for anything as long as it just changes the status quo? I have no idea, but I don't think it will be funny.

Data is the gold of the future, they say. I bet that there is at least one second gold vein: integrity and an intact moral compass of top leadership, having the chutzpah to advocate publicly the consequences that come with it, and when in doubt giving more weight to them than to personal or operational profit.

Would you challenge a bet that this is actually what everybody is waiting for? It was just not available for now. What is currently being imposed on us on a broad level is a transitional stage. In the long run, whoever earns the trust of society, will win, politician or entrepreneur. I'm prepared to bet.