

# Top 10 List: Lessons Learned from White Collar Crime

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## Background

- Served as Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Minnesota for nearly 20 years
- Prosecuted a wide range of corporate and other economic crimes
- Left U.S. Attorney's Office to join the University of St. Thomas School of Law and its Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership in the Professions, and later the University of Arizona James Rogers College of Law
- Currently teaches three courses: Crime & Punishment, White Collar Crime & Compliance, and Investigations

*Disclaimer:* I'm expressing only my personal views; my statements do not reflect any position of the University of St. Thomas or the University of Arizona.

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## Lessons Learned from the Failures of Others

- Holloran Center program consisting of joint ethics presentations with myself and white collar offenders
- Began with presentations by former business leaders, George Kline and Marvin Goldstein, who I prosecuted, and then continued with former lawyers, bankers, business executives, and others
- Has consisted of hundreds of presentations with more than two dozen former offenders.

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## My Top Ten List

From my experiences prosecuting white collar crime and conducting joint ethics presentations, I developed a top ten list of lessons learned from white collar crime offenders.

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## Lesson 10:

When faced with a right versus a wrong decision, guard against that first intentional misstep.

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## Lesson 9:

Never knowingly sign a false or even questionable document.

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Lesson 8:

Never compound or try to bury your mistakes.

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Lesson 7:

Do not follow directions from others you believe to be improper or unethical.

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Lesson 6:

No matter what your position in your organization, lead by example.

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Lesson 5:

Avoid the perils of "willful blindness."

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Lesson 4:

When faced with an ethical dilemma, seek advice and counsel from others.

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Lesson 3:

Learn to be satisfied with what you have legitimately earned. Greed is a vicious vice that can destroy you.

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Lesson 2:

No one is above the law.

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Lesson 1:

Above all else, at all times, wherever you live or work, do three things:

- Act with integrity
- Exhibit courage
- Honor your reputation

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