Course Title: Business Law & Ethics for Managers: A Practical Guide to Leading with Integrity

Duration: 5 Days (approximately 35-40 instructional hours)

Course Goal: To equip managers and business leaders with a foundational understanding of the key legal principles and ethical frameworks that govern business, enabling them to spot legal issues, mitigate risks, and foster a culture of integrity within their teams and organizations.

Core Focus: This is a "legal issue spotting for leaders" course, not a law school course. It avoids deep legal theory and instead focuses on real-world scenarios, practical applications, and the development of sound managerial judgment. It emphasizes proactive risk management and ethical decision-making as core leadership competencies.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Understand the basic structure of the legal system and the sources of business law.
- Identify the key legal risks in core business areas: contracts, employment, intellectual property, and marketing.
- Apply a structured framework for making sound ethical decisions.
- Recognize the essential elements of a valid contract and common contractual pitfalls.
- Navigate key employment law issues, including hiring, discipline, termination, and discrimination.
- Understand the basics of intellectual property (copyright, trademark, patents) and how to protect company assets.
- Identify legal and ethical issues in advertising and marketing.
- Recognize their role in creating a compliant and ethical workplace culture.
- Develop the critical skill of knowing when a situation requires legal counsel.

Target Audience:

- **Managers, Directors, and Team Leads** at all levels.
- **Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners.**
- **HR Professionals** seeking to broaden their understanding of the legal context of their work.
- **Product Managers and Marketing Managers.**
- Any professional in a leadership or decision-making role.

Prerequisites:

- Experience in a professional or managerial role.
- **No prior legal training is required.**

Teaching Methodology:

This is a highly interactive, scenario-based workshop.

- **Case Study Method:** The course is built around realistic business scenarios and mini-case studies that place participants in the manager's shoes.
- **Risk-Based Approach:** Each module is framed around identifying and mitigating specific legal and ethical risks that managers face daily.
- **"What Would You Do?" Workshops:** A central feature of the course. Participants work in groups to analyze a complex scenario, debate the legal and ethical implications, and decide on a course of action.

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- **Interactive Lectures:** Concepts are explained in plain language, using analogies and real-world examples from recent headlines.
- **Ethical Dilemma Debates:** Facilitated discussions where there is no single "right" answer, forcing participants to weigh competing values and stakeholder interests.

Materials Provided:

- **The Manager's Legal & Ethical Field Guide:** A comprehensive workbook with:
  - Checklists for key processes (e.g., hiring, contract review).
  - A glossary of essential legal terms.
  - A framework for ethical decision-making.
- All case study materials and workshop exercises.
- A guide on how to work effectively with lawyers.
- Certificate of Completion.

Detailed Day-by-Day Curriculum

Day 1: The Foundation - The Legal & Ethical Landscape

- **Module 1: Why Law & Ethics Matter to You as a Manager (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - Welcome, introductions, and course objectives.
  - The manager's role as the "first line of defense" in risk management.
  - The high cost of legal and ethical failures (financial, reputational, personal).
- **Module 2: The Legal Environment of Business (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - A simple overview: Sources of law (statutes, regulations, common law).
  - The court system and the basics of a lawsuit.
  - The difference between civil law and criminal law.
- **Module 3: A Framework for Ethical Decision-Making (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - Beyond the "gut check": Why a structured process is essential.
  - Introducing a practical framework: Identify the facts -> Identify the stakeholders -> Consider the options -> Test the options (e.g., the Sunlight Test, the Virtue Test) -> Make and justify your decision.
  - **Workshop:** Apply the framework to a classic ethical dilemma.

Day 2: Contracts - The Language of Business

- **Module 4: Contract Law for Managers (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - The five essential elements of a valid contract.
  - Understanding key clauses you will encounter: confidentiality, termination, liability, indemnification.
  - The difference between an employee and an independent contractor.
- **Module 5: Common Contractual Pitfalls (Approx. 4 hours)**
  - The danger of oral agreements and ambiguous language.
  - "Battle of the Forms" and other common negotiation issues.
  - The basics of contract breach and remedies.
  - **"Spot the Issues" Workshop:** Participants will review several sample contracts and letters of intent to identify potential red flags and areas of risk.

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Day 3: Employment Law - Managing Your Team

- **Module 6: The Hiring Process (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Legal "do's and don'ts" in job descriptions and interviews.
    - Discrimination and equal opportunity laws.
- **Module 7: Managing Performance & Discipline (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - The critical importance of documentation.
    - Handling difficult conversations and delivering performance reviews legally and ethically.
    - The basics of employee privacy.
- **Module 8: Harassment and Termination (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Defining and preventing workplace harassment.
    - The manager's duty to respond to complaints.
    - Best practices for conducting a legally defensible termination.
    - **Intensive Scenario Workshop:** Participants will work through a complex employee relations case study involving poor performance and a harassment allegation.

Day 4: Protecting Assets & Communicating Truthfully

- **Module 9: Intellectual Property (IP) for Managers (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - The four types of IP and what they protect:
        - **Trademarks:** Protecting your brand.
        - **Copyrights:** Protecting creative works.
        - **Patents:** Protecting inventions.
        - **Trade Secrets:** Protecting confidential information.
    - Your role in protecting the company's IP and respecting the IP of others.
    - **Workshop:** A series of mini-scenarios to identify the type of IP at stake.
- **Module 10: The Law of Marketing & Advertising (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - The legal standard: preventing deceptive and unfair practices.
    - Truth in advertising, endorsements, and customer testimonials.
    - Basics of consumer data privacy (e.g., CAN-SPAM, GDPR concepts).

Day 5: The Integrity-Driven Leader

- **Module 11: Corporate Governance and the Manager's Role (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - A brief overview of the roles of the Board, executives, and management.
    - Understanding conflicts of interest and the duty of loyalty.
- **Module 12: Creating a Culture of Compliance & Ethics (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - The power of "tone at the middle."
    - Encouraging your team to speak up and raise concerns.
    - Your role in enforcing the company's Code of Conduct.
- **Module 13: Capstone Scenario: The Manager's Dilemma (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - **Final Project:** A multi-layered case study that integrates contract, employment, and ethical issues.

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    - **Scenario:** "Your star salesperson is about to close the biggest deal of the year, but you discover they may have made unrealistic promises in the contract and disparaged a competitor in a way that could be legally problematic. The customer is also demanding unusual payment terms."
    - Groups must analyze the situation, weigh the short-term win against the long-term risks, and prepare a plan of action to present to their "VP."
- **Course Wrap-up & The Golden Rule: When to Call Legal (Approx. 0.5 hours)**
    - Final Q&A and a simple checklist to help managers identify situations that require immediate legal consultation.

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