Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy is a comedy taking place in the 1970s that centers around Veronica Corningstone, trying to break into primetime news as a respected reporter. This was a man’s profession during this time. The anchorman and other news team crew found it very difficult to accept the changing environment and the result was a war between the workers.

The overall business world was shown in a negative light in this film. The employees were not treated with equality or equity. This is due to the bias based on gender. Men were given choice assignments, promotion, and position over women. Also, there was bias towards friendships in the office. Besides the sexism displayed, the rest of the business of television news was displayed in a neutral light. The business did not appear unsavory or dark and disturbing. The movie does not go into detail on the operations of the news channel.

There were several business ethical dilemmas portrayed in Anchorman. Sexism in the workplace was the most obvious. This actually formed into an interoffice relationship between Ron and Veronica. This relationship caused working condition issues for many people working in the office. The relationship eventually lead to a sabotage of the other person’s on-camera sign-off that lead to that employee’s dismissal. A smaller ethical dilemma was the misappropriation of office time and resources. And finally, the rivalry between channel 4 and all the other news stations lead to a massive brawl that caused death and loss of limbs bringing up the question, is it ethical to kill a competitor with a trident for better ratings?

The first unethical topic brought up in Anchorman was sexism in the workplace. It was a new opportunity for Veronica when she entered the channel 4 building. She had
been fighting to obtain a top news position for her whole career. Unfortunately for her, this industry was dominated by male workers. Females in the industry did features on beauty parlors or were secretaries. Veronica was introduced to the office at a morning meeting as a way the company can add diversity to the office.

The day at the office involved all the male crew hitting on Veronica and trying to develop a sexual relationship. Veronica had to fight off all the advances in order to keep her respect in the office.

Her assignments were all very un-newsworthy. The first was covering a cat fashion show. The second was covering the news of a waterskiing squirrel. She did not appreciate the job assignments considering that she was a serious news reporter.

Only due to the chance that Ron Burgandy could not make it in to report the news did Veronica get a chance to perform her job. While she did the job of Anchorwoman, the other members of the news team tried distracting her to make her make a mistake and get fired. The plan did not work as she did a good job and inspired all of the other women in the greater San Diego area with her success. Due to the massive increase in ratings, Veronica was then promoted to co-anchor. Now, the news team really hated her. They tried making her look bad during the channel 4 news commercials, Ron and Veronica constantly exchanged insults while on the job, and they harassed her with prank calls trying to get her to quit.

This issue was partially resolved after Ron was forced to leave the station due to an unfair trick from Veronica. Since Ron never did his own work, he read exactly the wording on the teleprompter and while signing off, insulted the city with the “F”-Word. After Ron left, Veronica was lead anchor and had the respect of the rest of the crew.
The issue should have been resolved by Veronica proving herself as a professional journalist. Unfortunately, this would have taken years for the men in this movie to change their behavior.

The actions taken by the male employees of the channel 4 news were clearly unethical. They discriminated by sex in determining job positions and assignments. While the company was not better served by doing this, the friendships between management and some of the male crew remained stable. Of course, this took place in the mid 70s when sexual harassment and equal employment laws could not help the female employee. Just because there is not a law against it, doesn’t mean that it is ethical behavior to harass women.

The second unethical topic in Anchorman was an interoffice relationship. This relationship took place near the beginning of the movie when Ron was showing Veronica around the city. The relationship started as just two people that had an attraction towards one another. But after Ron admitted to the city of San Diego, on air, that they slept together and were in a relationship, it looked as if Veronica was in it just for the promotion. This is exactly what she wanted to avoid.

After Veronica had the chance to be anchorwomen and read the news in place of Ron (as mentioned above), the relationship fell apart. When Ron found out she did his job, he went on to say that he never really took her career aspirations seriously. The break-up was just another reason for some of the fighting and uncomfortable situations between Ron and Veronica.

The biggest reason that this was unethical was the impression that Ron gave to the public that the relationship was helping Veronica’s career. His on-air comment made it
appear as if Veronica was “easy,” and would sleep her way to the top. This was not the
case but perceptions can be reality. This breakup should have been held behind closed
doors. Afterwards, if they could not work well together, one of the two should have
voluntarily left the company.

Most of the staff misused company time. The reporters did no work, only read
the teleprompter throughout the movie. When one of the reporters started covering a
story about a Panda birth, he definitely had no prior background knowledge of Pandas.

At one point, they all left the office to go buy new suits. They walked all over the
city, got lost, and then ended up getting into a brawl with the other San Diego news
stations. Buying suits and brawling are obviously not company sponsored events.

Ron misallocated company resources by using the VCR to show a new reporter
how he won his prestigious award while Veronica required using this resource to review
and edit her footage. Of course, Ron wouldn’t let her and this started another fight. At
one point, the four guys were talking about Veronica and they all broke into song-
“Afternoon Delight.”

It is unethical to misallocate resources and time because it is basically stealing
company money. The company pays employees to spend their time and efforts to put on
a quality news program. When they misuse this time it is stealing. The reporters could
have spent more time researching Pandas. They could have not spent half their time
harassing Veronica or talking about harassing Veronica.

This issue was never resolved in the feature. It should have been resolved by the
station manager. If he would have had better control of his staff, he could have laid down
some ground rules to ensure a quality program.
This exercise really made me pay attention to a movie and notice all the unethical actions taken in an office. I learned that even in news stations in the 70’s, that sexual harassment existed.