

VW. Very Wrong

The Germans have built up an enviable reputation for engineering excellence. Their cars, notably Mercedes-Benz and BMW are renowned for quality, comfort and reliability. Volkswagen are leaders in the mass production of more affordable cars, so the storm following the revelations about them cheating in emissions tests is no surprise

For most people it is not the act itself that cannot be forgiven, but the lying about it that hurts the most. I had a thought of testing this by having an affair and when the inevitable discovery by my better half happened I should admit it rather than lying so that she may forgive me. Then I came to my senses as I want to retain all of my body parts. After all females can be dangerous when wronged

Angela's Ashes

Angela Merkel heard about the scandal whilst on the way home. She kicked down the front door and stormed into the lounge looking for blood. Her mild-mannered husband awaited the force of her displeasure whilst smoking his meerschaum and trying to hide behind his daily, Der Spiegel. The fire that emitted from Angela's mouth turned the newspaper into ashes.

"Joachim" she yelled, "Have you heard what those dumpkofs at Volkswagen have done?" "Yes liebschen dear is there anything that I can do?" "Yes you can do what you always do which is exactly what I tell you. You remember that horrible little shit with the funny moustache and straight arm whose idea was the peoples' car? Well he had a bunker and I want you to find it so that I can put the entire VW management in it, lock it up and throw away the key"

Why resign?

Martin Winterkorn, the head of VW had once had a minor disagreement with Frau Merkel and still suffers from the nightmares that it triggered, so he did the honourable thing, resigned and has done a runner.

Winterkorn thought that some other company could use his ingenuity so decided to move to a country where acting underhand is seen as normal. He made an approach to SEAT but was reminded that they are part of the VW family, so is now scouring South America to where corruption was exported by the mother country

Now resigning when you have been caught out doing something wrong is expected in Northern Europe, but has left some Spanish completely baffled. In similar circumstances a Spanish business leader or politician would put it down to bad luck for being caught and continue to draw his salary whilst receiving overwhelming support from his associates. Why

would anyone want to give up a job over such a trivial matter as lying or embezzlement?
“Those guiris are just stupid”, they may well mutter

No back tax

The world and his brother is aware that VW embedded a piece of kit into test engines that showed very favourable results in terms of emissions. Low emissions are important in order to reduce greenhouse gasses to the extent that governments reduce taxation on such vehicles. This is great for selling cars as more people will buy them if it helps the environment and saves them money. The temptation to cheat must have been overwhelming

Here in Spain, registration or “import” tax is partly based on CO2 emissions; the lower the emissions the lower the tax. My lawyer with whom I work and I were discussing the scandal last week and musing over what action if any would be taken here. We have re-registered many VW’s over the years and generally speaking the emissions have been in the lower categories. Now if in reality they were in a higher category the government has missed out on quite a slug of tax. We dismissed the idea of retrospective taxation as this would be embarrassing for the German authorities and strain relationships between the two countries. Somehow we could not see Mariano Rajoy coming off best in a battle with dear Angela

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