Julie Roehm was an aggressive woman working in a traditionally male-dominated position. She was very successful at what she did but after only 10 months of working for Wal-Mart she was fired for accepting a gift from an ad agency whom she had hired to work with Wal-Mart. This was against Wal-Mart's strict policy and therefore an appropriate reason for her to be fired. Displeased with this decision, she filed a counter-suit for breach of contract, which led to Wal-Mart's counter-suit citing that Roehm was having a romantic relationship with Sean Womack, a co-worker. Evidence of misconduct was produced (and leaked to the press) from an e-mail between Roehm and the co-worker in question and by a statement from a friend of Womack. Roehm in turn filed another suit against Wal-Mart's CEO citing that he had purchased discounted items from partners which was also against company policy and obviously the same offense that she was initially accused of. It's unclear of whether or not the allegations are true on either end as the lawsuits were all eventually dropped, but I believe it's safe to assume that both parties had given in to temptation and engaged in unethical behavior. This unethical behavior has no doubt affected Wal-Mart's reputation on some level, but Roehm's reputation was all but destroyed. Wal-Mart is a powerful company with incredible influence over many other companies and this proved to be big hurdle for Roehm to overcome. She wasn't able to sell her house, which she had recently purchased in the town of Bentonville that served as Wal-Mart's base of operations, or find employment elsewhere because stakeholders were afraid to incur the wrath of Wal-Mart. Having gone through this experience, Roehm mentions that this entire process was "a great slap to the ego;" an overinflated ego which resulted in her giving in to temptation on multiple fronts and being spotlighted for her unethical behavior. According to the author, Roehm is employing a "new ego-free career philosophy" which could lead her to a comeback in her field. An uncontrolled ego, which men and women alike are susceptible to, could very well be the root behind the motivation to make unethical decisions.

I believe that Wal-Mart's decision to fire Roehm was just as they were merely following their ethical responsibility. Wal-Mart enforced a policy of not accepting gifts and not allowing relationships between co-workers (although within the bounds of codified law) because it believed this was a part of their ethical responsibility. If the corporation were to have ignored the acceptance of a gift from a potential partner or client, this could be perceived as breaking the first criterion of corporate social responsibility: economic responsibility. Accepting gifts can lead to conflicts of interest for employees where decisions could be made that have don't have the company's or the shareholder's best interests at heart. The situation might have been handled a bit more delicately on the parts of both parties, but from the information in this article, I don't believe that Ms. Roehm was treated unfairly or unethically.