Ethical Decision Making

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON

Sandra Rhoten
Associate Dean of Students
Student Conduct
Ten Commitments of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRACTICES</th>
<th>COMMITMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Challenging the Process</td>
<td>1. <em>Search out</em> challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve.</td>
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<td>2. <em>Experiment</em>, take risks, and learn from the accompanying mistakes.</td>
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<td>4. <em>Enlist</em> others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes, and dreams.</td>
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<td>Enabling Others to Act</td>
<td>5. <em>Foster</em> collaboration by promoting Cooperative goals and building trust.</td>
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<td>6. <em>Strengthen</em> people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support</td>
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<td>Modeling the Way</td>
<td>7. <em>Set</em> the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.</td>
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<td>8. <em>Achieve</em> small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.</td>
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<td>Encouraging the Heart</td>
<td>9. <em>Recognize</em> individual contributions to the success of every project.</td>
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<td>10. <em>Celebrate</em> team accomplishments regularly.</td>
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WHAT IS ETHICS?

1. Greek root, ethos: the character and sentiment of the community.

2. The eternal verities of right and wrong, the rules of behavior that form the general conception of right and wrong for individuals, communities, and institutions.

3. Ethics is not a set of rules; it’s a complex set of ideas, guidelines or rules of conduct by which we aim to live.

4. Ethics – doing what is right or more right in a given situation.
KITCHENER’S
Five Principles of Ethical Behavior

“...ethical principles are more than convenient guidelines, but less than absolutes. They are always ethically relevant, and they can be overturned only by strong ethical obligations.”

1) RESPECTING AUTONOMY
Having freedom of thought or choice; acting as a free agent; allowing the same right in others; showing respect for the rights of others.

2) DOING NO HARM
Avoiding inflicting physical and/or psychological harm on others; avoiding engaging in harmful or hurtful behavior even unintentionally; being empathetic; trying to imagine how others feel.

3) BENEFITING OTHERS
Being kind and actively contributing to the general welfare of others; putting the welfare of others above one’s own interest.

4) BEING JUST
Being fair and impartial; treating others equally; considering the needs of underserved populations that may need special attention or treatment.

5) BEING FAITHFUL
Recognizing implicit contracts or agreements; entering into agreements in good faith; keeping promises, being loyal and telling the truth.
STAGE ONE
PUNISHMENT/OBEDIENCE
Concern is focused on the self. Obedience is to a powerful authority and fear of punishment dominates motives. One sees oneself as being dominated by other forces and actions are judged in terms of their physical consequences.

STAGE TWO
THE MARKETPLACE
Concern about others is one-way and focused on what one person can do for another and how they can agree to act so both will benefit. The basic motive is to satisfy one’s own needs. The needs of others are not considered unless one thinks it will benefit oneself to do so.

STAGE THREE
GOOD BOY/GOOD GIRL
Concern is focused on groups of people and conformity to group norms. There is a two-way relationship (we are good for each other) and the motive is to be a “good boy/good girl” – to be accepted. Affection plays a strong role.

STAGE FOUR
LAW AND ORDER
Concern is focused on order in society. Honor and duty come from keeping the rules of society. Preservation of the society is the dominant motive, not just obeying as in Stage One.

STAGE FIVE
LEGALISTIC POINT OF VIEW
Concern is focused on the principle that what is right is what the whole society decides. There are no legal absolutes. The society can change standards by everyone agreeing to the change. Changes in the law are usually made for reasons of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. The U.S. Constitution is written in terms of Stage Five orientation.

STAGE SIX
UNIVERSAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES
Concern is focused on the principle that what is right is a decision of one’s conscience that is based on ideas about rightness that apply to everyone—all nations, people, etc. These are called ethical principles. The most important ethical principles deal with justice, equality, and the dignity of all people. These principles are higher than any given law because they come from the experiences of all people.
GILLIGAN’S
Moral Perspectives

“Women’s construction of the moral problem as a problem of care and responsibility in relationships rather than as one of the rights and rules ties the development of their moral thinking to changes in their understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as justice ties (men’s) development to the logic of equality and reciprocity.”

**FIRST PERSPECTIVE**
**ORIENTATION TO INDIVIDUAL SURVIVAL**

The initial focus is on caring for the self in order to ensure survival.

**Transition: From Selfishness to a Sense of Responsibility**
Being centered on the self is criticized as selfishness. There is a new understanding of the connection between self and others which is articulated by the concept of responsibility.

**SECOND PERSPECTIVE**
**GOODNESS AS SELF SACRIFICE**

There is reliance on societal values. Good is equated with caring for others. Often only others are legitimized as the recipients of this care.

**Transition: From Goodness to Truth**
The equating of conformity with care and the illogic of the inequality between others and self lead to reconsideration of relationships.

**THIRD PERSPECTIVE**
**RECONCILIATION OF SELF AND RESPONSIBILITY**

There is a new understanding of the interconnection between others and self, that others and self are interdependent.

**Transition: To Care as a Universal Obligation**
Care becomes the self-chosen principle of a judgment that remains psychological in its concern with relationships and response, but becomes universal in its condemnation of exploitation and hurt.
Ethical Decision Making
A Framework for Ethical Decision-Making
THOMAS SHANKS

Ethics or morality poses questions about how we ought to act and how we should live. It asks, “According to what standards are these actions right or wrong?” It asks, “What character traits (like honesty, compassion, fairness) are necessary to live a truly human life?” It also asks, “What concerns or groups do we usually minimize or ignore?” And “why might that be?”

Recognize an Ethical Issue

- Is there something wrong personally, interpersonally, or socially? Is there conflict that could be damaging to people? To the environment? To institutions? To society?
- Does the issue go deeper than legal or constitutional concerns? What does it do to people or persons who have dignity, rights, and hopes for a better life together?

Get the Facts

- What are the relevant facts of the situations?
- What individuals or groups have an important stake in the outcome? What is at stake for each? Do some have a greater stake because they have a special need (e.g., those who are poor or excluded) or because we have special obligations to them? Are there other important stakeholders in addition to those directly involved?
- What are the options for acting? Have all the relevant persons or groups been consulted? If you showed your list of options to someone you respect, what would that person say?

Evaluate the Alternative Actions

- Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm?
- Which option respects the rights and dignity of all stakeholders? Even if not everyone gets all they want, will everyone still be treated fairly?
- Which option would promote the common good and help all to participate more fully in the goods we share as a society, as a community, as a company, as a family?
- Which option would enable the deepening or development of those virtues or character traits that we value as individuals? As a profession? As a society?

Make a Decision (taking into account the two questions below)

- Considering these perspectives, which of the options is the right thing to do?
- If you told someone you respect why you chose this option, what would that person say?

Act, then reflect on the decision later

- How did it turn out for all concerned? If you had to do it over again, what, if anything, would you do differently? Why?
Ethical Decision Making
A Model for Ethical Decision Making

1) Get the Facts Straight
Collect as much accurate information as you can. Ask questions. Who has a stake in this decision? What are the issues?

2) Identify the Ethical Dilemma
Agreement on the facts is important, but you must also agree on the content of the problem you must resolve. If you are not sure, try breaking the larger problem into smaller, more easily identified problems and deal with them one at a time.

3) Propose and Implement a Solution
Consider the following basic elements of ethical decision making:

**Impartiality:** Your wants and needs are important, but they are not more important than anyone else’s wants and needs. If there is to be some form of discrimination, there must be very good reasons for doing so.

**Consistency:** The correct ethical decision in one situation must also be the correct ethical decision when the same situation arises again. You cannot arbitrarily change the rules of the game. Once you compromise your principles ever so slightly, it becomes easier to do so again.

**Consider Both the Means and the Ends:** You should be concerned with the methods, attitudes and processes, as well as both the short and long term consequences of your decisions.

**Respect Human Dignity:** Ethical conduct seeks to educate by providing people the means they need to make reasoned decisions. Even when acting in the name of what is right and just, you cannot allow ethics to be reduced to manipulation.

**Consult Your Conscience:** Once you think about what you are doing, you will know right from wrong.

4) Evaluate the Solution Implemented.
After the decision is made, you need to go back and see if your decision had the desired effect. More importantly, you must consider ways that the situation could have been avoided through better planning or management.

Coming to Grips with Ethics in Business
Richard A. Wueste
Ethical Decision Making

How Did I Live Today?

Thomas Shanks, SJ., PH.D., Executive Director of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, recommends that everyone ask themselves these five questions at the end of the day:

1. Did I practice any virtues (e.g., integrity, honesty, compassion)?

2. Did I do more good than harm?

3. Did I treat others with dignity and respect?

4. Was I fair and just?

5. Was my community better because I was in it?
   Was I better because I was in my community?
Ethical Decision Making
Thoughts on Ethics

• “A man’s ethical behavior should be based on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death.”

  _Albert Einstein_

• “In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so. We must treat human beings as ends, not means.”

  _Immanuel Kant_

• “A man is truly ethical only when he obeys the compulsion to help all life which he is able to assist, and shrinks from injuring anything that lives.”

  _Albert Schweitzer_

• “Education teaches men to act nobly.”

  _Plato_

• “…the end of ethics is action.”

  _Aristotle_

• “We who now live are parts of a humanity that extends into the remote past, a humanity that has interacted with nature. The things in civilization we most prize are not of ourselves. They exist by the grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link. Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it.”

  _John Dewey_

• “The louder he talked of his honor, the faster we counted our spoons.”

  _Ralph Waldo Emerson_

• Calvin: “I don’t believe in ethics any more. It’s a dog-eat-dog world, so I’ll do whatever I have to do, and let others argue about whether it’s “right” or not. Get what you can while the getting’s good – that’s what I say! Might makes right! The winners write the history books! As far as I’m concerned, the ends justify the means.”

  _HOBBS SHOVES CALVIN AND CALVIN FALLS DOWN._

  Calvin: “Why’d you do that!!!!!!!”
  Hobbs: “You were in my way. Now you’re not. The ends justify the means.”
  Calvin: “I didn’t mean for EVERYONE, you dolt! Just ME!”
  Hobbs: “Ahh.

  _Calvin and Hobbs_
….look here: on one side we have a stupid, senseless, worthless, spiteful, ailing, horrid old woman, not simply useless, but doing actual mischief, who has not an idea what she is living for herself, and who will die in a day or two in any case….On the other side, fresh young lives thrown away for want of help, and by thousands, on every side. A hundred thousand good deeds could be done….on that old woman’s money which will be buried in a monastery. Hundreds, thousands perhaps, might be set on the right path, dozens of families saved from destitution, from vice, from the lock hospitals….and all with her money. Kill her, take her money and with the help of it devote oneself to the service of humanity and the good of all. What do you think, would not one tiny crime be wiped out by thousands of good deeds? For one life thousands would be saved from corruption and decay. One death, and a hundred lives in exchange….it’s simple arithmetic.
A Tribute to Yourself

Imagine tonight you will be honored as the “Leader of the Year.” Hundreds of people will gather to pay tribute to your contributions to your organization and community. There will be several speeches praising your performance and your character.

What three to five words or phrases would you most like others to say about you?

Start with the ideal image of yourself.

- How would you like to be remembered tonight?
- What descriptions would make you feel the proudest?
- If you could influence what people say about you when you are not around, what would you want them to say?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

These may be lofty or ideal, but that is exactly the point. We all have personal standards of excellence. The greater our personal clarity, belief in, and passion for these ideals, the greater the probability we will act consistently with them.

From The Leadership Challenge
James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner
Ethical Decision Making

Rank Order Exercise

Rank the statements below from 1 to 8 based on your opinion and how you feel. Number 1 will be the most ethical action and number 8 in your opinion is the most unethical action. You cannot assign a number more than once.

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<th>Individual</th>
<th>Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Looking on someone’s exam for help with an answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Playing a joke on a friend and he or she gets slightly hurt</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Hiding a book in the library so no one else can find it except you</td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Using a fake ID</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Not telling your professor when you see someone cheating on a test</td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Missing class and then making up an excuse to give to your professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Switching a price tag on a book at the bookstore so you can pay a lower price</td>
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<tr>
<td>__________ Posting unauthorized flyers on campus</td>
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Ethical Decision Making
Check-List

1. Is it legal?
   Will I be violating any civil law?

2. Is it against University policy?

3. Is it balanced?
   Is it fair to all concerned?

4. How will it make me feel about myself?
   Will I be proud?
   Would I feel good if the newspaper published my decision?
   Would I feel good if my family knew about my choice?

Blanchard, Kenneth,
“The Power of Ethical Management”