







Ethics

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- What are ethics?
- Ethics in Education
- Ethics in the Workplace
- Recent WV Ethics Commission Advisory Opinions



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What are ethics?

- According to Miriam-Webster:
 - Ethics are defined as “dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation” or “the principles of conduct governing an individual or a group”.
- Moral is defined as “relating to principles of right or wrong” and “conforming to a standard of right behavior”.

What are ethics?

- Duty is defined as an “obligatory task, conduct service, or function that arises from one’s position (as in life or in a group)”
- Obligation is defined as “something one is bound to do”.

What are ethics?

- Okay, so what that really means is...

Conforming to a standard of right behavior when completing a task, service, function that arises from one's position (as in life or in a group) or something one is bound to do.

OR



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What are ethics?

- Okay, so what that really means is...

“Let your conscience be your guide”



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What are ethics?

- Examples of ethical dilemmas – Let's hear from you!
 - Diamond in D.C.
 - Tucker Automobile



Ethics is Education

- What does this include?
 - Social Media
 - Cyber Bullying
 - Gender and Teacher Bias
 - Socioeconomics, Race and Resource Equity

Social Media

- Failure to graduate, find a job, or retain a job because of material or pictures that is posted
- Friends with Students
 - Barriers and Boundaries
 - Are you being a role model?

Cyber Bullying & Gender Bias

- Cyber Bullying
 - The use of technology to torment, tease, and harass someone.
- Gender and Teacher Bias
- Males and Females are treated differently
 - Teachers unknowingly give more attention to boys than girls.
 - Lack of education in text books

Socioeconomics, Race, and Resource Equality

- Issues: Racism, Socioeconomic segregation, and insufficient funding
- Solutions
 - Treat everyone equally regardless of their heritage
 - Offer poor students food or other basic needs so they learn at school (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs)
 - Maintain high expectations so students will strive for their best
 - Budget and allocate resources appropriately
 - Seek additional funding to improve the quality of education

Ethics in the Workplace



- Work Ethics - Group of moral principles, standards of behavior, or set of values regarding proper conduct in the workplace.
- Relationships at Work
 - Administrators towards students/parents
 - Administrators towards faculty/staff
 - Administrators towards external parties
 - Faculty/staff towards administrators
 - Faculty/staff towards each other

Ethics in the Workplace

- Relationships at Work
 - Gossip
 - Harassment
 - Irresponsible Behavior
 - Break Confidentiality
 - Ignore Safety Concerns



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Ethics in the Workplace

- Business Abuse
 - Stealing: inventory, money, equipment, school supplies, time, trust
 - Unnecessary purchases and/or trips
 - Conflict of interest – avoid the very appearance
 - Kickbacks – I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine...
 - Vandalism
 - Falsify records (Fraud) – All The Queen's Horses



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Ethics in the Workplace

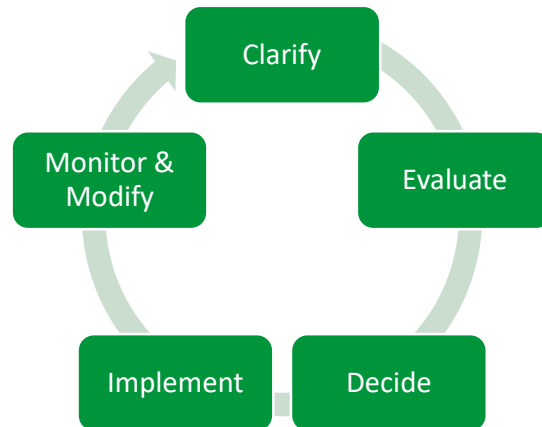
How or why do these situations arise?	How can we prevent these situations?
Rationalization – “Everybody does it.”	Security
Justification – “They don’t pay me enough.”	Controls
Opportunity – poor oversight, lack of control, cultural complacency	Increased Loyalty – wages, recognition, fair treatment
Things just happen	Speak Up – whistleblower program
	Tone at the Top – positive culture
	Increased awareness

Ethics in the Workplace



- When in doubt ask,
 - Is this legal? However, even it is, it may not be ethically correct.
 - Is this against state, federal, or board policy?
 - Could my actions cause loss or harm to anyone?
 - If everyone saw me would I feel embarrassed, ashamed, or uncomfortable?

Ethics in the Workplace



Ethics in the Workplace

- Refer to the following Ethical Decision Making Model:
- Step 1 is to Clarify –
 - Determine precisely what must be decided.
 - Formulate and devise the full range of alternatives.
 - Eliminate patently impractical, illegal and improper alternatives.
 - Force yourself to develop at least three ethically justifiable options.
 - Examine each option to determine which ethical principles and values are involved.

Ethics in the Workplace

- Refer to the following Ethical Decision Making Model:
- Step 2 is to Evaluate –
 - If any of the options requires the sacrifice of any ethical principle, evaluate the facts and assumptions carefully.
 - Distinguish solid facts from beliefs, desires, theories, suppositions, unsupported conclusions, opinions, and rationalizations.
 - Consider the credibility of sources, especially when they are self-interested, ideological or biased.
 - With regard to each alternative, carefully consider the benefits, burdens and risks to each stakeholder.

Ethics in the Workplace

- Refer to the following Ethical Decision Making Model:
- Step 3 is to Decide –
 - Make a judgment about what is not true and what consequences are most likely to occur.
 - Evaluate the viable alternatives according to personal conscience.
 - Prioritize the values so that you can choose which values to advance and which to subordinate.
 - Determine who will be helped the most and harmed the least.
 - Consider the worst case scenario.

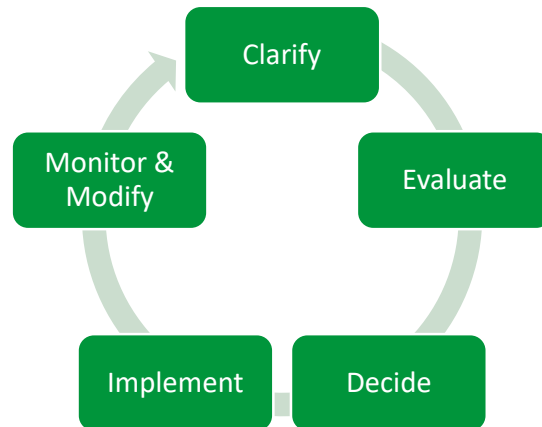
Ethics in the Workplace

- Refer to the following Ethical Decision Making Model:
- Step 4 is to Implement –
 - Develop a plan of how to implement the decision.
 - Maximize the benefits and minimize the costs and risks.

Ethics in the Workplace

- Refer to the following Ethical Decision Making Model:
- Step 5 is to Monitor & Modify–
 - Monitor the effects of decisions.
 - Be prepared and willing to revise a plan, or take a different course of action.
 - Adjust to new information.

Ethics in the Workplace



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Ethics in the Workplace

- Black, white or grey?
 - Business can be associated with competition and greed
 - If the laws and rules in place do not explicitly address the situation do we still rely on our own moral values or do we determine it is acceptable because it does not state otherwise?
 - Ethical fading
 - We become blind to the fact that we are actually crossing boundaries

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Ethics in the Workplace

- In John C. Maxwell's book Ethics 101
 - 43% of employees (surveyed) committed an unethical act
 - 75% observed unethical acts and did nothing.
 - Reasons:
 - Participation Attitude – They are also part of the 43%
 - Apathetic – The employee who notices really doesn't care
 - Afraid – The employees don't feel safe reporting the incident, and
 - Surrender Attitude – Why bother? Nothing will be done anyway.

Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2023-07 Opinion Sought

- A County School Superintendent asks whether he may accept payment from a private company that manufactures electric school buses for food, lodging, and travel expenses related to his service as a panel member at the company's conference.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2023-07 Facts

- The Manufacturer opened a plant in the Requestor's County the previous year.
- The county had purchased an electric bus from a dealer in West Virginia.
- The Superintendent would use personal leave to speak at the conference, designed to educate people on the use and effectiveness of electric school buses.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2023-07 Provisions Relied Upon by the Commission

- W. Va. Code § 6B -2-5(c)(1)
- No official or employee may knowingly accept any gift, directly or indirectly, from a lobbyist or from any person whom the official or employee knows or has reason to know:
 - Is doing or seeking to do business of any kind with his or her agency;
 - Is engaged in activities which are regulated or controlled by his or her agency; or
 - Has financial interests which may be substantially and materially affected, in a manner distinguishable from the public generally, by the performance or nonperformance of his or her official duties.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2023-07 Provisions Relied Upon by the Commission

- W. Va. Code § 6B -2-5(c)(2)
- "...the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection do not apply to:
 - Reasonable expenses for food, travel, and lodging of the official or employee for a meeting at which the official or employee participates in a panel or has a speaking engagement...
- W. Va. Code R. § 158-7-5
 - 5.2. Food and lodging expenses are "reasonable" if they expenses are limited to the usual and customary basic charges of the hotel and are comparable to those charged to other participants and hotel guests. Travel expenses are "reasonable" if the expenses are comparable to those ordinarily charged to other similar travelers.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2023-07 Opinion

- The Ethics Commission holds that the manufacturer may pay for the requestor's reasonable food, lodging, and travel expenses related to the requestor's service as a panel speaker at the manufacturer's conference.
- The requestor does not have to use professional leave to attend the conference if the County BOE determines that the conference will provide an overriding public benefit to the county BOE.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2022-19 Opinion Sought

A State Board Member who has an ownership interest in for-profit educational institutions asks whether he may vote to approve and license programs at other educational institutions when his educational institutions offer the same degree program.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2022-19 Facts

- The requestor has recently been appointed to serve as a member of a State Board that regulates a profession.
- The requestor has an ownership interest that is greater than 10% in for-profit educational institutions that provide seven associate degree programs in the regulated profession throughout the state.
- There are 24 educational institutions in the state that offer associate degree and/or baccalaureate programs that are approved and licensed by the state board on which the requestor serves. A general breakdown of the programs offered by the 24 educational institutions:
 - 4 have both associate degree and baccalaureate programs,
 - 8 have only baccalaureate programs, and
 - 12 have only associate degree programs.



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2022-19 Provisions Relied Upon by the Commission

- W. VA. Code §6B-2-5(j)
- Public officials, excluding members of the Legislature who are governed by subsection (i) of this section, may not vote on a matter:
 - (A) In which they, an immediate family member, or a business with which they or an immediate family member is associated have a financial interest. Business with which they are associated means a business of which the person or an immediate family member is a director, officer, owner, employee, compensated agent, or holder of stock which constitutes five percent or more of the total outstanding stocks of any class.
- W. VA. Code §6B-2-5 (k)



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Recent WV Ethics Commission Opinions

AO 2022-19 Opinion

- The Ethics Commission holds that the requestor may not participate in or vote on licensing and approving programs at educational institutions that have or seek to have the same programs as the requestor's educational institutions. He must recuse himself from the discussions and votes.
 - He must physically remove himself from the room during the period, fully disclosing his interests, and recusing himself from voting on the issue.
- The Ethics Commission also finds that W. VA. Code §6B-2-5 (k) prohibits the Requestor from participating in decisions of the State Board to approve programs and licenses at educational institutions that have or seek to have the same program or programs as the requestor's educational institutions.



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Questions ??



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Thank You!



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