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Ethics in the workplace

KA219 - Strategic Partnerships Project: “Entrepreneurship: Imagination at Work”

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WHAT IS ETHICS?

Ethics :

- the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation;
- a set of moral principles;
- a theory or system of moral values.



WHAT IS A WORKPLACE?



- A **workplace** is a location where someone works for his or her employer, a place of employment.
- Such a place can range from a home office to a large office building or factory.



12 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR BUSINESS EXECUTIVES



- Ethical behavior on the part of the company and the employees of a business can translate into *honest and valued relationships* with the **customers, the employees** and **the business partners**.
- Maintaining ethical standards in the workplace involves:
 - ❖ setting **expectations**;
 - ❖ providing **guidance** along the way
and
 - ❖ consistently **choosing** to do the right thing.



1. HONESTY



- Ethical executives are honest and truthful in all their dealings.
- They do not deliberately mislead or deceive others by misrepresentations, overstatements, partial truths, selective omissions, or any other means.



2. INTEGRITY



- Ethical executives demonstrate personal integrity and the courage of their convictions by doing what they think is right even when there is great pressure to do otherwise.
- They are principled, honorable and upright.
- They will fight for their beliefs.
- They will not sacrifice principle for expediency.
- They will not be hypocritical or unscrupulous.



3. PROMISE-KEEPING & TRUSTWORTHINESS



- Ethical executives are worthy of trust. They are forthcoming in supplying relevant information and correcting misapprehensions of fact.
- They make every reasonable effort to fulfill the letter and spirit of their promises and commitments.
- They do not interpret agreements in an unreasonably technical or legalistic manner.



4. LOYALTY



- Ethical executives are worthy of trust, demonstrate fidelity and loyalty to persons and institutions by:
 - ❖ friendship in adversity;
 - ❖ support
and
 - ❖ devotion to duty.
- They do not use or disclose information learned in confidence for personal advantage.
- They safeguard the ability to make independent professional judgments by avoiding undue influences and conflicts of interest.
- They are loyal to their companies and colleagues. If they decide to accept other employment, they provide reasonable notice and respect the proprietary information of their former employer.



5. FAIRNESS



- Ethical executives are fair and just in all dealings.
- They do not exercise power arbitrarily.
- They do not use overreaching nor indecent means to gain or maintain any advantage.
- They do not take undue advantage of another's mistakes or difficulties.
- Fair persons manifest a commitment to justice, the equal treatment of individuals, tolerance for and acceptance of diversity.
- They are open-minded.
- They are willing to admit they are wrong and, where appropriate, change their positions and beliefs.



6. CONCERN FOR OTHERS



- Ethical executives are caring, compassionate, benevolent and kind.
- They like to help those in need, and seek to accomplish their business objectives in a manner that causes the least harm and the greatest positive good.



7. RESPECT FOR OTHERS



- Ethical executives demonstrate respect for the human dignity, autonomy, privacy, rights, and interests of all those who have a stake in their decisions.
- They are courteous and treat all people with equal respect and dignity regardless of sex, race or national origin.



8. LAW-ABIDING

- Ethical executives abide by laws, rules and regulations relating to their business activities.



9. COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

- Ethical executives pursue excellence in performing their duties, are well informed and prepared.
- They constantly endeavor to increase their proficiency in all areas of responsibility.



10. LEADERSHIP



- Ethical executives are conscious of the responsibilities and opportunities of their position of leadership.
- They seek to be positive ethical role models by their own conduct and by helping to create an environment in which principled reasoning and ethical decision-making are highly prized.



11. REPUTATION AND MORALE



- Ethical executives seek to protect and build the company's good reputation and the morale of its employees
- by engaging in no conduct that might undermine respect
- and
- by taking whatever actions are necessary to correct or prevent inappropriate conduct of others.



12. ACCOUNTABILITY



- Ethical executives acknowledge and accept personal accountability for the ethical quality of their decisions and omissions to
 - themselves;
 - their colleagues;
 - their companies;
 - and
 - and their communities.

- Credits:
<http://josephsononbusinessethics.com/2010/12/12-ethical-principles-for-business-executives/>



4 MAIN PRINCIPLES

- Morality (honesty, integrity, promise keeping and trustworthiness, loyalty, **fairness**);
- Humanity (**respect for others** and concern for others);
- Law-abiding (including accountability);
- Leadership (commitment to excellence, **reputation** and morale);
- And now, let's watch a short movie illustrating these 4 main principles.

<https://vimeo.com/259640989>



DISCUSSING THE SHORT MOVIE

- What character did you like best? Why?
- What have you learnt?
- Describe the entrepreneur.





“Clients do not
come first.

Employees come
first.

If you take care of
your employees ,
they will take care
of the clients.”

Richard Branson

GROUP WORK

Task 1): Divide in 5 groups.

- 1 N.G.O.
- 1 bakery
- 1 online store
- 1 minimarket
- The Town Hall



Task 2): Agree on a common set of rules at your workplace.



ROLE PLAY – N.G.O.

The manager of the N.G.O. has been proven to have an affair with the wife of a senator in the Government. The manager is trying to cover this up.

You are an employee and have just found out about this situation.



What principle(s) has/have been broken? Why?

Act it out!



ROLE PLAY - THE BAKERY

You have just spotted a mouse in the storage area where the bakery keeps the flour.

You report the problem to your boss but he says that you should solve the problem.



What principle(s) has/have been broken? Why?
Act it out!



ROLE PLAY – THE ONLINE STORE

The store you are working at hasn't respected its return policy. You are now talking to a disgruntled customer who has not yet received the refund for the product he has sent back.



What principle(s) has/have been broken? Why?
Act it out!



ROLE PLAY – THE MINIMARKET

You are the manager and your supplier has brought some milk whose expiration date is no longer in effect.

You notice this only after you have sold 3 cartons.

What principle(s) has/have been broken? Why?

Act it out!



ROLE PLAY – THE TOWN HALL

Your boss is asking you to substitute one of your co-workers. It is the second time this month alone. He also asks you to finish and submit your colleague's work.



What principle(s) has/have been broken? Why?
Act it out!



FOR THE TEACHERS



Workplace Wellbeing

- Further reading on

http://www.ilo.org/safework/areasofwork/workplace-health-promotion-and-well-being/WCMS_118396/lang--en/index.htm

Credits: International Labour Organization

