



# Ethical Behavior in the Workplace

Participant Training Manual

Comprehensive Public Training Program



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# ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This training will help participants learn how to evaluate work solutions to identify potential ethical problems and conflicts of interest. Participants will learn how to comply with rules and/or laws governing potential areas of conflict, promote awareness of ethical behavior in work groups, and anticipate the implications of words and actions within work group goals. **This class does not substitute or replace the state requirement for mandated ethics training.**

## JOB/LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ◆ Understand what workplace ethics encompasses.
- ◆ Explore different ethical styles and learn how to address and resolve ethical dilemmas.
- ◆ Identify how ethics affect teamwork, productivity, and the public image.
- ◆ Model and encourage high standards of honesty and integrity.



## ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE GROUP ACTIVITY

In your small groups, create a definition for “ethics” and a definition for “compliance.” Aim for good working definitions in your group’s own words.

# ETHICS: IT'S MORE THAN COMPLIANCE



In your groups, list some examples of compliance?

## PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT GOVERNING THE WORKPLACE

### Principles of Ethics in Public Service

1. Public service in Louisiana is a trust; it should not be used for personal gain.
2. Make decisions on the merits, without partiality or prejudice.
3. Service should be conducted openly, equitably and honorably.
4. Respect democratic principles, observing the letter and spirit of laws.
5. Avoid appearances of impropriety in order to promote integrity in government.



### ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE GROUP ACTIVITY

Stephen has applied for a transfer to Department Q, headed by Jane. As part of Jane's fact finding, she reads through Stephen's written evaluation, which is exceptional, then asks Stephen's boss for information on his performance. Stephen's boss starts complaining about Stephen because his last project was not up to par; however, Stephen's boss fails to mention that Stephen's wife has been seriously ill for two months. Jane then decides not to accept Stephen's transfer.

1. Describe the ethical dilemma that this scenario highlights.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are your thoughts and feelings about how this situation was handled?

# VALUES

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**Values Defined:** A person's principles or standards of behavior; one's judgment of what is important in life. (Oxford Dictionary 2013)

Our values come from many different places, including:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

While some values may change throughout our lives, the core of our values will remain fairly constant. These core values steer us when making ethical decisions.



## VALUES INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

**What:** Understanding YOUR core values

**How:** The best way to understand your core values is to list them. Take a few minutes and list 3—7 core values that you think best represents you.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

# WHERE DO OUR VALUES COME FROM?

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## Factors that Influence Ethical Behavior



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# ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

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## MORAL TEMPTATION

Let's look a little closer at **moral temptations** (right versus wrong) first. What makes something wrong? How do we know when we see it? As Kidder references in his book, *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, he mentions that we typically think of wrong in three ways:

1. Violation of law
2. Departure from truth
3. Deviation from moral rectitude



Decisions regarding moral temptations can be weighed by testing ideas according to the following:

- The Legal Test

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- The Gut Test

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- The Front Page Test

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- The Mom Test

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## MORAL TEMPTATIONS—GROUP ACTIVITY

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**What:** Moral Temptations

**How:** Do each of these pass the moral temptation test?

- ◆ Occasionally being a little late to work?
- ◆ Surfing the web when you run out of things to do?
- ◆ Downloading some music to your computer?
- ◆ Forgetting to handle a couple of tasks you were given?
- ◆ Spending time on Facebook?
- ◆ Sharing with others an employee's salary?
- ◆ You see a \$10 bill fall out of a woman's purse—do you keep it?

**NOTES:**

# ETHICAL DILEMMAS

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## UNDERSTANDING ETHICAL DILEMMAS

**Ethical dilemmas** (right versus right) go straight to the heart of our core values. When these core values clash, we are faced with making difficult choices. How do we make those difficult choices?

When trying to understand ethical dilemmas Kidder introduces the Four Paradigms for Understanding Ethical Dilemmas. These four paradigms help us describe the basic issues at the heart of so many ethical conflicts—when core values collide—making it hard for good people to make those tough choice.



## KIDDER'S FOUR PARADIGMS FOR UNDERSTANDING ETHICAL DILEMMAS

1. Truth vs. Loyalty:
2. Individualism vs. Community:
3. Short-Term vs. Long-Term:
4. Justice vs. Mercy:

How is understanding the type of dilemma helpful?



# UNDERSTANDING ETHICAL DILEMMAS

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## Small Group Activity

**What:** Four Paradigms for Understanding Ethical Dilemmas

**How:** Each group will receive a scenario to work on. Read and discuss the scenario within your small group. Decide which of the four paradigms your scenario fits. Be prepared to share your scenario with the class and have discussion points regarding which paradigm you chose and why.

- ◆ Truth vs. Loyalty
- ◆ Individualism vs. Community
- ◆ Short-Term vs. Long-Term
- ◆ Justice vs. Mercy

**NOTES:**

# RESOLUTION PRINCIPLES

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**Ends-based:**

**Rule-based:**

**Care-based:**



## Small Group Activity

**What:** Resolution Principles

**How:** Read the case scenario on the next page and discuss the situation within your small group. Consider each of the three resolution principles above. Can your group decide on one resolution principle to solve this dilemma or are there differing views?

Be prepared to discuss with the class.

# ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND RESOLUTION PRINCIPLES

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You are a librarian who is working the reference desk at the public library in your community. The phone rings. The questioner, a male, wants some information on state laws concerning rape. You ask several questions to clarify the nature of his inquiry. Then, in keeping with long-established library policy designed to keep phone lines from being tied up, you explain that you'll call him back in a few minutes after researching his question. You take down his first name and phone number, and then hang up. You get up to do the research when a man who had been sitting in the reading area within earshot of the reference desk approaches you. Flashing a police detective's badge, he asks for the name and number of the caller. The reason: the conversation he had overheard led him to suspect that the caller was the perpetrator of a rape that had happened the night before in the community.

What should you do? On one hand, you are a member of the community. You feel very strongly about the need to maintain law and order. As a woman, you're particularly concerned that a rapist might be at large in the community. And as a citizen, you want to do whatever you can to reduce the possibility that he might strike again. After all, what if you refuse to tell and another rape happens the following night?

On the other hand, you feel just as strongly that your professional code as a librarian requires that you protect the confidentiality of *all* callers. You feel that free access to information is vital to the success of democracy, and that if people seeking information were being watched and categorized simply by the kinds of questions they asked, a police state was not far behind. The right of privacy, you feel, must extend to everyone. After all, what if this caller was simply a student writing a paper on rape for a civics class?

## **Questions:**

1. Which of the four dilemma categories does this fall into?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Consider each of the three resolution principles we discussed. Can your group decide on one resolution principle to solve this dilemma or are there differing views?

# THE ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

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Once it is determined that the problem is an ethical dilemma you must begin to examine how you should resolve the dilemma.

Kidder lays out nine checkpoints for ethical decision making. They are as follows:

1. Recognize there is a moral issue.
2. Determine the actor (who does the problem belong to).
3. Gather the relevant facts.
4. Test for right vs. wrong issues.
5. Test for right vs. right paradigms.
6. Apply the resolution principles.
7. Investigate the "trilemma" option.
8. Make the decision.
9. Revisit and reflect on the decision.

## **NOTES:**

# THE ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

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## Group Activity

**What:** Ethical Decision Making Process

**How:** Read the scenario on the next page. As a group, let's walk through the nine check points for Ethical Decision Making.

1. Recognize there is a moral issue.
2. Determine the actor (who does the problem belong to).
3. Gather the relevant facts.
4. Test for right vs. wrong issues.
5. Test for right vs. right paradigms.
6. Apply the resolution principles.
7. Investigate the "trilemma" option.
8. Make the decision.
9. Revisit and reflect on the decision.

# THE ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

## BILL AND THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

During the peak years of the Vietnam War, Bill found himself working for a company that, among its many products, supplied materials to the armed forces. Because it was a good job in an area of work he enjoyed very much, he did not spend much time dwelling on the military aspects of the corporation. But in the 1968 presidential campaign, he found himself attracted to Democratic candidate Eugene McCarthy, the senator from Minnesota who staked out a strong antiwar position. When a friend asked Bill if he would volunteer an evening's time at the local campaign headquarters, he agreed. One thing led to another, however, and before long he found himself cast as the leading spokesman for the campaign in his community, quoted in the newspaper and clearly identified with McCarthy's positions.

One day, a few months before the Democratic convention in Chicago, his boss called Bill into his office. The topic for discussion: Bill's political activities. The corporation, with a staunchly conservative bent and a long tradition of support for the nation's military, was uncomfortable. It was awkward, Bill's boss said, having one of its senior people take such an outspoken role against what appeared to be the interests of the corporation and, in its view, of the nation. Might Bill want to consider scaling back the level of his political activities?

Sobered, Bill talked it over with his wife. The dilemma was clear: Should he stick with his political activities or with his job? In fairness, he realized, the corporation had not made the dilemma quite so explicit: There was no threat to fire or demote him. There was just an expression of discomfort—although, Bill felt the possible consequences could be read between the lines. In discussing the situation at home, the usual issues arose: the children's schooling, the mortgage on the house, the difficulty in finding a comparable job. One side argued strongly for the freedom of political expression—the right, guaranteed by all that the nation stood for, to express dissent openly for corporate allegiance—the need, felt by an organization, for a sense of unity and common purpose around an agreed-upon set of objectives. Furthermore, one side argued for the unfettered individual conscience, while the other argued for the compromises that produced a salary and helped make family life pleasant and affordable.



# MORAL TEMPTATION AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS—GROUP ACTIVITY

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**Case 1:** Jeff works in the Human Resource Department at DOTD. His friend Nicole is applying for a job within the agency. Nicole has approached Jeff and asked for his advice on preparing for the interview. Jeff has access to the actual interview questions asked of all applicants and considers making a copy of the questions for Nicole so she can adequately prepare.

Ethical Issue:

Course of Action:

**Case 2:** You are with some members of your team on a Friday after work enjoying an adult beverage. On your way out, you witness a male team member act inappropriately with a female team member. She was shaken from the experience; however, after several days no complaint has been filed. What do you do?

Ethical Issue:

Course of Action:

# MORAL TEMPTATION AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS

**Case 3:** Linda, expecting her first child, went into labor shortly after lunch one weekday afternoon. Her husband, Walt, was home at the time. The contractions seemed to be coming close together as they rushed to the car. They were flying through the suburbs on the way to the hospital when, in his rear view mirror, Walt saw blue flashing lights. Looking at his speedometer, he saw he was going eighty miles an hour. Looking around him, he saw small children playing on the street and sidewalks as they walked home from a nearby school. As he came to a halt, it suddenly hit him that, for the sake of his own family and a child he was eager to love, he was endangering the lives of other children and the happiness of other families. For him, the issue was clearly of self-versus-community. He saw that he had acted more out of selfishness than out of consideration for others. But what is the ethical dilemma for the policeman?

Ethical Issue:

Course of Action:

Principal Causes of Ethical Compromises	Senior Mgmt.	Middle Mgmt.	Front Line Sup.	Prof. Non Mgmt.	Admin Salaried	Hourly
Meeting schedule pressure	1	1	1	1	1	1
Meeting overly aggressive financial or business	3	2	2	2	2	2
Helping the company survive	2	3	4	4	3	4
Advancing the career interests of my boss	5	4	3	3	4	5
Feeling peer pressure	7	7	5	6	5	3
Resisting competitive threats	4	5	6	5	6	7
Saving jobs	9	6	7	7	7	6
Advancing my own career or financial interests	8	9	9	8	9	8
Other	6	8	8	9	8	9