Ethics Defined

1. Theory, system, discipline, study or philosophy of moral principles, values, duties, and obligations
2. Rules, standards, or principles governing behavior
3. Conscious reflection on and discussion of our values and moral beliefs to guide choices and behavior

Ethics in Action

The practice of applying a code of conduct to day-to-day actions. The code is based on moral principles that balance what is fair to individuals or organizations and what is right for society.

Government Employees Observe Misconduct

- 52% of federal government employees observed some form of misconduct
- 57% of state government employees observed some form of misconduct
- 63% of local government employees observed some form of misconduct

Source: 2008 Ethics Research Center Study

ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

- One in 4 employees work in an environment conducive to misconduct (strong pressure to compromise standards, a presence of situations which invite wrongdoing, and a culture where employees’ personal values conflict with their values at work).
- Almost one-third of employees do not report misconduct.
- More than one-third of government employees believe government does not demonstrate its values through socially responsible decision-making.
Citizens and Government Trust

- In 2012, Gallup’s annual Governance survey showed that 74% of Americans expressed a great deal or a fair amount of trust in their local government.

- The same survey found that 65% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust in their state government.

- In 2009, 69% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust in local government and only 51% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust in state government.

Source: 2012 Gallup annual Governance survey

2018 Citizens Trust & Government

- In 2018, Gallup’s annual Governance survey showed that 72% of Americans expressed a great deal or a fair amount of trust and confidence in their local government when it comes to handling local problems.

- The same survey found that 63% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in their state government when it comes to handling state problems.

- In 2017, 70% of Americans expressed a great deal or a fair amount of trust and confidence in their local government and 63% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in their state government.

Source: 2018 Gallup annual Governance survey

Federal Government Survey

- In 2018, Gallup’s annual Governance survey showed that 50% of Americans expressed a great deal or a fair amount of trust and confidence in our federal government in Washington D.C., when it comes to handling international problems.

- The same survey found that 45% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in our federal government in Washington D.C., when it comes to handling domestic problems.

- In 2017, 52% of Americans expressed a great deal or a fair amount of trust and confidence in our federal government when it comes to handling international problems and 45% of Americans expressed a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in our federal government when it comes to handling domestic problem.

Source: 2018 Gallup annual Governance survey
ETHICS
Despite the codes of ethics, the ethics programs and the special departments, corporations don’t make the ultimate decisions about ethics.

Ethical choices are made by individuals.

M. Euel Wade, Jr. - Senior Vice President
Southern Company Services, Inc.

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Ethics: Bigger Than Compliance

**Compliance** is about doing what you have to do.

**Ethics** is about doing what you should do.

ETHICS IS ABOUT DOING WHAT IS RIGHT!!!

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The Ethical Decision Making Process

- Obtain the Facts
- Define the Ethical Issues
- Ensure Legality
- Promote Fairness
- Check your Intuition
ETHICAL DECISIONS
• Have extended consequences
• Have multiple alternatives
• Have mixed outcomes
• Have uncertain consequences
• Have personal implications

The Georgia Constitution
All government originates with the people, is founded upon their will only and is instituted solely for the good of whole.
Public officers are the trustees and servants of the people and are at all times amenable to them.

Article 1, Sec. 2 Para 1

CURRENT LAWS AND POLICIES
• The Georgia Constitution
• The Georgia Code
• Your County/City’s Ethics Policy
THE GEORGIA CODE
CODE SECTION 45-10-1
I. Loyalty
II. Uphold the Constitution, Laws, Regulations
III. Full Day's Labor
IV. More Efficient and Economical Ways
V. Special Favors
VI. Private Promises
VII. Engaging in Business with Government
VIII. Confidential Information
IX. Expose Corruption
X. Uphold these Principles

COMMON RATIONALIZATIONS
• If it's legal, it's ethical; if it's permissible, it's proper.
• I'm just fighting fire with fire.
• We've always done it that way.
• Everyone else is doing it.
• It's ethical as long as it doesn't hurt anyone.
• It's ethical as long as I don't gain personally.

ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT
• The Organization's Values
• The Individual
ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Organizational Values are principles, goals, or standards held and accepted by an organization. These values govern the organization’s norms or standards for activity. They represent a management philosophy.

“Values provide a common language for aligning leadership and its people”

(Amuso and Giblin, 1997).

REPORTING UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- Women tend to report more than men
- Managers report more than non-management employees
- Reporting rates rise along with management level
- Most employees contact a supervisor and only a small percentage use the hotline

2009 National Business Ethics Survey – Ethics Resource Center

REPORTING INSIGHTS

Personal Standards of Workplace Conduct

Stockholders and Workers with Positive Attitudes

Ethics and Compliance Program

Top Management Culture

2009 National Business Ethics Survey – Ethics Resource Center
Strong Ethical Cultures

- Ethical Leadership
- Supervisor Reinforcement of Ethics
- Peer Commitment to Ethics
- Embedded Ethical Values

Source: 2008 Ethics Resource Center Study

Strong Ethical Culture Results

- No employees felt pressure to compromise standards
- 17% of employees observed misconduct compared to 100% in weak ethical cultures
- 100% of employees reported their observations
- No employees experienced retaliation

Source: 2008 Ethics Resource Center Study

Ethics and Compliance Program

- Written Standards (Code of Conduct)
- Training on Ethics Issues
- Presence of a Helpline for Reporting
- Evaluation of Employees based on Ethical Conduct
- Discipline for Violations
- Resources for Employees with Ethical Questions

Source: 2008 Ethics Resource Center Study
Kohlberg’s Values Maturity Model
• Pre-Conventional Level (Self-Centered)
• Conventional Level (Conformity)
• Post-Conventional Level (Principled)

ETHICS CHECKLIST
• Is it in compliance with…
  • Civil Law
  • Institutional Policy
  • Rules of the Game
  • Family Rules
  • Other Rules

ETHICS CHECKLIST – Continued
• Is it fair to everyone involved…
  • To my family?
  • To my friends?
  • To my co-workers?
  • To my community?
  • To those less fortunate than me?
  • To others (clients)?
THE BALANCING ACT

PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

THANK YOU!!

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