

Ethics in Engineering

This is an example from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE): “Fundamental Canons’

- Engineers shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public and shall strive to comply with the principles of sustainable development in the performance of their professional duties.**
- Engineers shall perform services only in areas of their competence.**
- Engineers shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.**
- Engineers shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall avoid conflicts of interest.**
- Engineers shall build their professional reputation on the merit of their services and shall not compete unfairly with others.**
- Engineers shall act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, and dignity of the engineering profession and shall act with zero-tolerance for bribery, fraud, and corruption.**
- Engineers shall continue their professional development throughout their careers, and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those engineers under their supervision."**

Ethical Issues

- Relationships with clients, consultants, competitors, and contractors.
- Ensuring legal compliance by clients, client's contractors, and others.
- Conflict of interest.
- Bribery and kickbacks, which also may include: Gifts, meals, services, and entertainment.
- Treatment of confidential or proprietary information.
- Consideration of the employer's assets.
- Outside employment/activities (Moonlighting).

To be successful, most ethicists would suggest that an ethics policy should be:

1. Given the unequivocal support of top management, by both word and example.

2. Explained in writing and orally, with periodic reinforcement.

3. Doable...something employees can both understand and perform.

4. Monitored by top management, with routine inspections for compliance and improvement.

5. Backed up by clearly stated consequences in the case of disobedience.

Working with Ethics

- **A company and its employees should always believe that managing ethics is a continuous process and it is inherent like any other management function in the organization.**
- **The ground of ethics management is relationship and behaviour is the root, thus without fair and just behaviour an organization cannot make their employees follow ethical practices.**
- **As the McGregor's *Red hot stove rule* says, the administration of discipline should be more like touching a hot stove i.e., immediate, impersonal, consistent, and foreseeable; in the same way the act of breaking ethical norms/ code must be rooted out in its very initial stage. The codes must be applicable to each and every employee without discrepancy.**
- **Value forgiveness. It's better to try operating ethically and committing few mistakes than not trying at all.**
- **Participation of employees in such programme must be sought out. Employee must feel that working with ethics is as much necessary for the good health for the organization as fresh air is for human being.**