

BEHAVIORAL ETHICS AND STRUCTURED ETHICAL REFLECTION FOR BUSINESS APPLICATIONS¹

Reflection Activities

Introduction

This document contains a number of activities designed to help you reflect on the ethics of your business practices. Please complete each of these exercises as outlined below.

Reflection #1: Assessing Business Practices

The table below contains a list of practices from various companies which were identified as ethical on Ethisphere.com. Ethisphere is an organization that focuses on the ethical development of business leaders and corporate cultures. Please take a moment to identify what you think is ethical about each of these practices, and what you think could be done to make these practices even more ethical than they are now. These descriptions are intended only as a small sample of the types of ethical practices organizations may use. The purpose of this reflection is to establish a broad array of possible practices and to think both constructively and critically about such practices.

Practices	What do you find to be ethical about this practice?	What are some ways in which you could imagine these practices being even more ethical?
<p>Allstate has a Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer (CECO). Their Allstate Speak Up Process strongly encourages employees to report any activity that causes concern. Employees are required to take annual ethics training. The Board of Directors receives training in ethics and decision-making. An Ethical Leadership Toolkit is available for employees, including an Ethical Dilemma Spotlight series featuring a new ethical dilemma every month in their newsletter. They also survey employees annually to measure their ethical culture.</p>		

¹ These activities were designed by Mary Brydon-Miller and Mark Leach.

<p>NextEra Energy has invested billions in clean energy infrastructure and has ethical goals consistent with their stated values in this area. They are not the only company to do so but confronting climate change is at the forefront of their business model.</p>		
<p>Kimberly-Clark conducted a series of audits to determine compliance with their social responsibility principles across their supply chain.</p>		
<p>Cleveland Clinic has an Ethics Consultation Service to respond to requests regarding ethical conflicts or patient care questions.</p>		

Reflection #2

Having reflected on others’ practices, it is now useful to consider what values should guide your own and your organization’s ethical practices. What core values inform your practice as a leader in your business or organization? What principles do you want to stand for as an organizational decision-maker? Circle five values in the list below that you feel are central to your leadership. (If there are specific values you feel are key to your practice that do not appear on this list, feel free to use those instead.).

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Accuracy | Creativity | Humor | Opportunity |
| Adaptability | Critical Thinking | Impatience | Originality |
| Authenticity | Curiosity | Inclusiveness | Patience |
| Candor | Democratic practice | Industry | Perseverance |
| Carefulness | Determination | Integrity | Playfulness |
| Caring | Efficiency | Justice | Prudence |
| Caution | Empathy | Kindness | Resilience |
| Collegiality | Environmentalism | Leadership | Respect |
| Commitment | Equality | Legality | Responsibility |
| Common Sense | Fairness | Love | Rigor |
| Community Spirit | Flexibility | Loyalty | Self-Awareness |
| Compassion | Freedom | Mutual Respect | Self-Confidence |
| Conscientiousness | Gentleness | Objectivity | Self-Control |
| Conviction | Honesty | Open-mindedness | Self-Determination |
| Courage | Humility | Openness | |

Social
Responsibility

Tolerance
Transparency

Trust
Wonder

Zeal

Other value: _____

Other value: _____

Other value: _____

Reflection #3

Next, define what each of the values you chose means to you. How would you define them? Write the five values you selected in the column at the left, and your definition in the column on the right. Use your own words to define each value, not a dictionary definition. This is important to clarify what each values means to you, personally.

Value	I would define this value as ...

Reflection #4

How do these values inform your work as a leader? How should they inform your work? In the table below, list your primary responsibilities in the left-most column. List your five values along the top row. In the remaining cells of the table, indicate what you could do to better exhibit these values as you perform these responsibilities, and what criteria you could use to assess your performance.

Responsibilities	Value #1: _____	Value #2: _____	Value #3: _____	Value #4: _____	Value #5: _____
1.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
2.	Do better:	Do better:	Do better:	Do better:	Do better:

	Criteria:	Criteria:	Criteria:	Criteria:	Criteria:
3.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
4.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
5.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
6.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:

Revisit this process on a regular basis.

Reflection #5

As important as the preceding reflections may be, this process has the most power once you make it social. Invite the members of your team to engage in the same four steps above, and to do so independently. Then gather your team and ask each member to share what they learned in the first four reflections. Begin by having each person share the five values they chose. If you gather in-person, they can write their values on post-it notes, one value per note. If you gather virtually, consider using an app such as Padlet or Jamboard.

Once everyone’s values are visible to everyone else, ask each member of the group to share take some time to allow everyone to share how they define their values. Then, as a group, organize the values into common themes. For example, if a number of people note values such as open-mindedness, creativity, flexibility these might all go into one category under Creativity. Or empathy, caring, compassion might be combined under a common theme of Caring.

Use these themes to create a Team Structured Ethical Reflection grid:

Team Responsibilities	Theme #1: _____	Theme #2: _____	Theme #3: _____	Theme #4: _____	Theme #5: _____
1.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
2.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
3.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
4.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
5.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:
6.	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:	Do better: Criteria:

As a group, identify areas in which you can do better at exhibiting your values while you perform your responsibilities and generate a set of criteria to assess how effectively you are demonstrating these shared values in your work. Post this grid in a common work space or shared online forum. Revisit the grid together periodically, especially when your group faces ethical challenges.

Reflection #6

The links below contain cases of two situations in which organizational participants faced ethical challenges. Please read each case and describe how a structured ethical reflection process might have changed the outcome.

“No Regrets”: The Case of Al MacDonald and the Challenger Disaster that Could have been Prevented

<https://www.npr.org/2021/03/07/974534021/remembering-allan-mcdonald-he-refused-to-approve-challenger-launch-exposed-cover>

How might the SER process, had it been used, have changed the outcome of this case?

“My Profession Let You Down”: The Case of Joe Carson and the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

<https://www.ecowatch.com/stiffed-usec-sues-feds-in-nuclear-slugfest-1881758534.html>

How might the SER process, had it been used, have changed the outcome of this case?
