**ETHICAL AND PROFFESSIONAL ISSUES**

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**Introduction;-**

An ethical framework is like scaffolding around action made up of moral Philosophy, professional codes of behavior, values inherent in the therapeutic model, personal ethics, the law, organizational context. **(Bond 2008).**

Every individual must understand the scope of organization legal and ethical responsibilities and to minimizes the liabilities.

Ethics is study of morally appropriate behavior and decisions. And examining what should be done. Ethics helps to mould and shape human behavior. It aids employees to perform their role.

However, ethics can not be instilled unless we ‘practice what we preach”, otherwise, the effect of preaching will last only as long as a house of cards.

Ethics is the discipline that examines one’s moral standards of society. It asks how those standards apply to our life and whether these standards are reasonable or unreasonable – that is whether these are supported by good reason or poor one. - (**Manuel G. Velasquez).**

Professional ethics are principles that govern the behavior of a person or group in a business environment. Like values, Professional ethics provide rules on how a person should act towards other people and institution in such an environment.

Ethics are formalised principles derived from social value. These are moral principle which originate from social value and represent rules for moral behaviour and conduct of individuals or groups there of carrying on business.” — **Webster’s Directory**

**These definitions reveal the following characteristics of ethics:**

(i) Ethics is a set of moral standards and values acceptable in a society. It is relevant in the context of a society only.

(ii) Ethics guides human conduct or behaviour. If any member of the society behaves contrary to the norms and customs, society disapproves it. Moral principles serve as a guide for personal and professional conduct. Ethics checks people from taking decisions and actions which are harmful to society.

There are three main theories of ethics. First, the utilitarian theory suggests that actions become right or wrong on the basis of their consequence. Second, the theory of rights holds that all people have certain basic rights. Third, the theory of justice demands that actions must be fair and equitable.

(iii) Ethical principles are universal in nature. These prescribe obligations and virtues for everybody in a society. Ethics is important not only in business and politics but in every human endeavour.

(iv) Ethical standards differ from society to society. What is considered ethical behaviour in one society might be considered unethical in another. For example, abortion and artificial birth control is a taboo in most of the Islamic countries and catholic Christian communities. But these practices are fully ethical in China, Russia, Japan and many other countries. Similarly, euthanasia (mercy killing) is permitted in some countries but is strictly unethical in most countries.

(v) Ethics is normative or prescriptive in nature. It deals not with what is but what ought to be. It does not rest on feelings of approval or disapproval but on principles. For example, it may be unpleasant to fire an employee but morality may require it.

(vi) Ethical norms might not be legally binding. But these are more powerful than law because these have the sanction of society. When a person’s behaviour is inconsistent with the prevailing values and norms, it is called unethical. Ethics serves as a guide to law by highlighting its short comings.

(vii) Ethics relates to the behaviour of individuals and groups. The ethical norms do not apply to the behaviour of animals, birds, and insects. Only human beings have the capacity to guide and regulate their behaviour.

(viii) Ethics are not hard and fast rules. They are an expression of a society’s attitudes and beliefs. There is an element of discretion as a person has the option to adopt ethical norms. Ethics may differ from place-to-place and time-to-time.

(ix) There exist no sharp boundaries between ethical and non-ethical. Therefore, people often face ethical dilemmas wherein a clear cut choice is very difficult.

(x) Ethics aims at perfection in human conduct. It guides law makers in framing proper laws to regulate the behaviour of all citizens. Existing norms may contain valuable insights but ethics sets out to critics and test them in terms of ultimate norms.

(xi) The concepts of equity and justice are implicit in ethics. Fair and equitable treatment to all is its primary aim.

(xii) Ethics and morality are interrelated but not synonymous. In the words of Rogene A. Buchholz “Ethics deals with the formalisations of ethical principles in the abstract or the resolution of concrete ethical problems facing individuals in their daily life. Morality on the other hand generally refers to the tradition of belief that have involved over years. concerning right and wrong conduct, so that morality has its roots in belief of a society while ethics aim at formulating the principles to justify human behaviour.” According to Clearance C. Walton, “morality is the standards than an individual or group has about what is right and wrong good and evil.”

**ETHICS AND SUPERVISORY PRACTICE;**

An ethical framework is like scaffolding around action made up of moral philosophy ,professional codes of behaviour values inherent in the therapeutic models, personal ethics, the law organizational context.

* General principles of ethical decision making moral philosophical underpinnings
* Kant absolute duty
* Consequentialist theories
* Virtue theory.

**The British Philosopher W.D. Gross has listed six basic duties of a person:**

(i) Fidelity – doing no harm to others

(ii) Reparation – making amends to those we have hurt

(iii) Gratitude – repaying those who have helped us

(iv) Justice – treating people as well as they deserve

(v) Beneficence – helping others when we can

(vi) Self-improvement – bettering ourselves but not at the cost of others

**Basic Ethical Principles**;

All professionals make mistakes what is important is that people do their best in the knowledge of principles of ethics and codes of conduct.

Ethical principles underpin all professional codes of conduct. Ethical principles may vary or depending on the particular profession.

For example; professional ethics that relate to medical practitioners will differ from those relate to lawyers or real estate agents.

However, there are some universal ethical principles that apply across all the professions, including;

**1. Beneficence:**

The beneficence principle enunciates a fundamental principle of ethical conduct. This essentially means doing good to others. According to this principle, all our thoughts and actions must be directed to ensure that others benefit from these thoughts and actions. This can be done without much difficulty. People generally tend to care more about themselves than others. Even small actions performed by us can be based on this principle.

As an example, consider a person parking his/her motor vehicle, a car or a motor cycle. He/She must park the vehicle in such a way that it does not block pedestrians walking on the road, prevent smooth flow of traffic, or obstruct another person‘s parked vehicle. Many times, people park their vehicle oil the road without caring about the inconvenience caused to others.

As another example, consider an unfortunate accident where a person has been hit by a vehicle and the driver of that vehicle has fled. The person has been badly injured and requires urgent help. What would you do? Here, doing good to others would mean mitigating the injured person’s suffering by ensuring that he/she gets immediate medical help.

**2. Least Harm:**

The second ethical principle to keep in mind is that our actions must result in the least harm to others. There can be situations where, even if we intend to do good to others, our actions may cause some harm to them. In such a situation, it is necessary to ensure that our actions are such that we cause the least harm to others.

**For example;-**

Let us consider the case of a train accident. One’s duty in such an event is to help the injured passengers. He/She must get them out of the compartment; help the authorities take the injured to the hospital, and so on. On the other hand, sometimes it is seen that people use such incidents as an opportunity to steal the belongings of the injured, hapless people.

This is what doing harm is. The least good one can do in such situations is to prevent people from acting in such an unethical manner. Consider another example of a day-to-day occurrence. Young people travelling in a city bus are often seen grabbing a seat as soon as it is vacant, while a senior citizen or a woman accompanying a small child has to travel standing. It is your duty to offer your seat to such people if you are sitting.

If you are standing and a seat falls vacant, do not jump to catch that seat, taking advantage of their frailty or inability to move fast. Allow them to occupy that seat. This is the least that you can do.

**3. Autonomy:**

This principle essentially states that we need to respect the autonomy of others for performing actions. We should not impose our views on others. This principle assumes that every person knows what is good for himself/herself. One can also look at it from the point of view of the person performing the action, who decides that what he/she is going to do is good for himself/herself.

As an example, consider your own case. As a student you may have opted for a course based on your love for the subject. On the other hand, some of you may have taken up the course because your parents took the decision for you. They have invaded your autonomy to take decisions about yourself. This is a very common occurrence and many students end up pursuing a course for which they have no aptitude or do not like.

As another example, consider the case of arranged marriages in India. It is not uncommon to find parents deciding a partner for their sons/daughters based on factors such as family status or wealth, without caring for their children’s feelings or wishes. This is a clear invasion of the person’s autonomy. Taking the concurrence of the children before getting them married is a very important factor in the success of marriages.

**4. Non-Violence or Peace:**

This principle has become very relevant today. Violence has now pervaded all sections of society and has become its greatest bane. One of the basic ethical principles is to shun violence and to not support those who resort to it. Unless we adhere to this principle, no substantial progress can be made in ethical behaviour.

Our greatest concern is that there is a tendency to resort to violence in cases where many other options are available. There is also a nonchalant attitude to violence among people. This is a major cause for concern.

In an incident, a person was killed by a group. The police could not even investigate the case because in the violence that spread in the aftermath of this murder, many people were killed, a large number of houses were burnt, and hundreds were injured. In this case, there was violence for no particular reason.

In a case that was reported by the press, a group was collecting donations for a festival. The group approached a small shopkeeper and demanded Rs. 1000. The shopkeeper refused to pay more than Rs. 250. The group resorted to violence, beat him up, and ransacked his shop. It is to be remembered that donations, by their very nature, are voluntary.

However, extortion of money in the name of religious festivals and, in case someone refuses to pay, resorting to violence and causing bodily harm have become common nowadays. As a society, we have become violence- prone and there is an urgent need to curb this to prevent further damage.

Thus, commitment to peace and non-violence is a fundamental principle of ethics. There should be a commitment to not resort to violence and explore other better options to solve a problem.

**5. Justice:**

The principle of justice states that our actions must be such that they are fair to everyone concerned. All ethical decisions must be based on the principle of fairness. There can be situations where a deviation from past practice is required. All such cases must be analysed and justified before a decision different from earlier decisions is made.

For example, consider the many development-induced displacements that make headlines in the newspapers these days. The building of a dam, the requirement of a weapon-testing ground, the need for a nuclear power plant, or the need for an expressway might necessitate displacement of a community to clear land for such a purpose.

If you take the specific case of a dam, it is a necessary part of infrastructure development as it provides water for irrigation and electric power generation. The construction of a dam is, thus, for the common good of a large section of the society. However, thousands of people are displaced from their land and their means of livelihood threatened because of such a project.

It is generally found that the rehabilitation of people affected by such projects is shoddy. They are left in the lurch at the end of the project with, in some cases, inadequate compensation and in others, no compensation, land, or means to earn a living. Here, injustice is done to the thousands affected. Similar examples can be seen in many developmental projects.

**6. Truthfulness:**

Truthfulness is the quality of telling, adhering to, or upholding the truth. This appears to be a universal principle. Truthfulness also leads to other values such as trustworthiness and honesty. Mahatma Gandhi highlighted this principle when he undertook the freedom struggle and named it Satyagraha, desire for truth.

We will seldom find an example where not telling the truth gets us any real benefit. In the Upanishads, it is said asato ma satgamaya, meaning ‘lead me from falsehood to truth’. Truthfulness is thus a universal principle propounded by all religious texts. In engineering measurements, it is mentioned that the true value of a quantity is not known.

By making repeated measurements, we can come close to a true value called the most probable value. In real life too, there may be many instances where the truth is not known. We then accept the best possible conclusion derived from the available/perceived facts and circumstances as the truth. This is the only way to keep one’s conscience clear and remain happy.

**CODES OF CONDUCT;**

Professional codes of conduct draw on these professional ethical principles as the basis for prescribing required standards of behaviour for members of profession. They also seek to set out the expectations that the profession and society have of its members. The intention of codes of conduct is to provide guidelines for the minimum standard of appropriate behaviour in professional context. Codes of conduct sit alongside the general law of the land the personal values of members of the profession.

The main value of a professional code of conduct is not as a checklist for disciplining non-conforming members although breaches of carry a professional disciplinary consequence. Rather, code of conduct is primary value is to act as a prompt sheet for the promotion of ethical decision- making by members of that profession.

**Professional Code of Conduct Provide Benefits to;**

The public as they build confidence in the profession’s trustworthiness. Clients, as they provide greater transparency and certainty about how their affairs will be handled. Members of the profession, as they provide a supporting framework for resisting pressure to act in appropriately and for making acceptable decision in what may be ‘grey areas’. The profession as a whole, as this provide a common understanding of acceptable practice which builds collegiality and allows for fairer disciplinary procedures. Other dealing with the profession as the profession will be seen as more reliable and easier to deal with.

**Importance of Ethics in Various Management Functions;-**

Business ethics comprises various traits, such as – trustworthiness and transparency in customer services. Ethical business practices strengthen customer relationship that is of prime importance for long-term organizational success. It deals with retaining and creating a long-lasting impression in the minds of customers.

Such impressions help the enterprise to win the trust of customers and get more business. Business ethics plays a very crucial role in various management functions.

**Let us now discuss the importance of ethics in various management functions:**

**1. Ethics in Finance:**

It deals with various ethical dilemmas and violations in day to-day financial transactions. An example of ethical violations is data fudging in which enterprises present a fabricated statement of accounts and other records, which are open to investigation. Ethics in financial transactions gained importance when due to their insufficiency nations suffered massive economic meltdowns.

**The following are the ethics in finance:**

i. Following truthfulness and authenticity in business transactions

ii. Seeking the fulfilment of mutual interests

iii. Getting the economies and financial units freed from greed-based methodologies.

**2. Ethics in Human Resource Management:**

It deals with the enforcement of the rights of employees in an enterprise.

**Such rights are as follows:**

i. Having a right to work and be compensated for the same

ii. Possessing a right for free association and participation

iii. Enjoying a right for fair treatment in an enterprise

iv. Holding a right to work in a hazard-free environment.

v. Blowing whistle (an activity where an employee can raise voice against any wrong practice of anyone in an enterprise).

**3. Ethics in Marketing:**

**It deals with a number of issues, which are as follows:**

i. Misinforming the customers about the products or services

ii. Deciding high prices for the products and services

iii. Creating false impression on the customers/consumers about the features of products

iv. Promoting sexual attitudes through advertising; thus, affecting the young generation and children.

**4. Ethics in Production:**

It deals with the responsibility of an organization to make sure that products and processes of production is not causing harm to the environment.

**It throws light on the following issues:**

i. Avoiding rendering services or producing products that are hazardous to health. For example, tobacco and alcohol

ii. Maintaining ethical relations with the environment and avoiding environmental pollution.

**3 Basic Approaches to Ethical Behaviour;**

**Three basic approaches to ethical behaviour are suggested:**

**i. Utilitarian Approach:**

This approach proposes that actions and plans should be judged by their consequences. People should therefore behave in such a way that will produce the greatest benefit to society with the least harm or the lowest cost. This approach suffers from the difficulty in recognizing all the benefits and the costs of any particular decision.

Research reveals that only the stakeholders having the most power (ability to affect the company), legitimacy (legal or moral claim on company resources), and urgency (demand for immediate attention) are given priority by CEOs. It is therefore likely that only the most obvious stakeholders will be considered while others are ignored.

**ii. Individual Rights Approach:**

This approach proposes that human beings have certain fundamental rights that should be respects in all decisions. A particular decision or behavior should be avoided if it interferes with the rights of others.

The U.S. Constitution includes a Bill of Rights that may or may not be accepted throughout the world. This approach can also encourage selfish behavior when a person defines a personal need or want as a “right”

**iii. Justice Approach:**

The justice approach proposes that decision makers be equitable, fair and impartial in the distribution of costs and benefits to individuals and groups. It follows the principles of distributive justice and fairness. This approach can also include redistributive justice and compensatory justice.

**Cavanagh proposes that we can solve ethical problems by asking the following 3 questions regarding an act or decision:**

1. Utility- Does it optimize the satisfaction of all stakeholders?

2. Rights- Does it respect the rights of the individuals involved?

3. Justice- Is it consistent with the canons of justice?

**Another approach to resolving ethical dilemmas is by applying Kant’s categorical imperatives to guide our actions:**

(1) A person’s action is ethical only if that person is will for the same action to be taken by everyone who is in a similar situation. This is same as the Golden Rule. You should treat others, as you would like them to treat you.

(2) A person should never treat another human being simply as a means but always as an end. This means that an action is morally wrong for a person if that person uses others merely as a means for advancing his or her own interests. To be moral, the act should not restrict another people’s actions so that they are left disadvantaged in some way.

**Factors Affecting Individual Ethics;**

**Individual ethics are determined by the following factors:**

1.Family Influences – Individuals, as children, develop ethical standards if other family members engage in ethical behaviour.

2.Peer Group Influences – The children, when they grow up, are influenced by the behaviour of their friends and peer group. High or low standard of ethical behaviour is likely to be followed in the same manner by the members of the peer group.

3.Life Experience – The way an individual’s behaviour is dealt with in real life situations also affects his ethics. If his behaviour (right or wrong) is reprimanded by his elders, he tends to avoid repeating it in future thinking that it is unethical and vice-versa.

A person who speaks harshly, if, never objected to by his parents or elders, will form a habit of speaking in that manner and will feel nothing unethical about it.

4.Personal Values – Ethical standards change according to the priority accorded to different behaviours being pursued by an individual. A person who believes in the material world will have different ethical standards than the one who prioritizes religious or social norms.

5.Situational Factors – Sometimes, people are made to behave in a particular manner because of the situational factors. An honest man may resort to stealing if he is left with no other choice for meeting his financial requirements in crisis. Though wrong in content, the unethical behaviour has been adopted as warranted by situational factors.

**Ethical Issues; classification and examples;**

It must be clearly understood that we are discussing ethical issues that come up in the course of a professional performing his/her job. To some extent, we also need to consider his/her personal life from a moral perspective, as personal and professional lives are interlinked.

A person who thinks rationally and wants a clear conscience will face many situations in his/her professional life that would make him/her think about the ethicality of his/her actions.

Such issues can be classified into two major classes as described here.

**Variety of Ethical Issues:**

**We can classify the ethical issues faced by a professional into two major classes:**

**1. Micro-Ethical Issues:**

These are problems frequently faced by a person in his/her day-to-day functioning. The issues may be small but can nag a rational person’s mind and give him/her sleepless nights. These are issues where he/she has to decide what actions he/she should take and if he/she is prevented from taking actions that he/she thinks are right, then what is to be done. Plenty of such issues appear in a professional’s life now and then.

**2. Macro-Ethical Issues:**

These issues deal with societal problems that are not often addressed or are neglected until they acquire gigantic proportions. Many national disasters fall under this category, where the engineer may only be a cog in the wheel. The Bhopal gas leak is one such example.

Both these types of issues deserve our attention. While the day-to-day small issues need to be resolved, one should also look at the macro issues, which have great ethical implications and will benefit the society in the long term.

Since macro issues are likely to be in the realm of senior managements, the professional may not be directly involved but as a professional he/she needs to understand the systemic problems that cause such instances of difficulty. A professional needs to concern himself/herself with such issues as these help one to look at systemic issues that are of great significance.

**Examples of Ethical Issues ;-**

**Let us illustrate this with a few examples:**

i. A junior engineer working at a construction site feels that the concreting of the roof is being done incorrectly. Too much water is being added arbitrarily and due to paucity of labour, the concrete being mixed at the site is not placed in position in time. He talks to his executive engineer about this problem. The executive engineer tells him to ignore this because he has a soft corner for the contractor.

He says that he has done supervision at many sites and knows when to take action. He advises the junior engineer to ignore it and proceed with the construction supervision. The junior engineer feels that this will result in a weakened structure and will cause leakages in the long run. What should he do?

ii. As an engineer, you pass by a construction site every day. You think that the safety of workers is not being taken care of by the construction firm. The rickety scaffolding is very dangerous and is not properly made and supported. The workers working at great heights are in the danger of falling to the ground and there are no safety nets provided. You feel it is a hazardous situation that could potentially lead to a tragedy.

You are not concerned with the work but something is bothering your mind. Should you report your apprehensions or should you keep quiet? What if after a few days, you get to read in the newspaper that at that very construction site, a labourer fell from the scaffolding and died. Would you be filled with remorse because you have not done your duty as an engineer and a professional or even as a citizen? What do you think?

iii. Let us take a case of a societal problem. As an engineer working in the electricity distribution company in Delhi, you felt that your company was not doing enough to acquire power or report to the government that the power situation would aggravate in a few days’ time. When the matter was discussed with your superior, he told you to keep quiet as you were concerned only with the distribution of power and not with the generation of power.

After some time, there were frequent power cuts and supply failures took place. Low voltages created many problems with electrical appliances. Nobody seemed to have bothered about this for many days. The public were up in arms and there were incessant protests about the power situation.

It was only then that the administration woke up and lamented the performance of the distribution companies. Whose fault was this? The power shortage situation was swept under the carpet for long and it was only when it became very serious that some action was being taken.

**Moral Autonomy:**

Moral autonomy refers, in general, to the freedom and self-reliance of an individual to take moral decisions or hold moral points of view. Moral autonomy comes from an inherent strength for rational thinking based on moral values imbibed over a period of time. Professionals need to develop moral autonomy over a period of time by acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to develop such rational thinking.

Moral autonomy is just not any independent decision taken by a professional. In fact, the basis and rationale behind such decisions reflect moral autonomy. Moral values and ethical conduct imbibed from childhood form the background for a professional to have moral autonomy.

As a professional progresses in his/her professional life, he/she will come across many situations that call for his/her decisions on moral issues. A professional’s perception on such issues, the rational analysis of the situation to understand the implications and impact of the various options before him/her, and finally taking a decision and acting on it are normal occurrences in a professional’s life.

The basic training and guidance we receive as children on moral or ethical matters will be reflected in the decisions we take. Moral concerns based on the cardinal principles will be the hallmark of our moral autonomy.

Various moral concerns may arise during one’s professional life. These would call for pondering over moral issues. An engineer in the quality control department may face a situation where he/she is asked to give manipulated results and may also be rewarded for it.

The persuasion can come from an outside party or from his/her own superior who may ask him/her to tamper the results. This will go against the individual’s own perception of what is right. Self-interest may come into conflict with the correct actions he/she is supposed to take or what his/her conscience says is the correct action. Standing up to such challenges calls for moral autonomy coming from inherent moral strength.

A young doctor working in a private hospital may come across a situation where the patient may not really benefit from a surgery. His superiors may ask him to go ahead with the surgery as this will give them an opportunity to extract money from the patient.

The doctor’s personal judgement may go against what his employer wishes and this will create a moral dilemma. The doctor needs to meet the challenge by taking a correct moral stand that may be against his personal interest.

How does one face such situations and take actions that are morally correct? A course on professional ethics may give you some guidance to act in the right manner. All professionals need to imbibe such qualities through training and by developing skill sets needed for this purpose.

**The following are the skills required to face such situations, and take actions that ensure peace of mind and a clear conscience:**

i. Develop skills to identify problems of a moral nature in professional work. A problem may have many dimensions but recognizing the moral aspects of the problem and relating these to other dimensions of the problem is important. The moral values one has imbibed during childhood, and in school and college has a bearing on this.

ii. Develop the ability to critically analyse a moral issue or situation. Where the action to be taken is clear and one does not face any conflict, the situation is simple. However in moral issues, very often, we face conflicts and it may be necessary to look at the pros and cons of the action options to decide correctly what is to be done.

iii. Develop sensitivity to genuine difficulties. Some moral issues may call for taking actions, which at first sight may go against some moral principles held by the individual as sacrosanct. In such cases, some flexibility in thinking and taking decisions for the overall good of the people concerned may be called for.

iv. Develop ingenuity, creativity, and imagination to find alternative solutions to complex problems. Many problems do create situations that call for out-of-the-ordinary solutions. A true professional will develop creative solutions to such complex problems by a critical analysis of all factors and by imaginative understanding of the alternatives possible.

v. Develop consistency in thinking on moral issues. Consistency comes from knowledge and understanding of similar situations and comparison of facts in a given situation with those of others.

vi. Develop the ability to express your perception on moral issues clearly to others. This will enable others to appreciate the rationale behind any actions proposed in a given moral issue. An understanding of ethical principles and theories will enable one to make a comprehensive expression of one’s views.

vii. Develop moral integrity and credibility. This can be strengthened in your actions in all spheres of life, whether it is professional or personal. Consistency in moral standpoint of the individual in all spheres gives credence to his/her views on moral issues.

viii. Develop tolerance and try to understand other people’s views on moral conflicts. Moral issues, very often, are not simple enough to generate an algorithmic solution. People who think rationally may come out with differing perspectives of the problem. One must develop the ability to appreciate differing but rational points of view.

ix. Develop the ability to assimilate moral issues and solutions even in cases where you are not directly concerned. A general interest in moral concerns and issues, even in other professions, may be of help in one’s own profession. Keep track of moral issues and solutions and try to form your own opinions in such cases.

x. Develop your own moral standards or benchmarks for applying to situations that you may face. Over a period of time, this will help you in creating a yardstick for judging many situations.

**Ethics has developed as a science of moral reasoning in the following phases:**

**1. Greek Ethics:**

It advocates that ethics deals with duties of a person as moral citizen of the nation. A good or ethical man is the one who performs his duties as a good citizen. Famous advocates of this view are Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

**2. Medieval Ethics:**

This is the period when Christianity spread in Europe. It spread the thoughts that ethics is not simply a part of politics (as said in the Greek philosophy). It does not deal with duties of a person. Rather, it deals with increasing the inner aspect of a person’s morality.

**3. Modern Ethics:**

This era of ethics believes in performing actions whose results bring good to us and to others. It deals with determining Tightness of the acts. It tells about what individuals or institutions ought to do.

**Moral theories that advocate modern ethics deal with two components:**

**(a) Theory of Value or Theory of Good:**

It decides about what is good or valuable, though it does not make this explicit. It focuses on properties that we want to be realized in our actions. These properties may be compliance with law of nature, human freedom, social solidarity or combination of one or more of them.

**(b) Theory of the Right:**

It does not tell about which properties are valuable but tells about what individuals and institutions should do by responding to valuable properties.

**Top 2 methods used for instilling Ethics;**

Fraud is a major concern among business executives. One needs to ensure that employees and the man­agement team practice ethical behaviour. Anyone could be involved in a scam; a person may have vested interests or a situation may compel one to commit the act.

Whistle blowing may be necessary in a variety of business situations—when a senior or a junior is seen to be indulging in an unacceptable practice or when the boss orders something unacceptable with regard to the environment. In order to instil ethics among employees in organizations, there are two methods that can be used—whistle blowing and fraud hotline.

**i.Whistle Blowing;**

In a football match, whenever there is a forward in off-side or a defender fouls, the referee uses his whistle to correct the fault done immediately. Similarly, in organizations as soon as a fault or unethical action is done, someone should blow the whistle to alert the erring employee.

Whistle blowing means calling attention to a wrongdoing at the instance when it occurs within an organization. The accountability project lists some ways to blow the whistle.

**Some of them are as follows:**

a. Reporting an unlawful activity or a violation of the law to the proper authorities

b. Refusing to participate in workplace wrongdoing

c. Testifying in a legal proceeding in a departmental inquiry or a court of law

d. Leaking evidence of wrongdoing to the media by a person other than the spokesperson.

**ii.** **Fraud Hotline;**

The fraud hotline is a process for reporting concerns about improper, illegal, or anything that may violate the company’s image. The most important and common hotline is the telephone for reasons of convenience. The manager responsible to maintain ethics may be accessible through a 24-hour hotline system. The hotline is the most effective system that a company can allow for employees, customers, and even vendors to give information anonymously.

The witness or observer of an unethical incident will have to convey the message and the voice will be recorded at the other end. The recipient of the message, a trained live interviewer at the other end of the line, may like to seek some more information for probing the extent of gravity of the information.

For example, being an employee of a large company, if one has information about a fraudulent incident happening in the company, one may not feel like talking to the senior. The superior may be committing the fraud. In such cases, one should bring the matter to the notice of his/her senior’s senior. However, this may be a dangerous step as the senior also might be entangled in the fraud chain.

Furthermore, one may not want to talk to other employees because he/she may not be sure how they would react. By protecting oneself, an employee may access the information without disclosing his name and contact details. If the identity is revealed, the experienced interviewer may ask pertinent questions to get all the relevant information they need, so that they can get the take up matter to the company. The hotlines operate 24 hour/365 days a year and are equipped to handle different languages spoken within a company.

**Organizational Drives:**

It has already been established that the code of conduct should be laid out in a formal document. Con­currently, organizations should educate the new recruits and existing employees, create an environment conducive to promoting ethical conduct, and demonstration by the leadership team.

**The measures that can be adopted are as follows:**

1. Business conduct process should be an integral part of the induction programme for new recruits. Management needs to send frequent messages to them, keeping in mind that ‘it is easier to make the doll when the clay is soft’.

2. Employees should be aware of the business conduct policies. The legal department should design a ‘legal compliance course curriculum’ and the course should be conducted by experienced personnel. These courses should be mandatory and the employees must be evaluated.

3. Management-employee interaction session is a great platform to raise employee awareness and is of paramount importance where the management can share certain dos and don’ts with regard to behaviour disposition. These interaction sessions promote employee relations.

4. Internal communication plays an important role in conveying business conduct policies informally in a non-instructional manner, citing examples of actual situations to communicate acceptable form of behaviour.

Organizations can definitely derive benefits by adopting these practices in a planned manner.

**Instilling Ethics through Culture:**

An organization needs to create a culture of ethical conduct. The processes must be well defined so that the decision-makers can take the right decisions from amongst available alternatives. The orga­nizational culture should develop employees so as to evaluate them through self-questioning.

**Sasikar 2010 suggests three dimensions of self-questioning:**

1. Is my action consistent with the company’s corporate values of uncompromising honesty and integrity?

2. Can my action stand public scrutiny?

3. Will my action protect the company’s reputation as an ethical company?

**Ethics and Virtue:**

It is as important to be virtuous as it is to be ethical. Some of the virtues that one must possess are benevolence, contentment, cooperation, courage, determination, humility, tolerance, and wisdom. Other virtues include mercy, obedience, cleanliness, and introversion.

**Guidelines for Ethical Behaviour;**

**Though each individual or group has his own sets of ethical values, a few guidelines have been prescribed to be followed:**

1.Obey the Law – Obeying the legal practices prevalent in a country is conforming to the ethical values.

2.Tell the Truth – Disclosing the fair accounting results to the concerned parties and telling the truth is also an ethical behaviour on the part of managers.

3.Respect for People – Management ethics requires managers to show respect towards whomsoever he comes in contact with.

4.The Golden Rule – The golden business principle is “Treat others as you would want to be treated”. This, if followed, will always result in ethical behaviour.

5.Above All, Do No Harm – Even if law does not prohibit the use of chemicals in producing certain products, managers must avoid using them if their use happens to be an environmental pollutant.

6.Practice Participation – Not Paternalism – Managers should not decide on their own as to what is good or bad for the different stakeholders. They must assess their needs, analyse them in the light of business needs, and integrate the two needs by allowing the various stakeholders to participate in the decision-making processes.

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