



Work Sample

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Life Challenges

Ethical Management

The behaviors of an individual affect the entire group, regardless of whether that group is a tiny organization or society at large.

What is “ethics”? The dictionary definition is: “The specific moral choices made by the individual in his relationship with others.” This means that you have personal responsibility for your impact on the group. Regardless of the environment inside your own company or at the competition, you are obligated to move your company toward its goals.

Ethics is about choice — choosing to make a positive difference. Ethics is a philosophy concerned with the ways in which the choices we make in our individual conduct affect the ideals and interests of a particular group (as with a business or profession). Simply, ethics calls upon our innate sense of right and wrong and the conduct we choose in a certain environment.

These are some of the reasons modern society has accepted basic concepts of right and wrong as a matter of survival. Ethics is a discipline you apply to yourself in order to help the group. Imagine living in a world without standards of acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Trust, cooperation and security would vanish, along with any opportunity for growth or development. It would be chaotic and unproductive.

As a service manager and business owner, you are the leader, setting the example for everyone else in your company. You define your business culture (including ethics) through the choices you make each day. Your actions and comments influence others in everything from personal appearance to customer service.

To be effective, rules of conduct must apply to everyone. Exceptions only weaken your credibility with the team. You are not credible when your actions do not mirror your words. For example, if you lie to a customer (even if it's a ‘little white lie’), your employees will expect you to lie to them. *There is no right way to do a wrong thing.*

A good, strong manager demonstrates personal integrity. INTEGRITY means your behavior reflects your words and values. “Managing by example” means you demonstrate your integrity on the job.

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Ethical conduct is contagious. Those who see ethical behavior in action accept it as an expectation. As more people see ethical behavior acted out, they adopt the behavior themselves.

With the proliferation of television exposés and competing tabloid headlines, every business is under close scrutiny. Reporters hope to discover the slightest impropriety or error. Even an honest oversight can balloon into scandal. Moreover, a single dishonest business reflects on the entire industry. You and your company may be highly ethical, yet your reputation still can be tarnished. One individual's choice can damage credibility and trust for everyone. The very survival of the group may be at stake.

Knowing how to make choices is not always easy. There are times when the line between “ethical” and “non-ethical” is not clear. The [client name] Code of Ethics can help you make a good decision, the right choice in these situations. This topic includes tools to help out in tricky situations as well.

How Ethical Management Leads to Success

People want to follow honest leaders. The majority of people who work spend the bulk of their time there. They want to feel good about both their manager and the company. Often the integrity of an immediate supervisor and the company are more important to employees than their compensation. Ethics directly affects morale and plays a major role in the success of both an owner and his/her shop.

Many people have negative images of the behaviors required to be successful or to run a successful business. However, ethical behavior *will* take you to your goal. In the long run, ethical behavior improves production, net profits and growth. Increasingly, credibility and trust are crucial to businesses. Customer referrals and a good reputation are essential marketing tools. Your long-term success *depends* on your choices. Ethical behavior and success are not mutually exclusive — they are inseparable.

That's why the [client] Code of Ethics is so important. It offers guidelines for acceptable behavior and demonstrates a commitment to excellence. The ideals presented must be followed and enforced by the company as a whole, in a way that is highly visible to both employees and customers.

The cycle begins with you. Setting a good example reflects well on others and they will share their positive experience with you. A company whose employees and customers feel good can guarantee contented employees and satisfied customers.

Making It Happen

Create a culture of trust in your organization, and everyone will understand how to make ethical choices. As the leader of your business, you make the rules and you set the example for your employees. Be aware of your behavior as you interact with employees, customers and suppliers.

Every action you take is a behavior you choose. Things always will happen that are not within your control. Strive to choose actions that have positive impact and further meaningful relationships.

Trust must be earned and maintained. It takes the right choices to accomplish both.