

# Manual on Human Values and Professional Ethics

For G. H. Raisoni College of Engineering and Management the prime objective is to increase one's ability to deal effectively with moral complexity in engineering practice.

## **MORALS**

Morality is concerned with principles and practices of morals such as:

- (a) What ought or ought not to be done in a given situation?
- (b) What is right or wrong about the handling of a situation?
- (c) What is good or bad about the people, policies, and ideals involved?

## **VALUES**

Humans have the unique ability to define their identity, choose their values and establish their beliefs. All three of these directly influence a person's behavior.

## **ETHICS**

Ethics is the word that refers to morals, values, and beliefs of the individuals, family or the society. Basically it is an activity and process of inquiry. Secondly, it is different from non-moral problems, when dealing with issues and controversies. Thirdly, ethics refers to a particular set of beliefs, attitudes, and habits of individuals or family or groups concerned with morals. Fourth, it is used to mean 'morally correct'.

## **INTEGRITY**

Integrity is defined as the unity of thought, word and deed (honesty) and open mindedness. It includes the capacity to communicate the factual information so that others can make well-informed decisions. It enthuse people not only to execute a job well but to achieve excellence in performance. It helps them to own the responsibility and earn self-respect and recognition by doing the job

## **WORK ETHICS**

The 'work ethics' is aimed at ensuring the economy (get job, create wealth, earn salary), productivity (wealth, profit), safety (in workplace), health and hygiene (working conditions), privacy (raise family), security (permanence against contractual, pension, and retirement benefits), cultural and social development (leisure, hobby, and happiness), welfare (social work), environment (anti-pollution activities), and offer opportunities for all, according to their abilities, but without discrimination.

## **CARING**

Caring is feeling for others. It is a process which exhibits the interest in, and support for, the welfare of others with fairness, impartiality and justice in all activities, among the employees, in the context of professional ethics. It includes showing respect to the feelings of others, and also respecting and preserving the interests of all others concerned. Caring is reflected in activities such as friendship, membership in social clubs and professional societies, and through various transactions in the family, fraternity, community, country and in international councils.

## **SHARING**

Primarily, caring influences 'sharing'. Sharing is a process that describes the transfer of knowledge (teaching, learning, and information), experience (training), commodities (material possession) and facilities with others. The transfer should be genuine, legal, positive, voluntary, and without any expectation in return. However, the proprietary information it should not be shared with outsiders. Through this process of sharing, experience, expertise, wisdom and other benefits reach more people faster. Sharing is voluntary and it cannot be driven by force, but motivated successfully through ethical principles. In short, sharing is 'charity'.

## **HONESTY**

Honesty is a virtue, and it is exhibited in two aspects namely,

- (a) Truthfulness and
- (b) Trustworthiness.

Truthfulness is to face the responsibilities upon telling truth. One should keep one's word or promise. By admitting one's mistake committed (one needs courage to do that!), it is easy to fix them. Reliable engineering judgment, maintenance of truth, defending the truth, and communicating the truth, only when it does 'good' to others, are some of the reflections of truthfulness.

## **COURAGE**

Courage is the tendency to accept and face risks and difficult tasks in rational ways. Self-confidence is the basic requirement to nurture courage.

## **VALUING TIME**

Time is rare resource. Once it is spent, it is lost forever. It cannot be either stored or recovered. Hence, time is the most perishable and most valuable resource too. This resource is continuously spent, whether any decision or action is taken or not.

## **COOPERATION**

It is a team-spirit present with every individual engaged in engineering. Co-operation is activity between two persons or sectors that aims at integration of operations (synergy),

while not sacrificing the autonomy of either party. Further, working together ensures, coherence, i.e., blending of different skills required, towards common goals.

## **COMMITMENT**

Commitment means alignment to goals and adherence to ethical principles during the activities . First of all, one must believe in one's action performed and the expected end results (confidence).

## **EMPATHY**

Empathy is social radar. Sensing what others feel about, without their open talk, is the essence of empathy. Empathy begins with showing concern, and then obtaining and understanding the feelings of others, from others' point of view. It includes the imaginative projection into other's feelings and understanding of other's background such as parentage, physical and mental state, economic situation, and association. This is an essential ingredient for good human relations and transactions.

## **SELF-CONFIDENCE**

Certainty in one's own capabilities, values, and goals, is self-confidence. These people are usually positive thinking, flexible and willing to change. They respect others so much as they respect themselves. Self-confidence is positive attitude, wherein the individual has some positive and realistic view of himself, with respect to the situations in which one gets involved. The people with self-confidence exhibit courage to get into action and unshakable faith in their abilities, whatever may be their positions. They are not influenced by threats or challenges and are prepared to face them and the natural or unexpected consequences.

## **CODES OF ETHICS**

The 'codes of ethics' exhibit, rights, duties, and obligations of the members of a profession and a professional society. The codes exhibit the following essential roles:

1. Inspiration and guidance. The codes express the collective commitment of the profession to ethical conduct and public good and thus inspire the individuals. They identify primary responsibilities and provide statements and guidelines on interpretations for the professionals and the professional societies.
2. Support to engineers. The codes give positive support to professionals for taking stands on moral issues. Further they serve as potential legal support to discharge professional obligations.
3. Deterrence (discourage to act immorally) and discipline (regulate to act morally). The codes serve as the basis for investigating unethical actions. The professional societies sometimes revoke membership or suspend/expel the members, when proved to have acted unethical. This sanction along with loss of respect from the colleagues and the society are bound to act as deterrent.
4. Education and mutual understanding. Codes are used to prompt discussion and reflection on moral issues. They develop a shared understanding by the professionals, public, and the government on the moral responsibilities of the engineers. The Board of Review of the professional societies encourages moral discussion for educational purposes
5. Create good public image. The codes present positive image of the committed profession to the public, help the engineers to serve the public effectively. They promote more of self regulation and lessen the government regulations. This is bound to raise the reputation of the profession and the organization, in establishing the trust of the public.
6. Protect the status quo. They create minimum level of ethical conduct and promotes agreement within the profession. Primary obligation namely the safety, health, and welfare of the public, declared by the codes serves and protects the public.
7. Promotes business interests . The codes offer inspiration to the entrepreneurs, establish shared standards, healthy competition, and maximize profit to investors, employees, and consumers.