Ethics and Our Role as Leaders

Jeff King, Ph.D.
Director, OSU Leadership Center & Associate Professor
Is it bad apples or bad barrels?

Do groups engage in immoral behavior because unethical individuals (the “bad apples”) spoil those around them, or do unethical organizations (the “bad barrels”) corrupt their employees?
Where do we begin?
Our Ethical Fitness
As a Leader

Increase your ethical –

• **Commitment**… boost your desire to do the right thing.

• **Consciousness**… being aware about how ethics control our choices and actions.

• **Competencies**… skills to act ethically.
Objectives -

• Understand the foundation for ethical leadership;
• Explore reasons for ethical failures in the workplace;
• Identify key “leadership” tools available and needed; and
• Explore ethical decision making related to our work.
What are essential characteristics of the 21st Century Leader?
Identify the top 5 characteristics of leaders -

• Determined
• Competent
• Inspiring
• Forward-Looking
• Imaginative
• Intelligent
• Fair-minded
• Independent
• Ambitious
• Broad-minded

• Cooperative
• Courageous
• Supportive
• Loyal
• Mature
• Caring
• Honest
• Straightforward
• Self Control
Characteristics of Admired

- Honest (85%)
- Forward-Looking (70%)
- Inspiring (69%)
- Competent (64%)
- Intelligent (43%)
Ethical Leaders

Name One Ethical Leader You Admire
Leadership & Ethical Behaviors

Certain ethical challenges or dilemmas are inherent in the leadership role. If you choose to become a leader, recognize that you accept ethical burdens along with new tasks, expectations and rewards.

Craig Johnson, Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership, 2005, p. 26
• What does ethics mean to you?

• Why is ethical behavior important?
Ethics

• Standards or principles of conduct that govern the behavior of an individual or a group of individuals

• Generally concerned with moral duties or with questions related to what is right or wrong

-Rue and Byars, 2010
Why Behave Ethically?

• If you want people to act ethically when dealing with you, you should act ethically when dealing with them.
• Your organization’s name is one of its most important assets.
• Because it is the right thing to do.

Where do we begin?
• What does ethics mean to you?
• How does the definition translate to your actions?
• Where-What-Who are your greatest successes?
• Where-What-Who are your greatest challenges?
“Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.”

-Potter Stewart

“An ethical person ought to do more than he’s/she’s’s required to do and less than he’s/she’s’s allowed to do.”

-unknown
What are unethical and ethical behaviors?
Unethical Behaviors

- Working for personal gain.
- Lying.
- Scapegoating & blaming.
- Stealing.
- Damaging goods.
- Yelling at a coworker.
- Wasting goods and your time at work.
- Not helping with organization changes.
- Not keeping co-workers safe.
- Refusing to help others.
- Caring about only your work area or assignment.
- Playing it safe.
- Gossiping.
- Not treating everyone fairly.

-Craig Johnson, Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership, 2005, p. 246
Ethical Behaviors

- Being honest.
- Being respectful of others.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Following rules.
- Operating within the “spirit” of the rule or law.
- Taking responsibility for your actions.
- Doing what you say you will do.

- Creating trust with others.
- Respecting limits.
- Being fair with others.
- Owning up to your mistakes.
- Learning from mistakes.
- Speaking up when you see something wrong.
Why Do Good People Make Unethical Decisions?
Kern’s Derailers

- No Professional System
- Unclear or unstated values
- Poor Persuasion Skills
- Unrealistic Optimism
- Low Maturity
- Rationalization
- Not Walking the Talk

- Poor Accountability
- Misaligned Incentives
- Unapproachable
- The Need to be Liked
- Hyper Competitiveness
- Satisfying
- Lack of Straight Talk
- Over-Confidence
What Do You See in Others?

What Do You See in Yourself?
“Notice that ‘I’ is at the center of the word ‘ethical.’ There is no ‘they.’ Achieving the ethics of excellence is our individual assignment.”

- Price Pritchett
Four sources of unintentional unethical decision making

- Implicit Prejudice
  [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/) or [http://www.tolerance.org/hidden_bias/](http://www.tolerance.org/hidden_bias/)
- In-Group Favoritism
- Over-claiming Credit
- Conflict of Interest

Game Show Ethics?
What Tools Do We Have Available To Us?
“Don’t take people by what they say – watch what they do.”

Fred Meijer
Ethical Road – Meijer Ethics, 2011
Role of Values

• Look over the 2 page list of values and list the 15 most important values to you.

• Narrow your list to 10 values
Values Determine & Guide Our Decisions…

Values

Attitudes
Judgments of people or situations

Behaviors
Observable Actions

(Kerns, 2005)
Common Workplace Values

• Honesty: Tell the truth

• Integrity: Keep your promises

• Respect: Treat others with dignity, respecting their person and property

• Fairness: Play by the rules
Servant Leadership

- Listening
- Empathy
- Healing
- Awareness
- Persuasion
- Foresight
- Conceptualization
- Stewardship
- Commitment to the Growth of People
- Building Community
Leadership Philosophy and Standards of Behavior/Code of Conduct
I will…

✓ Treat all staff with dignity and respect
✓ Greet staff by name
✓ Be accountable for my work
✓ Show a competitive spirit for our business
✓ Treat staff fairly and not show favoritism
✓ Recognize others for what they do right more often than what they do wrong
✓ Offer feedback in a way that’s not embarrassing
✓ Listen to and value other’s perspectives
✓ Personally thank, encourage, and recognize others on my team
✓ Lead by example
Elements of Moral Character
(Johnson, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Will Power or Self Control</th>
<th>Integrity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(regulates ourselves when solving problems)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perseverance</td>
<td>• Self-consistency – being true to one’s word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determination</td>
<td>• Being transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self discipline</td>
<td>• Being accountable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will power can also be translated to a set of interlocking skills – analyzing problems, setting goals, focusing attention, resisting temptations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrity
• Self-consistency – being true to one’s word
• Being transparent
• Being accountable
Values Determine & Guide the Quality of our Ethical Leadership...

**Values**

*Quality* of our values we embrace and the *intensity* of our commitment to them

Determines the quality of *ethical leadership* we provide
Ethical Decision Making
Types of Ethical Decisions

• Right versus wrong
Types of Ethical Decisions

- Right versus wrong
- Right versus wrong with “rationalization”
  - “I deserve it”
  - “No one will get hurt”
  - “No one will ever know”
  - “Everyone does it”
Results Cone

- results
- behavior
- thinking

Questions:

1. ?
2. ?
3. ?
“In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.”

-Immanuel Kant
Results Cone

- results
- behavior
- thinking

“No one will ever know.”
Results Cone

thinking

behavior

results

“Everyone does it.”
Types of Ethical Decisions

- Right versus wrong
- Right versus wrong with "rationalization"
  - "I deserve it"
  - "No one will get hurt"
  - "No one will ever know"
  - "Everyone does it"
- Ethical Dilemma
Kidder’s Ethical Decision Making Process

1. Recognize that there is a problem.
2. Decide who is responsible.
3. Gather the relevant facts.
4. Test for right-versus-wrong issues.
5. Test for right-versus-right values.
6. Apply the ethical standards/perspectives.
7. Look for a third way.
8. Make a decision.
9. Look back at the decision and think about how it could have been done differently.

Ethical Dilemma

- Picking the best choice when neither decision is perfect
- Deciding between right and right values
Ethical Dilemma: Clashing of our Values

Truth

Loyalty
Kidder’s Paradigms

• Cuts through some of the facts, unclear information, and confusion... making the problem manageable.

• Gets rid of unneeded details and gets to why issue exists.

• Helps separate right from wrong.
Dilemma: Right vs Right Values

- Truth versus Loyalty
- Individual versus Community
- Short-term versus Long-term
- Justice versus Mercy

Kidder (2003)
Decision-Making Principles

- Ends-based Thinking
- Rule-based Thinking
- Care-based Thinking
### Decision-Making Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dilemma Paradigms</th>
<th>Ends-based Thinking</th>
<th>Rule-based Thinking</th>
<th>Care-based Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Truth versus Loyalty</strong>&lt;br&gt;(honesty or integrity versus commitment, responsibility, or promise keeping)</td>
<td>(greatest good for the greatest number…cost benefit analysis…forecasting outcomes)</td>
<td>(follow what you want everyone else to follow…fixed rules…stick to principles and let the consequential chips fall where they may)</td>
<td>(putting care for others first…do to others what you would like them to do to you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual versus Community</strong>&lt;br&gt;(us versus them, self versus others, or the smaller versus the larger group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-term versus Long-term</strong>&lt;br&gt;(now versus then, immediate needs or desires versus future goals or prospects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justice versus Mercy</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Fairness, equity, and even-handed application versus compassion, empathy, and love)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-Making Principles</td>
<td>Ends-based Thinking</td>
<td>Rule-based Thinking</td>
<td>Care-based Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dilemma Paradigms</strong></td>
<td>(greatest good for the greatest number…cost benefit analysis…forecasting outcomes)</td>
<td>(follow what you want everyone else to follow…fixed rules…stick to principles and let the consequential chips fall where they may)</td>
<td>(putting care for others first…do to others what you would like them to do to you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth versus Loyalty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(honesty or integrity versus commitment, responsibility, or promise keeping)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual versus Community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(us versus them, self versus others, or the smaller versus the larger group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term versus Long-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(now versus then, immediate needs or desires versus future goals or prospects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice versus Mercy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Fairness, equity, and even-handed application versus compassion, empathy, and love)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Leadership Skills that Make a Difference
“As educational and public leaders we are in the people business, and ethics is embedded in that (Donlevy & Walker, 2011, p. 10)”
Relationships & Communication

• If we want to establish and maintain healthy relationships, we must master communication skills that foster ethical interactions and decisions.

• Successful dialogue focuses on what happens between communicators.
To engage in dialogue...

• Seek the good of others.
• Value relationships.
• Open to influence.
• Allow others to hold differing opinions.
• Honesty.
• Willingness to invest time and energy.
Ethical Communication Competencies (Johnson, 2012)

- Mindfulness
- Effective Listening
- Emotional Intelligence
- Trust Building
What does it mean to be mindful?

• Devoting full attention to the task at hand.
• Pay Attention - “Be Here Now.”
• A mode of thinking.
Empathy

• “Tuning in” to what, how and why people feel and think the way they do.

• Being able to “emotionally read” other people.

• Ability to non-judgmentally put into words your understanding of the other person’s perspective on the world/situation.
Tips to Improve Your Empathy

• Be a Supportive Listener
  – Acknowledge your acceptance of what the speaker is saying
  – Does not signify agreement
  – Do not judge or criticize
Levels of Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>listening to understand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• entire message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• beyond the words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>for how it applies to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to tell my story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to agree/disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-listening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Attitudes are Communicated

7%  Words
38%  Tone of Voice
55%  Body Language
I didn’t say your decision was unethical.
• I didn’t say your decision was unethical.
  ➢ Implication – Someone else said it was.
• I didn’t say your behavior was unethical.
  ➢ Implication – I may have thought it, but didn’t say it.
• I didn’t say your behavior was unethical.
  ➢ Implication – It wasn’t you I was talking about.
• I didn’t say your decision was unethical.
  ➢ Implication - It wasn’t your decision that was unethical. It was you.
• I didn’t say your decision was unethical.
  ➢ Implication – I didn’t say unethical exactly.
Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence Framework

Self Awareness

Social Awareness

Self Management

Relationship Management

recognition

regulation
Emotional Intelligence Packaging

• “Packaging” your
  • Empathy
  • Assertiveness
  • Impulse Control
Assertiveness

• Ability to express feelings, beliefs, and thoughts and defend one’s rights in a nondestructive manner.

• Think of assertiveness along a continuum.

• Use empathy and courage as your “context.”
“Impulse Control”

• Ability to resist or delay an impulse, drive, or temptation to act.

• Ability to remain in control of one’s self, to avoid acting in an impulsive fashion, to have patience, and to control one’s anger.

• Ready–Fire–Aim versus Ready–Aim–Fire
Packaging your Empathy – Assertiveness – Impulse Control

• Empathy

• Assertiveness

• Impulse Control

• Radar

• Engine

• Throttle
“Thought is action in rehearsal.”

-Sigmund Freud
lower quality thinking

thought habits/
state of mind

behaviors

results
Trust

“You must earn the right to lead others…this comes as a result of your care and building of trust with others.”

Jason Barger, 2012
“You must earn the right to lead others...this comes as a result of your care and building of trust with others.”

Jason Barger, 2012
What does trust look like?
What does trust look like?

Attitudes & Behaviors

- Trust involves **optimistic expectations**...believing the other party will carry through on promises.

- **Put themselves in a vulnerable position**...they depend on the behavior of others and have much to lose if these individuals break their commitment.

- **Trust is willingly offered**. Those entering into trust relationships hope to increase cooperation and generate benefits, not only for themselves, but also for the group as a whole.

- Trust **imposes an obligation or duty** to protect the rights and interests of others.

- Trust is **hard to enforce**.
Ethic of Trust

• Think of someone who you need to work with where the trust as been strained.

• Why is the trust strained? What has “happened.”

• What are the implications of your resulting behavior with them? Their behavior with you?
When we experience betrayal

• Acknowledge what happened.
• Allow feelings to surface
• Get support from others
• Reframe - What can you learn from the experience
• Take responsibility if you had a role (unintentional or intentional)
• Forgive yourself and others
• Let go and move on
Ethical Communication Competencies (Johnson, 2012)

- Mindfulness
- Effective Listening
- Emotional Intelligence
- Trust Building
As a Leader

Increase your ethical –

- **Commitment**…boost your desire to do the right thing.
- **Consciousness**…being aware about how ethics control our choices and actions.
- **Competencies**… skills to act ethically.
Our Ethical Fitness
“Your ethical muscle grows stronger every time you choose right over wrong.”

-Price Pritchett
Despite the codes of ethics, the ethics programs, and special departments, organizations don’t make the ultimate decisions about ethics...

ethical choices are made by YOU