Work Ethics

G. Gopalakrishnan

{Former Vice Chancellor / Provost, Dr. M.G.R. Educational & Research Institute, Chennai}

Abstract

Ethics is needed in any field of activity, be it dealing with People, Businesses, Employers, Customers, Legal matters, Social Systems and Environmental issues. Ethics defines whether the procedures followed are right or wrong. Certain codes are set, be it any society where humans / procedures are involved. The ultimate word is accountability. Efforts have been made in this paper to present the meaning of the word 'ethics' in certain spheres of activity. Even religion has a code of ethics. Almost all religions respect and also expect certain behaviours from their believers! Amidst dilemmas, decisions need to be taken

Keywords: *Ethics, Business ethics, religious ethics, work ethic, codes of ethics, dilemmas of ethics*

I.   Introduction

A matter of timely concern is the lack of ethics that we see every day, all around us at most places of work, be it industries, educational institutions or even hospitals; insincerity, time watchers and large number of members of the workforce shirking their responsibilities, to participate in other non-useful activities. This can be termed as unethical!

Ethics is defined as a term based on one's 'morality'! Defines what is 'morally right' or 'morally wrong'. Ethics is invisible, and borders closely on one's integrity and conscience. Ethics is to study what is 'morally right' and 'morally wrong'! A person with strong 'work ethics' is one who sincerely devotes his time, energy and effort into the work he is doing or directed to perform. Such a person will not abandon his work on account of heavy constraints and challenges, but on the other hand determines to make things happen. It is an innate character of the 'ethical' person. "As such, personal ethics can be cultivated, but often it cannot be achieved if the person has no inner desire to accomplish it"

Work ethics is a soft skill, either inherited from parental guidance, or the inherent ability to remain determined and perseverant against all odds, during one's career. To develop a strong work ethic takes time and continuous dedication. An excellent work ethic concept leads to unlocking incredible opportunities and it helps socially in the long run.

Good Work Ethic

Differences between a good and a great work ethic indicates how committed one is towards the assigned work and also the amount of care one takes about the team, making sure the team's career advances. Mostly such good ethics are on time, punctual about completing the work allotted to them on time. They also assist others in their team, care more for their company's future. A professionally motivated and committed employee is the most wanted person in an organization. Referring matters to the organization, concentration, reliability, integrity, and other skills show that one is likely to be a good work ethic. When being interviewed, one could also highlight how dedicated time was allotted to work ethic development since one was passionate about the organization's success. Tone and body language could also indicate that 'work ethic' is important.

Most important factors that contribute towards a 'good ethic' are reliability, dedication, productivity, cooperation, discipline and integrity. Reliability implies that the person could be trusted, projects could be completed on time, and maintains punctuality in all that one does. Quality and making meaningful contributions are expected from a good ethic. A common characteristic of such people are they are committed individuals and complete jobs on time and do not change jobs frequently. They are disciplined and seize opportunities to help some very complicated issues at times. To summarise, work ethics is a soft skill, either inherited from parental guidance, or the inherent ability to remain determined and perseverant against all odds, during one's career. To develop a strong work ethic takes time and continuous dedication. An excellent work ethic concept leads to unlocking incredible opportunities and socially helps in the long run. Differences between a good and great work ethic indicates how committed one is towards the assigned work and also the amount of care one takes about the team, making sure the team's career advances. They also assist others in their team, care more for their company's
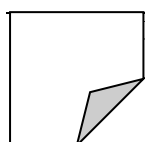
future. Such persons are highly productive, and go beyond expectations, help each other, cooperate whenever and wherever necessary. Such individuals are integrity-wise above board, are honest, virtuous, polite, and kind, and uphold a positive company culture. They are totally responsible in nature when assigned certain tasks, maintain total professionalism, and appropriate body language, social cues, and tone adopted while at work. Additionally, looking tidy and neat also contributes to professionalism.

Ethic Types

Ethics are from time immemorial based on standard facts humanly described as right or wrong, which humans need to do, in terms of benefits to society, in fairness. Sometimes it becomes rather difficult to change an environment which lacks the culture of 'Work Ethics' and total absence of accountability in the workplace, seen all over. It therefore becomes absolutely impossible for an ethical person to continue working in that surrounding, unless the entire locale is freed from this environment. It therefore becomes necessary to establish a culture of work ethics and accountability at that place, to change the entire scenario for an organizational leader who is interested to have a better working environment – naturally he needs to "lead by example". To establish such a fair organizational system, one needs to eliminate workplace bias and favouritism, allow the employees the freedom to speak out, give a meaningful feed to the management and above all develop an authentic leadership in the place!

Work Ethics apply to almost all branches of activities, usually classified as – Personal, Business, Employer, Customer, Legal, Social and Environmental; invariably linked with moral values in every day operations. In business, ethics is the buzz word, if business is to thrive – every business having its own ways of bartering ethics – understanding the ethical judgements one needs to take, changing good stances to transact, honesty and fairness in all dealings and be prepared to ethically face any after sales situations.

Ethical Dilemmas

Normally during the process of work, ethical dilemmas arise. Mostly when there are divergent views on doing a particular process or operation arise, then further considerations as conflict of interest, following of norms can be understood as knowing the right thing to do, but institutional or other constraints make it difficult to pursue the desired course of action. Ethical dilemmas may at times lead to false accounting, data privacy, discrimination, internal harassments, favouritism and many other doubts and fears may have to be taken into consideration, besides considering major biases; major decisions have to be taken - truth against loyalty, justice over mercy. Whatever the decisions be, they send a clear message. In the process, positive or negative consequences have to be faced.

Business Ethics – An Example

United Kingdom amongst all nations has a great reputation for ethics being maintained in public service. "The Nolan Principles were devised largely in response to MPs' conduct, and it is politicians' adherence to them which most often grabs the headlines. However, in recent months a spotlight has been placed on to the Civil Service". The seven notable principles were, "selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership". This was applicable right across for all public offices. These seven principles called the Nolan Principles were first introduced in 1995.

Religions & Codes of Ethics

Codes of ethics have been existent since time immemorial! The *"Ten Commandments"* was the basis of ethics and cultures of Judaism, Islam and Christianity, as enunciated in the Bible. Pericles dictated what should be the codes for the Greeks; likewise, we have for example, the full instructions for the Sikh are given in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, authored and edited by seven Sikh Gurus! Islamic ethics is based on the moral conduct, good character to attain the pleasure of God. The three words *Akhlaq, Adab* and *Ihsan* precisely define *Islamic Ethics.* It is totally different from morality based on codes of behaviour. While *Akhlaq* is ethics defined as Islamic behaviour, good conduct and soft nature*, Adab* is related to actual practice of manners and attitude, refined behaviour. On the other hand, *Ihsan* refers to perfection or excellence or virtuous living. Religious traditions and civic cultures have their codes. All these codes are associated with obligating and admonitions. The Hindu religion follows different ethics for different customs – the ancient Hindu ethics correspond to five Yamas of ancient Hindu ethics: Ahimsa {non-violence}, Satya {truth, non-falsehood}, Asteya {non-stealing}, Brahmacharya {celibacy if unmarried and non-cheating on one's partner if married}, and Aparigraha {non-possessiveness}. Thiruvalluvar, the great Dravidian Saint and Philosopher had espoused the religious ethics of Hinduism. There are some similarities of religious ethics of Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam with that of the Thirukkural. The importance of ethics in life is beyond any religion

The most popular of all the ethics is that quoted often - "The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Fearlessness; purification of one's existence; cultivation of spiritual knowledge; charity; self-control; performance
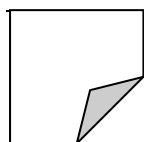
of sacrifice; study of the Vedas; austerity; simplicity; nonviolence; truthfulness; freedom from anger; renunciation; tranquillity; aversion to fault finding; compassion for all living entities; freedom from covetousness; gentleness; modesty; steady determination; vigour; forgiveness; fortitude; cleanliness; and freedom from envy and from the passion for honour – these transcendental qualities, O son of Bharata, belong to godly men endowed with divine nature." {Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.1-3}.

Benefits that Accrue when Organizations Follow Work Ethics

Some of the benefits that accrue when organizations and systems follow work ethics could be summarised hereunder:

- Builds up a good work atmosphere, creates confidence in employees, and builds cooperative teamwork, increased productivity
- Creates a pleasant work environment, makes the entire workspace enjoyable
- Assists when people move beyond the comfort zone and helps people through severe stress and tough times
- Helps individuals get the desired recognition for their contributions for the work delivered
- Leads to entrepreneurial and business successes
- Aids in developing additional leadership and interpersonal skills, and foster good relations amongst coworkers
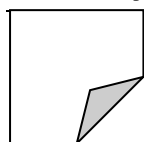
II.   Conclusions

To conclude, *Work Ethics* is needed in all spheres of activities. It sets standards under which businesses can flourish, educational institutions could impart good codes of conduct and the entire community and environment is made to make the entire space enjoyable! Colleagues and employers could feel the comfort of an ethical atmosphere, wherein success is the only catchword! For an individual, it's often seen as an indicator of one's level of professionalism and could have a strong and powerful impact on the person's career and success – a soft skill that employers value! Every religion follows their own code of ethics, and from ages past they are being observed fastidiously.

Acknowledgement

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