

ETHICS
WORKSHOP GUIDE



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This session is about putting ethics into practice.

INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed for a manager or a facilitator to deliver a short workshop featuring videos from the Video Arts Leadership Essentials Series. Each video comes with a series of activities around the following structure:

LOOK - watch the video and reflect on the content and message.

THINK - activities and questions linking the video to their own experience and workplace.

REMEMBER - a summary of the key learning points.

These activities will take about 15 minutes to complete. At the end of this guide is a practical exercise to help bring all of the learning points together.

FEATURED VIDEOS

- The Only Way is Ethics (But it's not against the law, technically?)
- How you behave matters (Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Evil Club!)

VIDEO 1 – THE ONLY WAY IS ETHICS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Being ethical is about doing the right thing every day.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group to discuss the tangible benefits of acting ethically.

Responses should include;

- Acting ethically protects your organisation's reputation and brand. Reputation and brand build slowly, but can be destroyed in a moment.
- People prefer to work for a company that they know is ethical and sticks to its principles.
- Customers want to do business with a company they can trust.
- Behaving ethically is the right thing to do. It accords with your inner voice and your own personal values.

REMEMBER (recap, 2 minutes)

- Ethics are for every day.
- Talk frequently about the ethical values and commitment of your organisation.
- Explain how these values and commitments apply to the work of your team.
- Explain that being ethical means doing the right thing, even when not required by law or policy.

VIDEO 2 – HOW YOU BEHAVE MATTERS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Leaders who live by their code of ethics and demonstrate this behaviour daily are more likely to win the respect of their teams and encourage others to adopt the same behaviour.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Sometimes it's tempting to act unethically for personal gain or when friends or colleagues pressure us. But people judge us by our actions more than by what we say.

What are the steps to behaving ethically when it's tempting to do otherwise?

Responses should include;

- Gather the relevant facts.
- Think about who is going to be affected by your decision.
- Ask yourself: what is the guiding principle here?
- Assess the ethics of each possible alternative.
- Reflect on how your decision will also affect you, now and in the future.

REMEMBER (recap, 2 minutes)

- Be aware that your team will judge their workplace as ethical or not based on the way that you behave.
- Don't compromise ethics for the sake of other more pressing business goals.
- Weigh up your options daily and choose the most ethical course of action.

ETHICS - PRACTISE

This exercise provides an opportunity for participants to explore a number of typical ethical issues and to consider how they might respond.

Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4. Depending on the time available, ask each group to look at 2 or more of the following case studies. Ideally you want each of the five case studies to be tackled by at least two groups, so you can compare solutions.

Case 1

You have been advising the board of your company on a proposed takeover of a major rival. It so happens that your girlfriend's father has a large holding of shares in this rival. You are tempted to quietly pass on what you know about the takeover. What would you do and why?

Case 2

You are involved as an administrator in the recruitment of a new salesperson. The process is being conducted formally according to your company's recruitment policy. However, you have found out that one of the candidates is actually a nephew of one of the team conducting the interviews and nothing has so far been said to make this visible. What would you do and why?

Case 3

You work in the office of an agricultural company. You have witnessed casual labourers being paid cash in hand, without a formal contract of employment. You have reason to believe that some of these labourers are illegal immigrants. What would you do and why?

Case 4

You are leaving the office with a colleague to have dinner after a very long day's work. The cost of meals is normally covered by your employer if you work more than two hours overtime. Your colleague suggests inviting your partners to join you and putting in the expenses as if there were two further colleagues with you. What would you do and why?

Case 5

You work as a lecturer at a large technical college. You are concerned that some foreign students who quite clearly have not performed well are being awarded high grades. You also know that the college depends on the high fees paid by foreign students. What would you do and why?

Bring the groups back together and have them share their solutions. In particular look for differences in approach. Emphasise the importance of acting ethically, even when this might compromise a business objective.