Why Be Ethical?

James J. L. Stegmaier, Retired County Administrator, Chesterfield, VA
Daniel Weinheimer, Deputy County Manager, Routt County, CO
Jeffrey L. Mincks, Chesterfield County Attorney
Truth is the Foundation of Ethics

Telling the truth is an absolute and forms the basis of all ethical behavior
Truth is the Foundation of Ethics

1. Hypocrisy and compromise are necessary parts of human existence.
2. Social courtesy is not lying in the ethical sense.
“Why should I tell the truth when everyone around me is lying?”

In the long run, it is in your self interest.
Organizations Which Adhere to Ethical Standards are the Best Performers

Building Customer Value and Profitability with Business Ethics
Cluteinstitute.com

The Importance of Being Ethical
Inc.com

How do ethics affect the financial results of a company?
Houston Chronicle

How Enterprise Leaders Like Bill Marriott Create customer loyalty
Forbes.com

Why be an Ethical Company? They’re Stronger and last longer
Bloomberg.com
Articles of Interest


“How Do Ethics Affect the Financial Results of a Company?”

“How Enterprise Leaders Like Bill Marriott Create Customer Loyalty”
http://www.forbes.com/sites/robertreiss/2013/05/06/how-enterprise-leaders-like-bill-marriott-create-customer-loyalty/

"Does Being Ethical Pay?"  http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB121018735490274425

"Building Customer Value and Profitability with Business Ethics"

"Business ethics and customer stakeholders"

"Why Be an Ethical Company? They're Stronger and Last Longer"
http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/technology/content/aug2009/tc20090816_435499.htm
Values ≠ Rules

1. Rules will only serve as minimums; they define what you have to do to keep from being punished.
2. Without a strong ethical attitude, rules won't cause you to behave ethically.
Using Values to Create a High-Performing Organization

1. Actions conform to ethical beliefs.
2. Work environment encourages ethical behavior.
3. Leaders reward ethical behavior.
4. Leaders punish unethical behavior.
5. Leaders never request unethical behavior.
6. Superiors do not undermine ethical behavior of subordinates.
Ethical Anchor
Ethical Anchor
Ethical Anchor
Ethical Anchor
Leaders take risks by making ethics a high priority.
County Code of Ethics


B. Only two changes in over two decades.
County Code of Ethics

1. Deceiving others by misrepresenting or withholding information
County Code of Ethics

1. Deceiving others by misrepresenting or withholding information.
2. Pressuring someone else to act unethically.
Fire Lieutenant Scenario

1) Lieutenant in Fire Department under investigation for minor infraction (failure to enforce the way subordinate firefighters sit in fire apparatus).

2) On evening before subordinate firefighters to be questioned, Lieutenant sends out Facebook post to subordinates to tell them “not to send me up the river!!”
Call the guys on your crew and tell them not to send me up the river!! Good to hear that your getting back!
Fire Lieutenant Scenario

3) Battalion Chief sees post and makes a screen shot of it. Word gets out that Department may be looking into post and Lieutenant deletes it.

4) Battalion Chief confronts Lieutenant about post and Lieutenant denies he posted it.
5) Battalion Chief shows Lieutenant screen shot; Lieutenant explains:

a) Post was actually written by his wife;
b) Wife thought she was posting on her own Facebook page, and
c) The reference to “Don’t send me up the river” was just wife using the wrong pronoun.
County Code of Ethics

1. Deceiving others by misrepresenting or withholding information.
2. Pressuring someone else to act unethically.
3. Failing to accept blame; passing blame to others; passively allowing others to take blame.
County Code of Ethics

1. Deceiving others by misrepresenting or withholding information.

2. Pressuring someone else to act unethically.

3. Failing to accept blame, passing blame to others; passively allowing others to take blame.

4. Failing to honor promises.
LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all people to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner which does not bring discredit to me or my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my Department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held as long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will never engage in acts of bribery nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

I know that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession..........LAW ENFORCEMENT.
Director of Department

1. Never shows up for work before 10:30.

2. Does not keep work calendar.

3. Requests to Director always completed by deputies.

4. When terminated, deputies reveal Director was doing almost no work for County. Getting rid of Director actually made it easier for deputies to do job.
5. Subverting group decisions by action or inaction. (Passive/Aggressive)
“Easier to ask for forgiveness than ask for permission.”
5. Subverting group decisions by action or inaction.

6. Feigning lack of memory or understanding to avoid following group decisions.
1) It is discovered that police officer has been working security for various businesses at the same time he is working for the County. Draws three paychecks for the same hour: “triple dipping”.

2) Officer explains that he did not understand that he couldn’t work two jobs simultaneously, that “everyone does it” and his Sergeant knows he and other officers (actually 7 others) do it.
3) Businesses say their arrangement with the officer is that his police work always takes precedence and they just want him to drive by and check on their facilities when he can. There is no indication that he has ever failed to respond to a police call.
5. Subverting group decisions by action or inaction.

6. Feigning lack of memory or understanding to avoid following group decisions.

Telephone Communications Chief

Using County phone system to obtain confidential “secret” information about employees. Passing info on to Director of another department. Reported by subordinate.
Telephone Communications Chief

When Chief’s activity is reported and Chief under investigation, Chief writes memo to subordinate suggesting that she not participate in investigation. Claims Director of department has said, “if anyone talks about it he would fire them”.
From: Doe, John
Sent: Thursday, June 05, **** 12:15 PM
To: Mary Smith
Subject: review

I met with our department director this morning. It took a couple of hours and it was difficult. He did want the facts and he has the information. He is looking at the data and will get back to me I guess once he talks to the County Attorney. He does not want to involve anyone else because he feels comfortable with the fact you did nothing wrong. Anyway I have probably said too much here because he also said if anyone talks about it he would fire them although I have heard him say that before about things so I never tested that one. I know you like working here and the things you do. I don’t need to complicate that for you.

John S. Doe
County of Chesterfield
P.O. Box 40
9901 Lori Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832
5. Subverting group decisions by action or inaction.

6. Feigning lack of memory or understanding to avoid following group decisions.


8. Failing to follow rules or procedures to achieve self-needs.
5. Subverting group decisions by action or inaction.
6. Feigning lack of memory or understanding to avoid following group decisions.
8. Failing to follow rules or procedures to achieve self-needs.
9. Compromising public authority or trust.
County Code of Ethics (cont’d)


8. Failing to follow rules or procedures to achieve self-needs.

9. Compromising public authority or trust.

10. Engaging in on-duty or off-duty conduct which harms the reputation or integrity of the County in the community.
Making Ethics The Foundation of Your Organizations

1. Stress in employee orientation.
2. Provide training for all employees.
3. Emphasize supervisory training.
4. Enforce with disciplinary action.
5. Reward (and never punish) ethics whistleblowers.
6. Reward ethical behavior generally.
7. Make ethical behavior a part of employee evaluations.
8. Make Code of Ethics applicable to governing body members.
“Senior leaders in my department (including department and senior manager) clearly communicate a strong set of values and ethics.”

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“My immediate supervisor encourages ethical business practices in all transactions and interactions.”

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“The Leadership Group clearly communicates a strong set of values and ethics.”

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In 2014, there were no questions regarding ethics on the survey.
Motivators

Inspire employees with motivators which elevate pride and loyalty to create a high-performing organization.
Fostering an Ethical Cultural

the Fort Collins experience

Dan Weinheimer
Deputy County Manager
Routt County, CO
Why Start an Ethics Program?

• Avoid the front page
• Foster successful decisions
• Communicate to electeds and community
• Build an ethical culture
• Guidelines form best decisions
• Practice makes perfect
Overview

• Fort Collins, CO
  – Pop. 158,000
  – 2,000-2,500 employees
  – Full Service City
  • Four Utilities
  • Police Services
  • Transit
“Employees demonstrate the City of Fort Collins values by behaving in a manner that creates a trustworthy, transparent and credible organization.”
“We’re Ethical”

- “Why do we need this?”
- “Don’t you trust us?”
- “We would never hire anyone like that”
What are Ethics?

Moral principles that govern a group or individual’s behavior

Doing what the law requires

The standards of behavior our organization accepts
Shared values promote an ethical culture
Creating the Ethics Ecosystem

- **Hiring**
  - Job announcements
  - Job descriptions
  - Interview questions

- **Onboarding**
  - Organizational
  - Positional

- **Communication**
As Ethical Employees, We Will:

- Act at all times in the best interests of the citizens of Fort Collins.
- Support the City’s Mission, Vision, and Values.
- Report improper conduct.
- Seek guidance when confronted with ethical dilemmas or “gray areas.”
As Ethical Employees, We Will:

- Follow all federal, state, and local laws.
- Comply with City and Service Area policies, procedures, and rules.
- Treat all coworkers and citizens with respect and provide assistance to the best of their ability in all situations.
Available Resources

- Ethics Decision Framework
- Citynet website
- Supervisor’s toolkit
- Captain Conundrum (blog)
- EthicsPoint Reporting Tool
- Colleagues and supervisors
- Human Resources partners
Standards and Decision Framework

**ETHICS: RAISE THE BAR**

**WHY CIVIL servants are ETHICAL?**
- Act at all times in the best interests of the citizens of Fort Collins.
- Support the City’s Mission, Vision, and Values.
- Respect mutual contact.
- Seek guidance when authorized with ethics membership or “gray areas.”
- Follow federal, state, and local laws.
- Comply with City and Service Area policies, procedures, and rules.
- Treat all coworkers and citizens with respect and provides assistance to the best of their ability in all situations.

**WHO IS ETHICAL?**
A Code of Ethics describes the principles that guide decision-making in an organization.

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW ETHICAL CONDUCT?**
As employees of the City of Fort Collins, maintaining the public trust is vital to the continued support of the city’s integrity and sustainability.

**RISKS OF BREACHES**
- Breach of trust
- Breach of confidentiality of the city/organization
- Breach of policy
- Breach of the law/standard

**BASIC ELEMENTS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**
- Employees shall maintain the highest standards of practice.
- Employees shall treat others with respect and dignity.
- Employees shall respect the confidentiality of privileged communications.
- Employees shall observe the law and standard.

**BEST DECISION**
- Ethical
- Legal
- Fair and consistent
- Good for the community

**DECISION-MAKING STRATEGY**
- Ask yourself: What would I do if I were in a similar situation?
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Intranet Resource Page

Ethics Resources
- Ethics Decision Framework
- Report Preferential Treatment
- Report an Ethics Violation
- Request an ethics presentation

Ethics Links
- Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual
- City Charter
- City Ethics Code
- City Manager's Administrative Policies

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- Act at all times in the best interests of the citizens of Fort Collins.
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- Follow all federal, state, and local laws.
- Comply with City and Service Area policies, procedures, and rules.
- Treat all coworkers and citizens with respect and provides assistance to the best of their ability in all situations.
Your Role as Manager

• Leadership support is critical
• Leaders model good, ethical choices
• Communicate the importance of ethics (a lot!)
• Support good individual/work group decisions
• Include ethics in hiring and evaluations
• Ethics = customer service (consistency)
Takeaways

• It usually isn’t black and white
• Encourage employees to throw the flag
  – When you see a violation
  – When you aren’t sure
• Foster discussion throughout organization
• Ethics is a journey not a destination
  – Culture change requires sustained effort
Thank you!

Dan Weinheimer
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970.870.5345
Questions/Comments?