



## Protecting the Public Interest

### The Critical Role of Ethics in Governance & Management Leadership

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This is an Ethics Test!

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“Where a man assumes a public trust – he should consider himself public property”

Thomas Jefferson

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Organizations Have Dual Obligations

To Protect the Public Interest  
And  
To Maintain the Public Trust.

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Ignoring Ethics at Your Organizational Peril

The Ramifications

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## Organizational Ramifications

- Increased rates of employee misconduct,
- Decreased willingness of employees to seek assistance when needed,
- Poor morale,
- Poor service delivery,
- Increased litigation,
- Weakened competitive business advantage, inclusive of the ability to attract charitable donations,
- Loss of reputation.

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## Turning the Negatives into Positives by;

- Recognizing that ethics is good business
- Nurturing a culture of ethical excellence and all of its key components,
- Modeling ethical behaviour from the top, inclusive of the governance level,
- Having the ethical courage to address issues appropriately as they arise,
- Recognizing that a culture of ethical excellence is an effective risk management tool.

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## A Culture of Ethical Excellence

### Eight Key Drivers

(adapted from the extensive literature on organizational cultures inclusive of Public Service Ethics & Values: Measuring Performance 2005. Specific Points for a Director to Examine the Effectiveness of an Ethics Program - F. Navam 2003)

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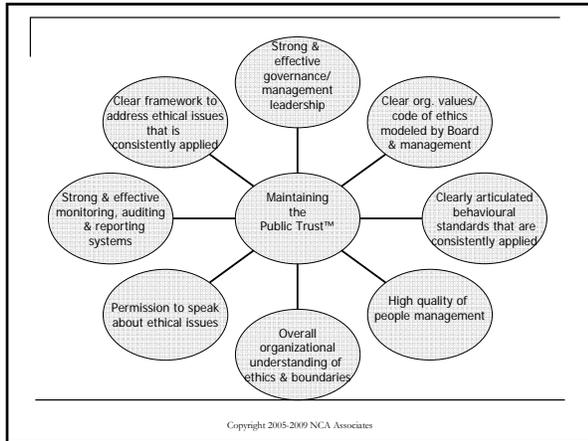
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### Focusing on 3 of the 8 Key Drivers

- Governance & Management Leadership
- Organizational Understanding of Ethics & Boundaries
- A Clear Decision-Making Framework

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### Governance & Management Leadership

Key Driver # 1

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Governance & Management Leadership

- An ethics strategic plan with clearly articulated goals & objectives,
- May include a survey to assess the ethical climate,
- Designated person responsible for the plan with decision-making authority,
- Evaluation mechanism for all components,

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Governance & Management Leadership

- Effective communication of the strategic plan, responsible person(s), policies & procedures & other systems put into place.

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Organizational Understanding  
of Ethics & Boundaries

Key Driver # 3

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## The Slippery Slope

Your client is upset and you give them a hug.

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## Boundaries

- Boundaries define & separate professional roles from others.
- Boundaries are the limits that allow for a safe connection between you and your client. This safe connection is always based on clients' needs – ***not wants***.

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## Boundaries & Human Behaviour

Where the “rules” intersect with human behaviour. (Rules meaning regulations, standards, policies, as example.)

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## Boundary Violations

A boundary violation occurs when the professional places his or her own needs above the needs of their client so that the professional gains **personally** at the expense of their client.

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## A Clear Decision-Making Framework

Key Driver # 8

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## Benefits of A Clear Decision-Making Framework

- Application of critical thinking and analysis to ethical dilemmas and other issues,
- Increased probability of reaching ethically sound resolutions,
- Demonstrated consistency when addressing ethical dilemmas and other issues,
- Increased probability of achieving defensible resolutions,
- Increased probability of identifying critical gaps in policy and/or programs.

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## Dilemma

Your client, a teacher lets slip that they "cruise" pornography web sites.

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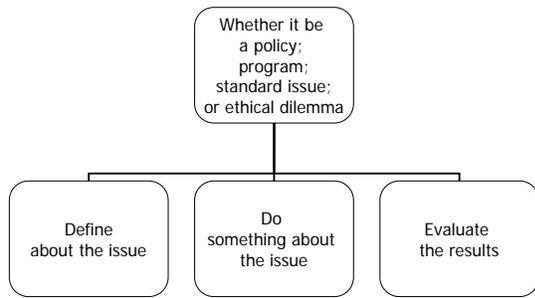
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## A Decision-Making Framework



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## Step 1: Define the Issue

- Define the goal to be achieved
- Articulate the issue clearly. Separate fact from emotion & assumption
- Identify values, ethical principles or standards involved.
- Identify any required additional facts or information.
- Are all the right people at the table?
- Who will be or is affected by the issue? Individuals? Groups? Organizations?
- What relevant policies, procedures or Acts need to be reviewed and/or taken into consideration?

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## Step 2: Do Something About the Issue

- Brainstorm possible options.
- Identify pros & cons. Think short & long term.
- Weigh options. Which option or combination is most likely to work within the context of the most important values, ethical principles and or standards?
- Choose and implement and option.
- For policy; program or standard decision, document the rationale (& process if not used consistently)
- For an ethical dilemma, document the option, rationale, & decision-making process

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## Weighing the Options

- What good to the public/client will occur with this option? (Ethical principle of beneficence)
- Does this option present any risk of harm to the public/client? (Ethical principle of non-maleficence)
- Does this option infringe on or foster client autonomy? (Ethical principle of client autonomy)
- Does this option reflect what was promised to the public/client; and is true to the articulated goals of your profession? (Ethical principle of fidelity or your fiduciary duty)

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## Weighing the Options

- Is this option fair within the concept of balance of burden? (Ethical principle of justice)
- Is this option consistent and/or congruent with successful decisions that you have taken with similar situations in the past?
- What is your professional and/or organizational purpose for choosing this option?
- Are your own personal values and personal desires entering into this decision? (Ethical issue of bias)

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## Weighing the Options

- Does this option adhere to your organization's code of ethics, and other relevant documents?
- Does this option conform to applicable legislation?
- Can you explain **why** you took this option to the public, your client, other relevant stakeholders, your employer, your regulatory College, the newspapers and the courts?

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## Step 2: Do Something About the Issue Continued

For an ethical dilemma;

- Develop a course of action.
- Identify what needs to be done, by whom and by when

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## Step 3: Evaluate the Results

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| ■ For policy; program or standard issue – set date for review. | ■ For an ethical dilemma – evaluate the plan |
| ■ Is it achieving the intended results?                        | ■ Is it achieving the intended results       |
| ■ Is it still current and/or relevant?                         | ■ If not – why not?                          |
| ■ If not, repeat the appropriate steps.                        | ■ If not, repeat the appropriate steps       |

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Thank You!

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