

Ethical Decision Making – Questions to help decide the ethical course of action

Developed by the Insurance Institute for Applied Ethics

1. Questions to help decide if the situation or decision has ethical dimensions
 - A. Is it legal but unethical? (*Capital Punishment is legal but is it ethical?*)
 - B. Is it necessary? (*Do you really need to make this decision, or should someone else be involved or make it?*)
 - C. Does it involve a core ethical principle such as honesty, integrity, truthfulness, etc.?
2. Information gathering questions to help make the ethical decision
 - A. Who are the stakeholders and what are their rights?
 - B. Consider the source, reliability, and accuracy of all relevant information.
 - C. Who should be involved in this decision?
 - D. Do I have enough information to make a sound ethical decision? If not, how do I get it?
3. Questions to help identify and evaluate alternatives
 - A. Am I rationalizing my answer to justify what I want to do?
 - B. Am I using anyone for my own personal gain? (Who will be injured and how)
 - C. Are there conflicting loyalties to stakeholders?
 - D. What would result in the long run if everyone did this?
4. Questions that help in reaching a decision
 - A. Could I defend my position before the Board of Directors, the CEO, or the media?
 - B. What would _____ do? (Fill in the name of the best ethical role model you know.)
 - C. Will this seem to be the right decision a year from now? Five years from now?
 - D. Do I have the moral courage to take the more ethical course of action? (Am I willing to pay the price for my convictions?)