

Social Issues in Management and Business Ethics: Exercises and Activities

Exercise/Activity Title:

Create a Code of Ethics

Exercise/Activity Explanation (150 words or less):

Codes of Ethics serve as a moral anchor for decision making and policy formations. This exercise helps employees create a code of ethics for their organization. Employees independently develop a Code of Ethics and share their models in small groups for feedback. The small group reaches consensus on one model and further develop the code. Each small group then presents their code to the other groups. Workshop participants choose one of the models for final development and presentation to a management team for additional edits, and formal approval for implementation.

Assignment is on the following page.

Optional – Contact Information:

If interested in additional information, please contact Professor Denis Collins, School of Business, Edgewood College, Madison, WI; dcollins@edgewood.edu

Creating a Code of Ethics

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Below are thirteen steps for creating a Code of Ethics as a team building exercise:

Step 1: Obtain approval.

Step 2: Create a code writing team.

Step 3: Gather list of ethical issues from relevant stakeholders.

Step 4: Define a "Code of Ethics".

Step 5: Gather a list of ethical behaviors from participants. Have each participant independently write answers to the following four prompts:

1. Describe a situation when *you observed someone* in the organization behave very ethically toward a customer.

2. Describe a situation when *you behaved* very ethically toward a customer.

3. Describe a situation when *you observed someone* in the organization behave very ethically toward an employee.

4. Describe a situation when *you behaved* very ethically toward an employee.

Step 6: Determine common themes.

Step 7: Draft a Code of Ethics.

Step 8: Compare to Other Codes and Modify.

Step 9: Compare to Other Groups and Modify.

Step 10: Code Alignment and Modify.

Step 11: Code Review and Modify.

Step 12: Code Communication Strategy.

Step 13: Code Revision.