



Personal and Organizational Ethics: Charting a Values-Based Course to Authenticity and Trust

Having a defined list of ethical principles is like having an organizational or personal set of Core Values. Too often, this is done for marketing purposes with compromises accepted when it comes to actual behavior.

This two-part online course will explore the responsibility that accompanies defining publicly how an organization or individual will behave and the risks of not taking this responsibility seriously. In addition, the class will discuss different approaches to decision making. These discussions will include critical thinking skills and the importance of objectivity as we wrestle with both conscious and subconscious decision making.

Session 1: Defining Ethical Behavior

Preparation:

As a participant, you'll be asked to watch a short recording which will outline the structure of the course and explain the preparation required prior to the first large group session. Review the NSPE Code of Ethics.

You'll also be given a copy of another profession's Code of Ethics and asked to consider similarities and differences prior to the first session.

Small group discussions will be held prior to the first live session. The groups will be based on which Code of Ethics participants receive. A short list of homework-based discussion questions will be sent out to each group. These small group discussions should last no more than 30 minutes.

Live Session: Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 1:30-2:30 PM Eastern

The following themes will be explored through an initial brief presentation and follow up discussions:

- What are the main components of the NSPE Engineers Code of Ethics?
- How does this compare to the defined ethical principles of other professions?
- How does the public perceive the profession of engineering and other professions when it comes to ethical behavior?
- What might affect the public's perception of the level of ethics within a profession?
- What is the difference between what is legal, what is moral, and what is ethical?

Session 2: Decision-Making Responsibilities that Accompany Defined Ethics or Core Values

Preparation:

Study your organization's Core Values. If your organization does not have a defined set of Core Values, consider what values you believe would best describe the culture of your organization. You may wish to meet with senior leadership to get their thoughts on this topic.

Watch a short recording which will cover some of the concepts fundamental to establishing meaningful Core Values. Identify two or three important decisions you have made recently (work related or not) and consider what "values" drove your decisions.

Small group discussions will be held prior to the second live session. A short list of homework-based discussion questions will be sent out to each group. These discussions should last no more than 30 minutes.

Live Session: Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 1:30-2:30 PM Eastern

The following themes will be explored through an initial brief presentation and follow up discussions:

- What are examples of highly visible organizations that publicly fell short of their published Core Values?
- Why is it important to go beyond just listing Core Values and make the effort to clearly define expected behaviors?
- What are some of the more common values that seem to have driven participants' recent decisions?
- Why making painful short-term decisions may be necessary to preserve long range values.