

# **ROLE OF CODE OF ETHICS IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE WORK CULTURE: A LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Ethical workplace cultures prioritize self-transcendence values such as care, compassion, honesty and the responsibility to uphold the rights of all persons and of nature. When we say that one organizational culture is “more ethical” than another, we refer to how adequately the organization’s values, systems and policies address the complex realities of its everyday operations. An ethically adequate workplace culture will leverage such essential. An ethically less adequate organization will leave gaps between its values and operations unaddressed and will leverage only a small portion of the tools that can shape ethical culture.*

*Workplaces in which employees at all levels strive toward self-transcending values and adhere to ethical obligations are, by definition, more ethical than those in which employees strive toward self-enhancing values or violate their ethical obligations. We probably all know people in our private lives who say one thing but do another. Workplace cultures are no different.*

*Aristotle famously counseled that rather than always seek the ideal, a virtuous person or culture will strive to attain the mean between too much and too little. Too much moral courage turns into self-righteousness. Too little moral courage turns into cowardice. Workplaces in which employees seek a balanced, pragmatic approach to living out their ethical values develop cultures of character that make ethics practical, attainable and adequate to the complex challenges of modern work. Perhaps the most important point for HR professionals to understand is that good work can only be sustained in an ethical workplace culture.*

*So, it is very important for the leader to ensure the ethical practices and follow the professional code of ethics like to work/act accordance with the highest standards of personal conduct, to ensure the acceptance of differences, to provide the right to participation and right to self determination, to*

*maintain confidentiality and privacy, ethical responsibility to colleagues, respect, fairness, and courtesy and to maintaining the integrity of the profession.*

**Key Words: Code of Ethics, Leadership, Sustainable Work Culture**

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## **1. Introduction:**

Profession is characterized by specialized body of knowledge and skills and area of operation, a code of ethics and a certain degree of organization among its members.

Every profession which deals with human body, human psyche and human relationship always has a code of conduct/ethics. Code of ethics are concerned about what is right (ethical behavior) and what is wrong (Unethical Behavior). Codes are a systematic collection of regulations and rules of procedure or conduct and are evolved over time during which the professions emerged in society. Code of ethics can be defined as a set of rules and regulations that should govern the conduct of the worker in his/ her relationships with his/ her clients, fellow professionals, colleagues, the agency and society in general.

The codes of ethics are formulated so that the behavior of the professional can be controlled and the society trust is not lost. In the field of medical the medical practitioners are pledge to prescribe only beneficial treatment, according to their abilities and judgment; lawyers have their own code like pleading before a judge and questioning witnesses. Bodies of fellow elected professional to oversee the implementation ensure the ethical behavior of fellow professional. The body alike Medical Council of India and Bar Counseling of India has power to censure the offending members, impose a fine on the members or even revoke the member's license to practice.

### **1.1 The Purposes of Code of Ethics:**

The professional code of ethics served the following major purposes.

1. The Code of ethics generally helps us to identify core values on which profession is based like importance of individuals, right to participation, individuality and confidentiality.

2. The professional Code of ethics summarizes broad ethical principles like principle of self awareness, non judgmental attitude, right to self determination that reflects the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide practice.
3. The Code is designed to help workers (practitioner) identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflictual or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The Code provides ethical standards (not to involve in unfair practices) to which the general public can hold the profession accountable.
5. The Code socializes (social into professional) practitioners new to the field, to mission, values, ethical principles and ethical standards.

## **2. Role of Ethics in Promoting Sustainable Business:**

In the present competitive global world, business and industry are not merely profit oriented institutions or concern with production or sale of goods and services but the social climate inside the organization, the work structure and the mental health of the employees is of equal concern along with social obligations.

In order to ensure the maximum contribution of each and every employee and for sustainable business it is important to ensure the psychical, social and mental fitness of human resources. The appropriate use of professional code of ethics' can help the organization to keep the morale of its employee's high along with positive mental health. By applying the professional core values and ethics the organization will be able to ensure social justice in its policies and practices. The ethical practices in an organization will promote the concept of service for all, the concept of natural /social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, Integrity of the person as a whole, competence/strength based practices.

### **3. Roles of Leadership in Promoting Sustainable Business Environment through Code of Ethics:**

#### **3.1 The leader should act in accordance with the highest standards of personal conduct:**

- A leader should maintain high standards of personal conduct when he/ she is dealing with others. High standards of conduct would mean that should' not engage in dishonest acts, cheating and deceit.
- He must follow the principle of self awareness & handle the situation/ situations with his/ her level of competence.
- In order to promote sustainable business environment it is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that his decision should be based on an impartial study of the facts and circumstances related to the people, situations, issues and circumstances.
- Being a professional/ leader while dealing with people/situations /issues /challenges if at any stage he feels that the things are beyond to his/her competence he/ she should make arrangements to transfer the case to a more competent professional.
- It is also expected from the leader to serve the organization with full loyalty and to the best of his/ her abilities.

#### **3.2 Acceptance of Differences:**

- It is the responsibility of the leader to follow the ethics of acceptance of every person. He needs to accept people/employees regardless of their personal qualities are important in the relationship.
- Being a leader he also needs to ensure that discriminatory and inhumane actions are not allowed in his/ her practice and within his/ her sphere of authority.
- He/she should be able to resist all harmful influences, the sources of which are within the organization or outside the organization; from colleagues, subordinates or superiors; from bureaucrats, politicians or anybody else who is in a position to do so.

### **3.3 Self Determination:**

- Self determination means giving the other people the necessary opportunities, support, confidence and knowledge to make decisions that will affect his/ her life.
- The leader should keep in mind the rights of the person his/ her socio-cultural situation and other relevant facts that may affect him while making decisions for the client.

### **3.4 Confidentiality and Privacy:**

- The leader should respect the privacy and hold in confidence all information obtained during the course of professional service.
- Information kept in records should be carefully maintained and access to these records should be restricted.
- When information has to be shared with others, the leader should tell the concern people about it and seek his/her consent.
- The people's feelings and emotions regarding this should be respected and action may be taken accordingly.

### **3.5 Ethical Responsibility to Colleagues Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy:**

- In order to promote sustainable work environment the leader should treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. He also has ethical responsibility to employers and employing organisations and he should adhere to rules and regulations of the employing agencies.
- Unethical practices in the agency will have to be dealt according to the seriousness of the offense, its adverse effect on the otherss and on with society.
- In no circumstances leader should not be the part of any wrong- doings done by the agency even if he/ she is employed by that agency.

### **3.6 Maintaining the Integrity of the Profession:**

- The leader should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge and mission of the profession.
- He should remember that he/ she is part of a larger community of professionals and his/her actions will positively or negatively affect the profession and its professionals.
- He should not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications and abilities.
- He should not misrepresent facts regarding the clients even when it seems to benefit them.

### **3.7 Importance of Individual:**

1. Being a leader in order to ensure the sustainable business environment it is very important to consider the value of each and every person in the organization because each and every person is contributing in one or another way. The worth and dignity of the individuals must be respected and there must be an acceptance of every person.

### **3.7 Right to equal participation/opportunity to participate:**

2. To great extent sustainability of the business depends upon the involvement of the people in decision making processes. It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure the maximum people participation in decision making and their contribution must be acknowledged.

## **4. Conclusion:**

Ethics and the values an organization demonstrates in its goals, policies and practices are the heart of any workplace culture. The quality of experience in an organization depends on the quality of its culture whether we are employees, customers or clients, a positive culture enlivens and enriches our experience of a firm and a negative culture diminishes it.

We should not be surprised by the link between ethical workplace culture and profit. Researchers have found that an organization's culture is the strongest predictor of how much market value

that firm will create for every dollar invested by shareholders. Businesses that have ethical workplace cultures outperform their competitors and peers in all the categories that matter.

The evidence indicates that a positive workplace culture predicts shareholder value by enabling superior value creation. The ethics of a firm's culture plays a significant role in creating and sustaining value.

In order to create sustainable work culture it is very important for the leader to follow the code of ethics and values in his practices, the importance of individual should be valued by giving the right to participation and self determination along with to consider the worth and dignity of the person and confidentiality must be ensured.

If workers believe that their organization and its leaders are fair, respectful and trustworthy and that the organization's values and practices are ethically justified, they will meet or exceed expectations. HR professionals can shape their practices to reflect self-transcending values and thus set the stage for employees to meet the goals of an ethical workplace.

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