**UNIT 3:Ethics in Management:**

Semester- IV (UG)

Subject- Business Ethics (Module-II)

Topic-UNIT – 3 (Ethics in Workplace)

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Lecture no-2

**Business ethics** is a form of applied ethics or professional ethics that examines ethical principles and moral or ethical problems that arise in a business environment. It applies to all aspects of business conduct and is relevant to the conduct of individuals and entire organizations. (Business Ethics- Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy). A work ethic is a set of values based on the ideals of hard work and discipline. Building a reliable work ethic means training yourself to follow these values. Training yourself so that work becomes automatic instead of a struggle.

**Foundations of Ethics in Workplace:**

A successful business depends on the trust of various parties—employees, managers, executives, customers, suppliers, and even competitors. Six ethical terms form the foundation of business in general and ethics in workplace in particular:

* Ethics
* Values
* Morals
* Integrity
* Character
* Laws

Ethics in work place is regarded as the application of moral principles, standard way of behaving or set of values regarding proper conduct in workplace as individuals and as a member of a group. Employees of an organization should be proved themselves to be honest and loyal to the organisation. Every employee of the organization should respect each other and obey the direction and advice of their superiors. There should be good relation between employee-employee, employee-employer and employee-supervisor. Workplace ethics are codes of conduct that influence the development of an ethical culture within the workplace. Going beyond what is considered legal in the area where the business operates, they inspire communication between employees, allow for respect to be extended to each person within the organization, and promote customer relationships that are based on honesty and integrity. It is important to remember that workplace ethics are shaped by two important factors- Workplace policy and workplace ethics and behaviour.

**Workplace policy** must be in harmony with all laws and regulations that are currently in force in the jurisdiction where the business operates. This helps to ensure that basic ethics preclude any pressure or coercion to engage in actions that are considered to be illegal, promote discrimination in the workplace, support unfair hiring and firing practices, or allow wages to be set that are below the minimum legal standards for the area.

**Workplace ethics and behaviour** are a crucial part of employment, as both are aspects that can assist a company in its efforts to be profitable. In fact, ethics and behaviour are just as important to most companies as performance as high morale and teamwork are two ingredients for success. Every business in every industry has certain guidelines to which its employees must adhere, and frequently outline such aspects in employee handbooks.

**Behaviour**

All companies specify what is acceptable behaviour, and what is not, when hiring an employee. Many even summarize expected conduct in job descriptions or during the interview process. Behaviour guidelines typically address topics, such as harassment, work attire and language. Workers who don’t follow codes of conduct may receive written and verbal warnings, and ultimately be fired.

**Integrity**

A key component to workplace ethics and behaviour is integrity, or being honest and doing the right thing at all times. For example, health care employees who work with mentally or physically challenged patients must possess a high degree of integrity, as those who manage and work primarily with money. Workers with integrity also avoid gossip and sneakiness while on the job. According to [Robert Shaw](https://cmoe.com/results-integrity-concern-level-of-trust/), you can earn a certain level of trust if you are able to achieve results while demonstrating concern for others and acting with integrity the whole time. Hence, the formula:

Results + Integrity + Concern = Level of Trust

Acting with integrity, in this context, also means behaving in a consistent manner.

**Accountability**

Taking responsibility for your actions is another major factor when it comes to workplace ethics and behaviour. That means showing up on scheduled workdays, as well as arriving on time and putting in an honest effort while on the job. Workers who exhibit accountability are honest when things go wrong, then work toward a resolution while remaining professional all the while.

**Teamwork**

A vital aspect of the workplace is working well with others. That includes everyone from peers to supervisors to customers. While not all employees will always like each other, they do need to set aside their personal or even work-related differences to reach a larger goal. In many instances, those who are not considered “team players” can face demotion or even termination. On the other hand, those who work well with others often can advance on that aspect alone, with teamwork sometimes even outweighing performance.

**Commitment**

Ethical and behavioural guidelines in the workplace often place a high amount of importance on dedication. Although possessing the necessary skills is essential, a strong work ethic and positive attitude toward the job can carry you a long way. Plus, dedication is often viewed in the business world as “contagious,” meaning employees who give a strong effort can often inspire their co-workers to do the same.

**Importance of Workplace Ethics:**

**Workplace ethics ensures positive ambience at the workplace**. Workplace ethics leads to happy and satisfied employees who enjoy coming to work rather than treating it as a mere source of burden. Employees also develop a feeling of loyalty and attachment towards the organization.

Organizations need to have fool-proof systems to measure the performances of individuals. Appraisal system needs to be designed keeping in mind employee’s performance throughout the year and his/her career growth. Periodic reviews are essential. It is mandatory for superiors to know what their subordinates are up to. Managers need to know who all are going on the right track and who all need that extra push. **Workplace ethics ensures management guides and mentors their employees well**. Appraisal and salary hikes should not happen just for the name sake. Workplace ethics is important as it enables management to treat all employees as equal and think from their perspective as well. Employees must have a say in their appraisal system. Transparency is essential.

An employee is bound to move on after a year or so if he/she is not appreciated and rewarded suitably. It is indeed the organization’s loss when employees after being trained quit and move on. Employees change primarily because of two reasons - Career growth and monetary benefits. Management needs to make employees feel secure about their job and career. Unnecessary favouritism is against workplace ethics. If you favour anyone just because he is your relative, the other team members are bound to feel de-motivated and thus start looking for new opportunities. An individual’s output throughout the year should decide his/her increment.

Organizations need to stand by their employees even at the times of crisis.

**Benefits of Managing Ethics in the Workplace**

1. Attention to business ethics has substantially improved society.
2. Ethics programs help maintain a moral course in turbulent times.
3. Ethics programs cultivate strong teamwork and productivity.
4. Ethics programs support employee growth and meaning.
5. Ethics programs are an insurance policy -- they help ensure that policies are legal.
6. Ethics programs help avoid criminal acts “of omission” and can lower fines.
7. Ethics programs help manage values associated with quality management, strategic planning and diversity management -- this benefit needs far more attention.
8. Ethics programs promote a strong public image.

**Steps Towards Better Work Ethics:**

1. **Attendance:**

Attendance and punctuality often have a large impact on individual and team success. Tardiness or absenteeism can also profoundly impact job performance and retention. To maintain good attendance:

* Make work a high priority
* Know the schedule
* Make use of an ALARM clock
* Get enough sleep
* Arrange the transportation
* Inform supervisor of an absence

1. **Character:**

An employer expects employees to work together toward achieving the objectives of the Company. The wise employee who is interested in having a good relationship with an employer will try to help the employer to achieve success. Thus employer excepts employees to develop certain desirable traits that will help them to perform their jobs well so that the company can succeed. Some of these traits include the following:

* Loyalty
* Honesty
* Trustworthiness
* Dependability
* Reliability
* Initiative
* Self-discipline
* Self-responsibility

#### Teamwork:

#### It is vital that employees work as a team. Teamwork involves the following aspects:

#### Respecting the rights of others

#### Being a team worker

#### Being cooperative

#### Being assertive

#### Displaying a customer service attitude

#### Seeking opportunities for continuous learning

#### Demonstrating mannerly behaviour

#### Respecting confidentiality

#### Appearance: A person makes their first impression of someone in three seconds.

#### Attitude:

#### It is very important to demonstrate a positive attitude, appear self confident, and have realistic expectations for self. Developing and maintaining a positive attitude involves setting realistic expectations for ourselves at school and at work. These goals should be challenging, but obtainable.

#### Productivity:

#### In order to be a productive student and employee, a person must follow safety procedures, conserve materials, keep the work area neat and clean and follow directions properly.

#### Organizational skills:

#### Employers consider effective time management and organizational skills as good work habits. To begin managing wisely the time you spend at work, to prepare for assignments at home, and to manage the life at home and work simultaneously, it is needed to know and to put into practice some good time management techniques.

#### Communication:

#### Communication whether it is verbal or nonverbal must be clear, to the point, empathetic, and one must keep in mind that everyone must always treat others as they would like others to treat others.

#### Cooperation:

#### Involves developing good working relationships, following the chain of command, good at conflict management, and being a good problem solver.

#### Practice punctuality.

#### Develop professionalism.

#### Cultivate self-discipline.

#### Use time wisely

#### Stay balanced

#### Make work a priority.

#### Set aside time specifically for work.

#### Know your distractions, and minimize them when working.

#### Create the Right Environment That Encourages a Good Work Ethic

#### Transform a Moment into a Movement

#### **Promote Transparency Within the Workplace**

#### Clearly Identify Daily Priorities

#### Encourage Employees to Work Smart, Not Hard

#### Deliver Regular Feedback, Good and Bad

#### Align Your Business’ Purpose with Your Core Identity

#### Create a Culture of Continuous Improvement

#### Acknowledge and Reward Enthusiasm

#### Keep Employees Up to Date on Company Successes

#### Give Your Employees the Opportunity to Contribute

#### References:

1. “Entrepreneurship Development and Business Ethics” -by Dr. Buddhadeb Chandra and Dr Bhaskar Biswas.
2. “Workplace Ethics and Value System” – By Dr S K Prasad ,BNM Institute of Technology.