



Your Personal Daily Ethical Audit

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The moment your stomach gets that twinge about what you are doing or planning to do, or someone else in your company is starting or plans to start doing, stop and ask yourself:

1. What is the ideal ethical behavior here?
2. How are ethical questions being surfaced and addressed?
3. What is remaining unsaid, ignored, actually covered up?
4. When will leaders address the ethical expectations of others?
5. Is the profit motive in balance with your own ethical expectations?

ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING GUIDE HELPS RESOLVE ETHICAL DILEMMAS

By Kathy R. Fitzpatrick, JD, APR, Former Member BEPS
On PRSA.org

For public relations and other professionals, ethical dilemmas arise when responsibilities and loyalties conflict and a decision about the appropriate – i.e., ethical – course of action must be made. Often, a choice is required among actions that meet competing obligations. For example, when might the obligation to serve the public interest override loyalty to clients? When does a particular stakeholder's interest take priority over an employer's interest? In other words, just exactly what is "responsible advocacy"? Apply these questions to sort things out:

1. Define the specific ethical issue/conflict.
2. Identify internal/external factors (e.g., legal, political, social, economic) that may influence the decision.
3. Identify key values.
4. Identify the parties who will be affected by the decision and define the public relations professional's obligation to each.
5. Select ethical principles to guide the decision-making process.
6. Make a decision and justify it.