

Instructor's Guide

ETHICS AT WORK *Doing the Right Thing on the Job*

Description:

Is it okay to give your friends free food at the restaurant where you work? Or bring home supplies from the office? Are these practices just as wrong as stealing from the proverbial cash drawer? That's what this video explores, by looking at the ins and outs of ethical behavior in today's work environment. From extended lunches to computer hacking to sexual harassment, we discuss the fine lines of business ethics with employers, employees and workplace professionals.

Grades 7-adult. 21-minutes.

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Activity 1 – DOING THE RIGHT THING!

Name 5 tips you learned in the video about doing the right thing on the job.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Activity 2 – “JUST THIS ONCE”

The video referred to “just this once” thinking in relation to unethical behavior. Describe what this means and give one example.

Activity 3 – WHAT’S YOUR DILEMMA?

Directions: Divide the group into teams of 4 or 5. Select a “leader” to facilitate and keep the discussion moving along. Ask teams to discuss ways to handle each dilemma.

Discuss: Which are NEVER acceptable? Is it EVER right? When is it wrong and why?

- Receiving too much money in your paycheck.
- Seeing a co-worker take money from the cash register.
- Giving free food to friends at a restaurant where you work.
- Giving your employee discount to a friend.
- Taking supplies from the company where you work.
- Using company e-mail.

Activity 4 – HOW ETHICAL ARE YOU?

The following words are used to describe persons who exhibit ethical behavior. Circle those that identify YOU and write a SENTENCE for each word that describes YOU.

CHARACTER _____

ATTITUDE _____

VALUES _____

MORALS _____

SELF-ESTEEM _____

INTEGRITY _____

SUCCESS _____

Activity 5 – COMPANY POLICIES

Optional Activity

Directions: Have students/participants investigate various companies in your area regarding their ethics and policies related to behavior on the job or even after hours. Learn what is acceptable and what isn't; what is grounds for termination? Have class report their findings back to the rest of the group. Discuss any policies that they feel are irregular.

Answer Key:

Activity 1: Doing the Right Thing (there are numerous answers, such as)
Avoid “just this once” thinking; you might get caught! It can get out of hand.
Real friends won’t ask you to do something dishonest.
Instead of trying not to get caught, don’t do it in the first place.
Take responsibility for your behavior on the job.
Pull your weight; be a team player.
Don’t take office supplies or make copies without permission.
Using email at work may be against company policy.

Activity 2: Just This Once!

An employee decides to do something unethical just one time, thinking s/he will get away with it. When they DO get away with it, it’s easier to do it again...and risk getting caught. Examples: taking home supplies or making copies at work or giving free food to a friend.

Activity 3: What’s Your Dilemma?

Team responses will be individual based upon their own values, morals and character. Some may even debate whether or not a behavior is really unethical, such as using email at work for personal use.

Activity 4: How Ethical Are You?

Words circled will depend on the individual. Examples of sentences to describe an ethical person are: (If students don’t have jobs, use sentences referring to real-life.)

CHARACTER: My good *character* keeps me from giving food to my friends where I work.

ATTITUDE: I have a positive *attitude* and show ethical behavior on the job.

VALUES: My strong family *values* keep me from working overtime on the weekends.

MORALS: Dating a co-worker is not acceptable *moral* behavior.

SELF-ESTEEM: I have great *self-esteem* because I know right from wrong.

INTEGRITY: I have *integrity* and would never lie to my boss.

SUCCESS: Ethical behavior will help me be a *success* one day.

Activity 5: Company Policies

Responses will vary depending upon the companies selected to survey. This could be an interesting topic for a guest speaker from a large corporation in your community. Some may provide a copy of their policies and procedures manual.

