

ASSIGNMENT ON

CASE STUDIES

UBA - 2892 Professional Ethics
And Legal Practices.

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HYATT Regency Walkway Collapse -

Ethical Analysis

Engineering Judgment vs Management

Shortcuts.

Background of the incident.

→ The Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kansas City (USA) had suspended walkways in its atrium. During construction, a design change was made from a single rod system, without proper structural re-analysis.

on July 17, 1981, the walkways collapsed, killing 114 people and injuring over 200. It remains one of the deadliest structural failures in U.S History.

Ethical values violated [based on professional Ethics]

a) Public Safety and welfare.

Most important ethical violation. Engineers must prioritize safety above all. This value was ignored, leading to massive loss of life.

b) Competence and Due Diligence.

Engineers failed to:

Double check the required design.

Follow standard structural analysis

procedures.

c) Honesty and Integrity

There was:

Inadequate communication.

Failure to report design concerns.

This breaks the ethical requirement to be truthful and transparent.

- Engineering Short Judgement [have been done]
- Perform a complete structural analysis when design changes are made.
 - Ensure that the safety factor is maintained
 - Communicate clearly between designers, contractors, and engineers
 - Prioritize public safety over convenience, cost, or deadlines.
- Management shortcuts [what actually happened]
- The contractor proposed the bid change to simplify fabrication.
 - The engineering firm approved the change without verifying structural strength.
 - Poor communication between project stakeholders.

a) Responsibility and Accountability.

Engineers are responsible for the consequences of their decisions. By approving unsafe changes, they violated their duty of professional responsibility.

Conclusion :

The Hyatt Regency walkway collapse is a direct example of how violating ethics - especially public safety, competence, responsibility, and honesty - can lead to catastrophic results.

Engineering judgment must always override management shortcuts. When ethics fail, engineering fails.