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Ethics Paper

In the programming field of becoming a software developer a person will face many

challenges that will test the person's moral integrity as well as their spiritual fortitude. One of the

main issues that young programmer's face in wide field of software development is dishonesty,

whether it be claiming someone else's code as one's own or marketing one's code as doing more

than what it is designed for.

As a young programmer, one of the most difficult aspects of programming is the

development of code that is free of plagiarism. When developing code, it is only natural to get

help when stuck. Working with a team is an essential component of programming and being part

of a team is necessary when working on large projects. However, it is never ok to copy code

from a fellow team member or code found online and claim it as one's own. As stated in the

ACM code of ethics, "Honesty is an essential component of trustworthiness." When presenting

code, the code should be yours alone and with any outside sources such as teammates or

resources online cited accordingly and cleared with the figure presiding over the development of

the project. The adage "Trust is a fragile thing" rings very true in many aspects of life, but in

coding especially. If it is found out that copied code was presented and claimed as one's own

then marketed to the public, the legal ramifications involved would become insurmountable and

likely ruin the reputation of the coder forever, especially if the code was for large company.

Once a coder's reputation for trustworthiness has been ruined, it becomes nearly impossible to

regain that trust with employers which in turn makes finding work an extreme difficulty, whether it be in the coding field or another job entirely. This is not only true for copying code, but as well as team projects that face very specific deadlines. As coders, teamwork is an essential part when working on large projects, and each team member is responsible for completing the task assigned to them for the whole project to come together. If one team member falls behind, but states that everything is going as planned, the entire project suffers along with the trustworthiness and reputation of the coder involved. When one person does not complete the area of code assigned, the lie not only hurts them, but causes the project to become delayed consequently ruining the company's reputation along with the reputation of the coders involved with the project as well. This exact situation is explained in the IEEE code of Ethics in point 3 stating "We, the members of the IEEE […] herby commit ourselves to the highest ethical and professional conduct and agree: […] to be honest and realistic in stating claims or estimates based on available data[.]"

When trying to overcome this challenge of dishonesty and it is imperative that one grounds his actions and motivation in the word of God remembering the promises that God has given. The verse Proverbs 16:3 reminds us to "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans." When grounded in the Lord we are able to have a firm foundation so that one can have faith that their actions will be guided by the Lord and that they will not falter, not allowing themselves to resort to the unrighteous methods such as plagiarism and dishonesty. Another verse to reference when trying to overcome dishonesty is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all this through Christ who gives me strength." This is yet another reassurance that when grounded in Christ, one is able to do everything required of him and that God will guide them through the trials and tribulations ahead.

I feel personally prepared to overcome the challenges ahead of me as I know that through hardship, Christ will be there to guide me through the difficulty and help me resist the temptation that plagiarism and dishonesty present. I know that in the future I will have to learn to pray over my projects and the decisions that I will be taking as they will impact the performance of not only my team, but the employer that I am under. The help of my team members on projects will be another essential part of my future as a programmer and leaning on and trusting them will be a large part of my life and the future as a young programmer in the ocean of software development.

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