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Who can be trusted to write code?

The tech industry is rapidly evolving and becoming more complex by making everyone's life simpler. This produces the need for more programmers every year. With thousands of programmers and millions of lines of code, there are a lot of ethical concerns within the field of programming. As I will soon embark upon my own journey into this fast-paced industry, I am concerned with the ethical dilemma of protecting and using people's personal information.

As a programmer, it will be my job to protect and maintain the security of people's personal information and data. I will be in control of how it is used and who has access to it. If I am to be working under some corporation and taking orders from a boss of mine, I need to ensure that what I am told to do is ethical and in no way misuses any information. Therefore, it is important that I stay well informed about any projects that are going on and ask the necessary questions to ensure that I know what my code will be used for because "…the complexity of software projects creates a situation in which programmers may also justify or hide unethical behavior" (Sojer). This is why it is important that I maintain awareness and not allow myself to be caught up in between any ethical violations.

One of the most beautiful things about coding is that there are unlimited capabilities that involve lots of decision-making. The decision we make as programmers can have a dramatic

effect so "it needs to be questioned whether the assessment of such decision-making is necessary and expedient after all" (Kochupillai). This is because one minor mistake could cause a whole lot of problems not just for myself but also for the company I may be working for. I propose the best way to prepare for a situation in which someone is responsible for the usage and maintenance of important data is to set up some precautions. These could include having someone look over the work and ensuring that people only have access to information that they need to have in order to do their job effectively. These precautions are particularly important in today's day in age because "many of the questionable activities now going on are not merely ethical issues, but violations of civil or criminal law" (Dakin). As we see on the news time and time again, the CEOs of big tech companies are constantly at hearings with the U.S. Senate about how they share personal information because their decisions have implications that can lead to imprisonment and fines.

Personally, I feel I have a decent grasp of the importance of maintaining and protecting people's personal information and the implications it can have on others and me. With that being said, I do feel like there is still a lot of information left for me to learn. I definitely need real experience within the field to get a much better idea of how these dilemmas will affect the way I work or how they will affect the entire industry moving forward. In order for me to be prepared, I will make sure I stay informed on policies and news stories related to ethics within my field. I will also make sure that if I am even responsible for protecting information and I properly follow all guidelines and rules established by the company that I may work for. If I have any concerns with the policies, then I will definitely ask questions and clarify them.

The ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct principle 1.2 states, "Avoiding harm begins with the careful consideration of potential impacts on all those affected by decisions." I

strongly believe that this coincides with the bible verse, "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:23 NIV). This bible verse embodies the belief that everything we do should respect others and be in the best interest of everyone. What both the ACM and the bible want us to understand is that there can be major consequences to the decision we make, and we must do our absolute best to ensure that the right thing is done every time.

As the IEEE Code of Ethics states, "to treat all persons fairly and with respect, and to not engage in discrimination based on characteristics such as race, religion, gender…." This principle is a foundation for providing equal opportunity and creating a fair environment for others under all circumstances. This strongly relates to Bible when it says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (Eph. 4:29 NIV). This verse is explaining the importance of building people up rather than tearing them down. That is what both the IEEE and Ephesians 4:29 are trying to help us understand. It is essential that programmers must not create an unfair environment or opportunity for people.

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