

PPIT Assignment 1

* The 1996 Mount Everest Climbing Disaster

- Professional Practices violated

The climbing disaster of 1996 on Mount Everest was one of the deadliest events in mountaineering history. Eight climbers died just in a few days. On surface it looks like the cause was only bad weather and natural conditions. But when studied, I see that many professional practices were broken and lot of ethical mistakes also happened.

Obsession with Summit and Narrow Goal

The biggest violation was how the main focus became only to reach the summit. Guides and clients both forgot the golden rule "getting to the top is optional, getting down is mandatory".

Moral Right Violated: Every client had right to safety and survival, but leaders put summit glory above it.

Professional duty Ignored: Turnaround time was 2pm, but climbers still moved up 2pm at 3pm and even 4pm. despite low oxygen and incoming storm.

This was a clear ethical lapse because life must come before Pride.

Directive Leadership and loss of Independent Judgment

leaders like Rob Hall and Scott Fischer were famous guides, but their leadership was too controlling. Climbers depend totally on them and do not make their own choices. Example: Beck Weathers waited for Hall's permission to move, even when it was dangerous. He could have gone down earlier but he obeyed blindly.

Moral Aspect: A leader should guide, not control every decision in life-death situations.

Professional Practice Violated: leader must empower team to adapt when condition change. Here the principle of shared responsibility is broken.

Treating complex Problem as Simple One

Everest is a complex system, weather, bottle neck oxygen shortage. But leaders acted like it was just math: hours up + hours down.

Because ropes were not fixed early, teams wasted hours waiting. Traffic jam at Hillary step delayed everyone. Still they pushed ahead blindly.

Violation of Professional Standards: Risk assessments and continuous re-evaluation was missing.

Ethical mistakes: Guides gave false sense of "guaranteed success" to clients.

Commercialization - Conflict between Money and Ethics

By 1996 Everest became business. Client paid 60,000 dollars to guiding companies. This created pressure for "100% summit success". Even inexperienced climbers were accepted because of money.

Example: Taiwanese team left a weak climber behind so leader could continue.

Moral Rights Ignored: Every climber had right to protection, but money came first.

Professional Code Breached: Life of members was risked for fame and financial interest.

Poor Communication and weak Coordination

Many climbers had no radios. Teams from New Zealand, USA, and Taiwan mixed on one route, causing jam. If communication and coordination was better, time and lives could be saved.

Professional Practice Violated: Reliable communication and planning are mandatory in extreme missions.

Moral Duty Ignored: To keep everyone informed and Safe

Legal vs Moral Angle

Moral wrongs: Ignoring safety, leaving weak climbers, breaking turnaround rule. These may not break written law but are serious breaches of ethics.

Legal wrongs: Accepting clients who were not qualified can be seen like "giving degrees to unqualified students".

Conclusion

The 1996 Everest disaster was not only storm or fate, but also human mistakes and broken professional codes. Summit obsession, directive leadership, poor risk assessment, commercialization and weak communication ~~showed~~ all showed professional and ethical lapses.