

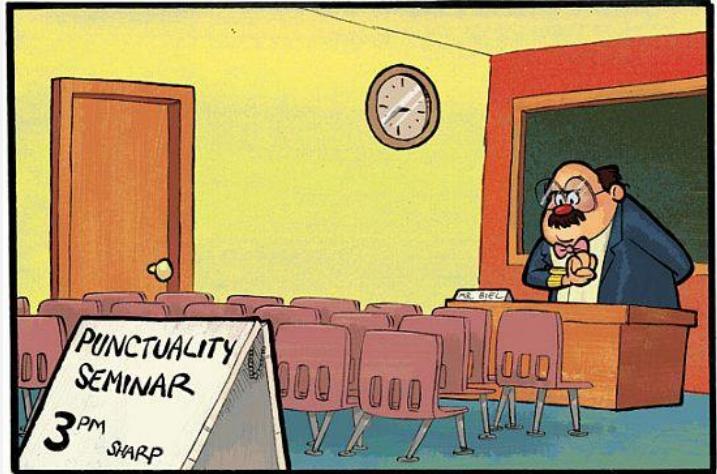
# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Pubudu Liyanage

UCSC



# GROUND RULES





# Active Listening Benefits

Active listening is a vital communication skill

## ● Improved Productivity

Improves productivity by reducing misunderstandings & promoting clearer communication.

## ● Reduced conflict

Helps prevent conflicts by promoting better understanding and respect.

## ● Improved relationships

Promotes empathy and understanding, which leads to stronger relationships.

## ● Active Listening

A process of fully concentrating on, understanding, and responding to the message

## ● Better understanding

Active listening helps you comprehend the speaker's message accurately.

## ● Enhanced problem-solving

Active listening helps identify and address problems more effectively.

## ● Build trust

Proper communication through active listening helps in building trust.

# COURSE OBJECTIVE

- Identify ethical issues in the employment, development and application of computing technology.
- Get a broader understanding of professional ethics, contemporary issues, entrepreneurship, communications, and career planning.
- Various topics related to the ethical and social impact of computing technology and the responsibilities that IT Professionals have in shaping this technology and its applications.
- Focus on initial employment, professional practice leadership, the broad education necessary to understand
  - the impact of employment and technological solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context
  - professional, ethical, legal, security and social issues in information technology.

*The ideal engineer is a composite ...*

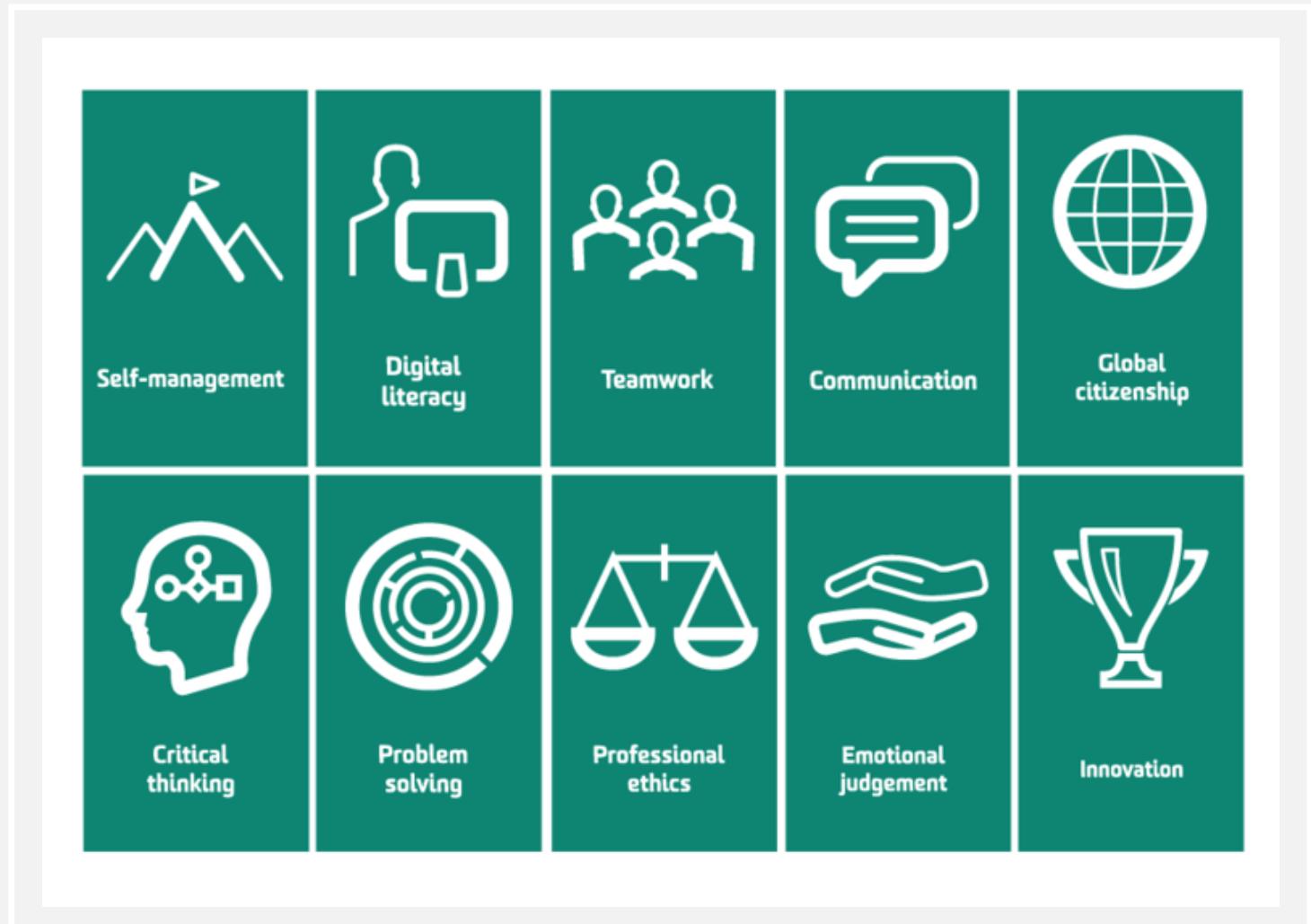
*He is not a scientist,*

*he is not a mathematician,*

*he is not a sociologist or a writer;*

*but he may use the knowledge and  
techniques of any or all of these  
disciplines in solving engineering  
problems.*

*- Nathan W. Dougherty*



# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE CONTEXT

- Initial employment
- Advance in responsibilities
- Demonstrate leadership
- An understanding of professional and ethical responsibility
- The broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context
- A recognition of the need for, and an ability to engage in life-long learning
- A knowledge of contemporary issues
- An understanding of professional, ethical, legal, security and social issues and responsibilities
- An ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences
- An ability to analyze the local and global impact of computing on individuals, organizations, and society
- Recognition of the need for and an ability to engage in continuing professional Development





# PROFESSIONAL

- A professional is a member of a profession or any person who works in a specified professional activity.
- The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform their specific role within that profession.
- In addition, most professionals are subject to strict codes of conduct, enshrining rigorous ethical and moral obligations.
- Professional standards of practice and ethics for a particular field are typically agreed upon and maintained through widely recognized professional associations, such as the IEEE.
- Some definitions of "professional" limit this term to those professions that serve some important aspect of public interest and the general good of society.

# FULLY DEVELOPED PROFESSION

- A fully developed profession has a well-organized infrastructure for certifying new members and supporting those who already belong to the profession.
  - Accreditation—assures that the formal course work meets the standards of the profession
  - Skills development—activities that provide candidates with the opportunity to gain practical skills needed to practice the profession
  - Certification—process by which candidates are evaluated to determine their readiness to enter the profession
  - Licensing—the process giving candidates the legal right to practice the profession
  - Professional development—formal course work completed by professionals in order to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills
  - Code of ethics—mechanism by which a profession ensures that its members use their knowledge and skills for the benefit of society
  - Professional society—organization promoting the welfare of the profession, typically consisting of most, if not all, members of the profession

# FULLY DEVELOPED PROFESSION

- Intellectual property and copyright
- Privacy and privacy laws
- Ethical theories: responsibility, accountability and liability
- Legal obligations and liabilities of IT Professionals
- IT Professional Code of Conduct



## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- Professional practice is a term which usually refers to the conduct as well as the work of someone from a specific profession.
- They are usually supervised by professional bodies that may recognize educational establishments and experienced professionals. Qualification may be acknowledged by the title 'member of...', 'certified', 'fellow', and so on.
- These professional bodies set standards of morals, performance, competency, insurance, training and so on that must be met to endure within the profession.

# SOCIETY



- People participating in continuous social connection, or a broad social group occupying the same social or spatial territory, normally exposed to the same political power and cultural standards that are dominant
- Cooperation among individuals helps promote the common good.
- However, people in a society also compete with each other.



- A group of people with a common characteristic, common or shared values or interest living together within a larger society.
- Communities prohibit certain actions and make other actions obligatory.
- Those who do not conform to these prohibitions and obligations can be punished.

# SOCIETY VS COMMUNITY

## SOCIETY VERSUS COMMUNITY

### SOCIETY

A group of people with a common territory and culture, interacting with one another

Members are diverse since it consists of many different communities

Interactions among members is a core element since it determines the connection between vast networks of people

There is a high diversity among members; hence, it is heterogeneous

Smaller than society

Locality is not defined, and it is not an essential element

### COMMUNITY

A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common

Members necessarily share common characteristics among each other

Interactions among members happen involuntarily since these people share many things in common

There is minimum diversity; hence, it is rather homogenous

Larger than a community

Definite locality becomes an essential factor, and it provides a definite shape



## RESPONSIBILITY OF A COMMUNITY MEMBER

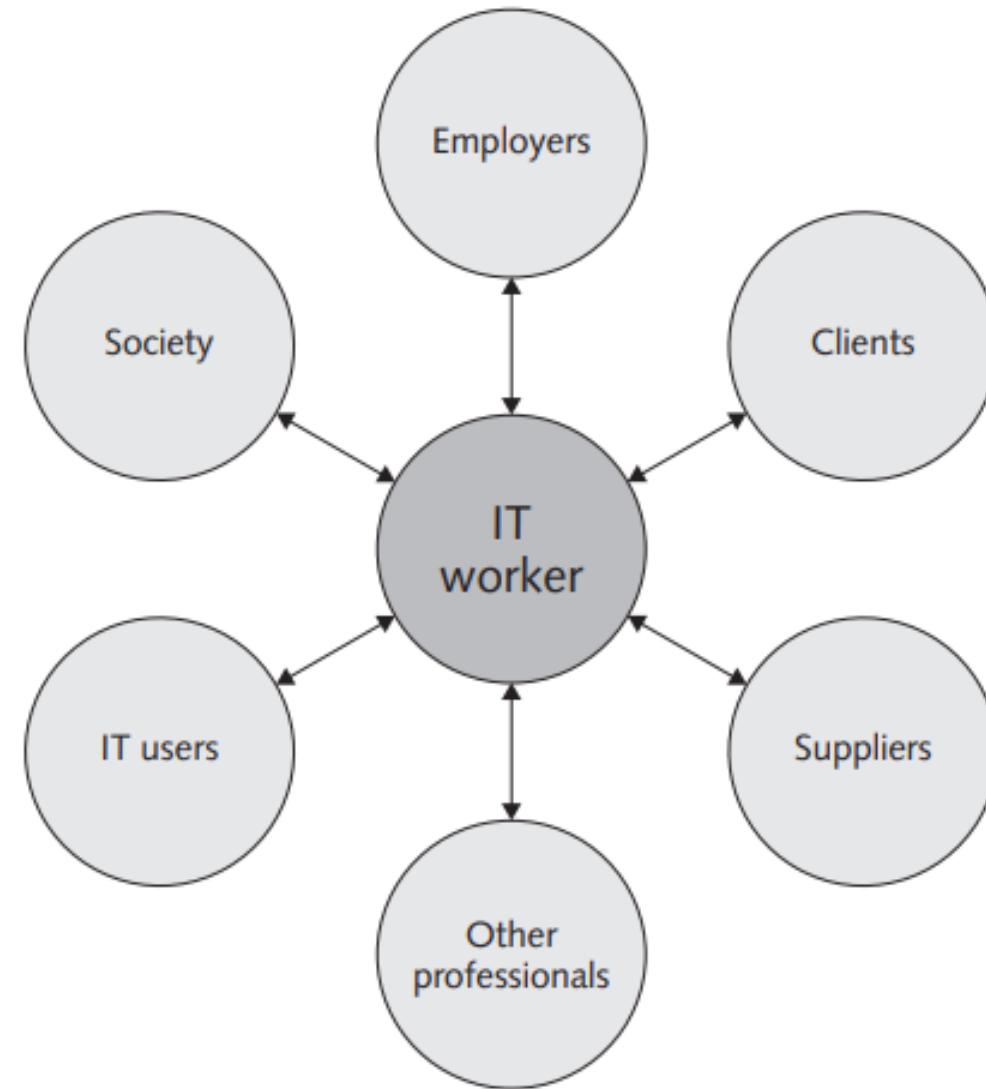
Responsible community members take the needs and desires of other people into account when they make decisions.

They recognize that virtually everybody shares the “core values” of life, happiness, and the ability to accomplish goals.

People who respect only their own needs and desires are taking the selfish point of view.

Moving to the “ethical point of view” requires a decision that other people and their core values are also worthy of respect.

# IT EMPLOYEE



## SOFTWARE ENGINEER ETHICS - EXAMPLE

### PRINCIPLE 2: CLIENT AND EMPLOYER

Software engineers shall act in a manner that is in the best interests of their client and employer, consistent with the public interest. In particular, software engineers shall, as appropriate:

- 2.01 Provide service in their areas of competence, being honest and forthright about any limitations of their experience and education.
- 2.02 Not knowingly use software that is obtained or retained either illegally or unethically.
- 2.03 Use the property of a client or employer only in ways properly authorized, and with the client's or employer's knowledge and consent.



**FIGURE 9.3** Software engineers shall not knowingly use software that is obtained or retained either illegally or unethically (clause 2.02).

# WHY PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT & ETHICS

**TABLE 1-1** Most common forms of employee misconduct

Type of employee misconduct	Percent of surveyed employees observing this behavior
Misuse of company time	33%
Abusive behavior	21%
Lying to employees	20%
Company resource abuse	20%
Violating company Internet-use policies	16%
Discrimination	15%
Conflicts of interest	15%
Inappropriate social networking	14%
Health or safety violations	13%
Lying to outside stakeholders	12%
Stealing	12%
Falsifying time reports or hours worked	12%

Source Line: Ethics Resource Center, "2011 National Business Ethics Survey: Workplace Ethics in Transition," © 2011, [www.ethics.org/nbes/files/FinalNBES-web.pdf](http://www.ethics.org/nbes/files/FinalNBES-web.pdf).

# PHISHING

- Phishing is the act of fraudulently using email to try to get the recipient to reveal personal data.
- In a phishing scam, con artists send legitimate-looking emails urging the recipient to take action to avoid a negative consequence or to receive a reward.
- The requested action may involve clicking on a link to a Web site or opening an email attachment.
- These emails, lead consumers to counterfeit Web sites designed to trick them into divulging personal data.



Dear valued customer of TrustedBank,

We have received notice that you have recently attempted to withdraw the following amount from your checking account while in another country: \$135.25.

If this information is not correct, someone unknown may have access to your account. As a safety measure, please visit our website via the link below to verify your personal information:

<http://www.trustedbank.com/general/custverifyinfo.asp>

Once you have done this, our fraud department will work to resolve this discrepancy. We are happy you have chosen us to do business with.

Thank you,  
TrustedBank

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# RESUME FALSEHOOD OR EXAGGERATION

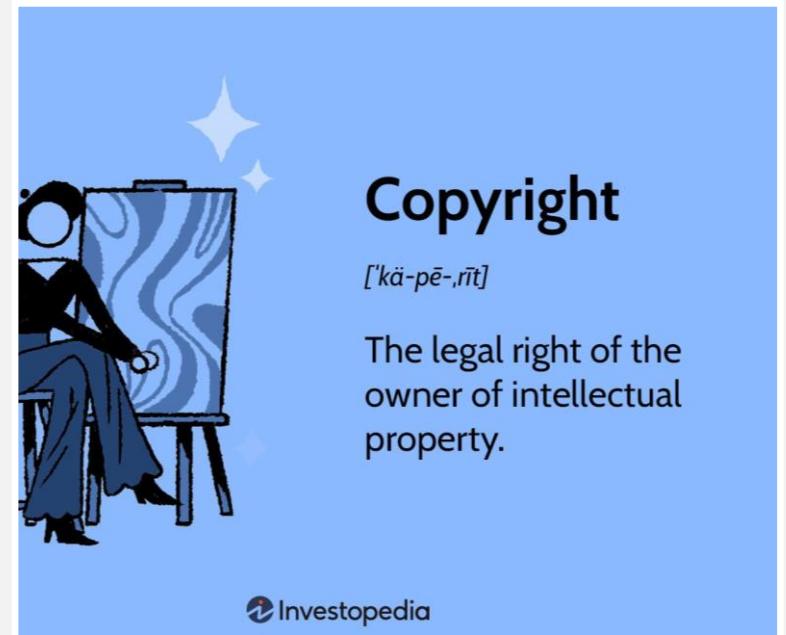
**TABLE 2-2** Most frequent areas of résumé falsehood or exaggeration

Area of exaggeration	How to uncover the truth
Dates of employment	Thorough reference check
Job title	Thorough reference check
Criminal record	Criminal background check
Inflated salary	Thorough reference check
Education	Verification of education claims with universities and other training organizations
Professional licenses	Verification of license with accrediting agency
Working for fictitious company	Thorough background check

Source Line: Lisa Vaas, "Most Common Resume Lies," The Ladders, July 17, 2009, [www.theladders.com/career-advice/most-common-resume-lies](http://www.theladders.com/career-advice/most-common-resume-lies).

# SOME ETHICAL ISSUES IN IT

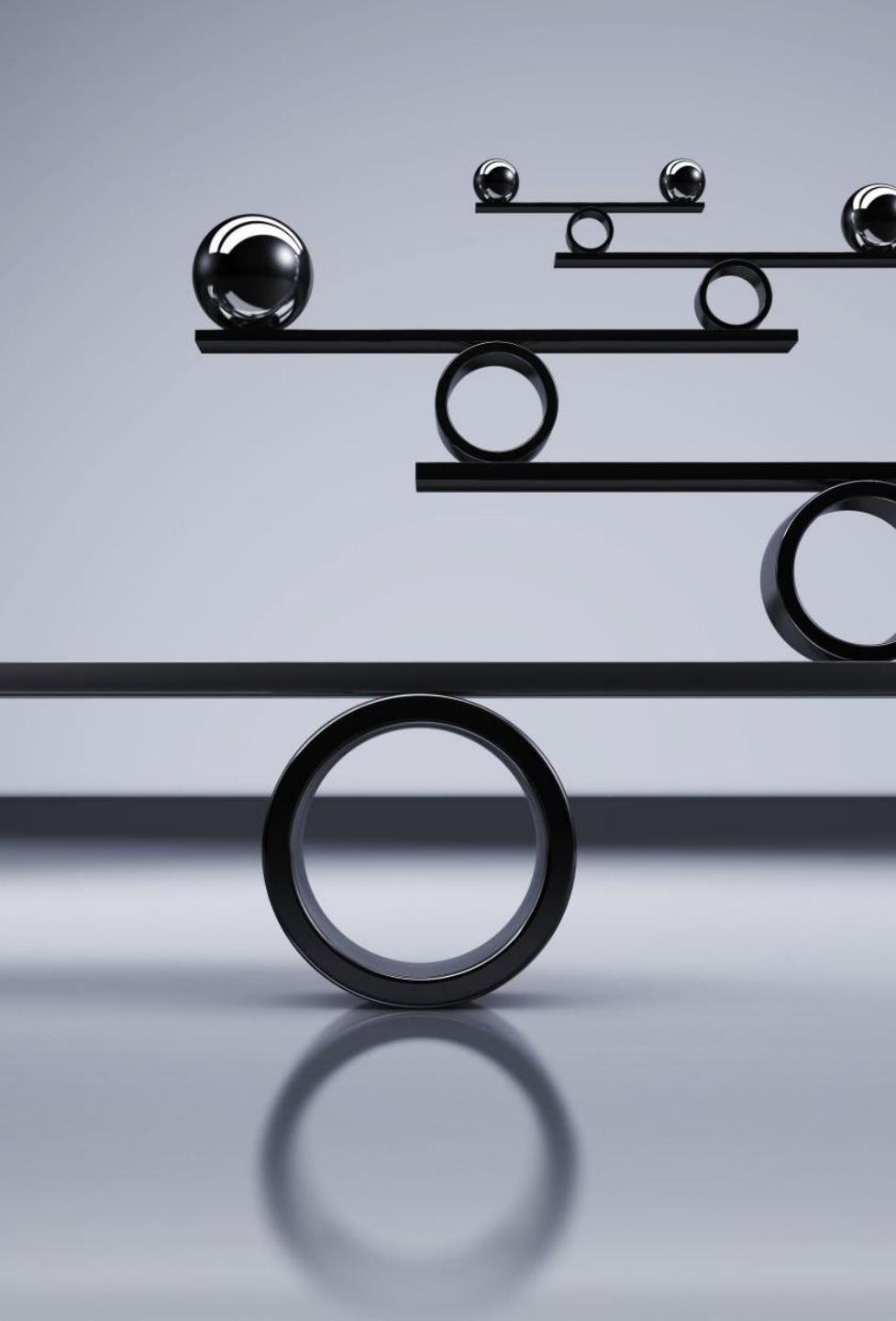
- Some examples that raise public concern about the ethical use of information technology:
- Many employees have their email and Internet access monitored while at work, as employers struggle to balance their need to manage important company assets and work time with employees' desire for privacy and self direction.
- Millions of people have downloaded music and movies at no charge and in apparent violation of copyright laws at tremendous expense to the owners of those copyrights.
- Organizations contact millions of people worldwide through unsolicited email (spam) as an extremely low-cost marketing approach.



## SOME ETHICAL ISSUES IN IT

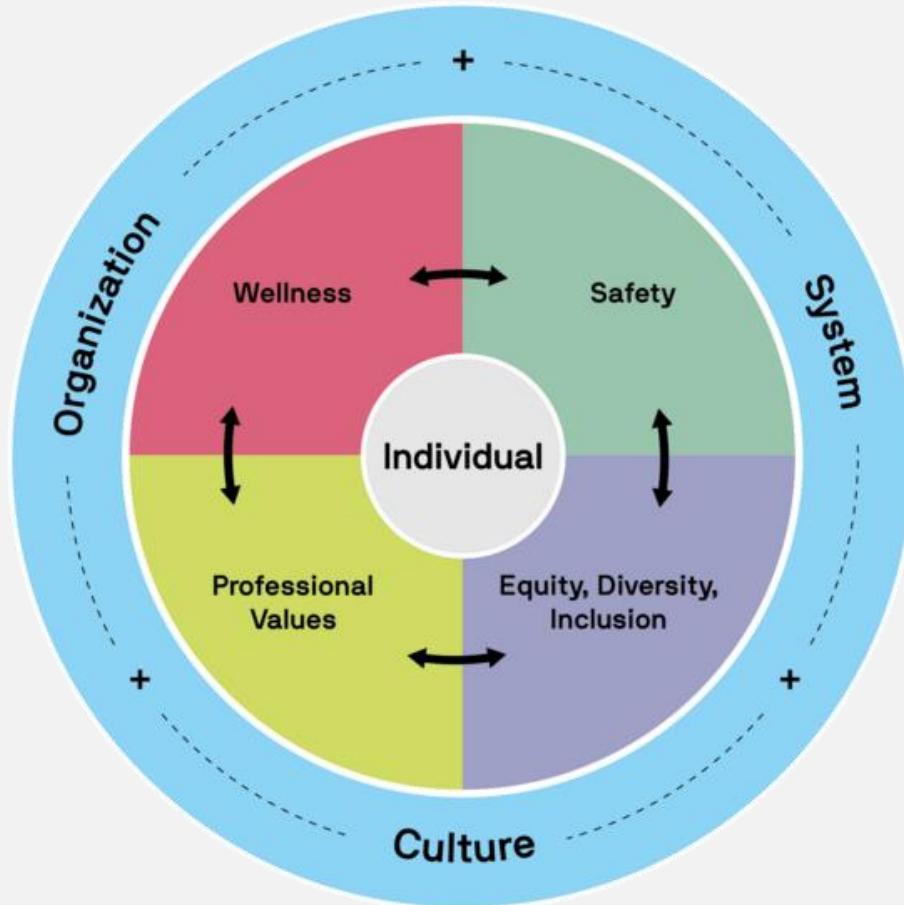
- Hackers break into databases of financial and retail institutions to steal customer information, then use it to commit identity theft—opening new accounts and charging purchases to unsuspecting victims.
- Students around the world have been caught downloading material from the Web and plagiarizing content for their term papers.
- Web sites plant cookies or spyware on visitors' hard drives to track their online purchases and activities.





VALUES, MORALS,  
ETHICS

# VALUES



**Do you possess professional values and ethics?**



# CORE VALUES & PROFESSIONAL VALUES

- Core values?
  - These are the set of fundamental beliefs, ideals, and practices that inform you on how you conduct your life in both a personal and professional manner. In an organizational setting, values are put in place to maintain by the employees, and this helps the organization determine how they allocate resources and sustain growth. Some of the general universal values have been listed above.
- Do our core values affect our professional values?
  - Yes, it does. If a person is found wanting in the core values, his professional values should be under scrutiny.
- Must your core values align with your professional values?
  - Of course, it should. When your core values don't align with your professional values, there will be issues.

# WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES



## WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES

- To find out your core values, you need to reflect on what is important to you. It might be challenging to identify what exactly, especially if you are the type that lives in the moment. But through patience and attentiveness, you will indeed identify it though it might be hard to accept.
  - What drives you?
  - What professional environment suits your values?
  - What qualities do you admire in people, especially people you call your role model?
  - What inspires and motivates you?
  - What qualities do you wish to develop?

# PROFESSIONAL VALUES

- Professional value is a generic term for principles that are major and unique to practicing a profession. In simple words, they are the guiding beliefs and principles that influence our work behavior (profession).
- Professional values are essential because of the following:
  - Better work ethics
  - Professional look
  - Accountability
  - Responsibility
  - Quality work standard

Professional Value is a generic term for principles that are major and unique to practicing a profession.



# UNIVERSAL AND APPROPRIATE VALUES FOR ALL PROFESSIONS AND SCENARIOS

- Appropriate dressing: You will be addressed the way you dress. Every profession appreciates dressing properly; ask about it if you are not sure of the dress code in your profession. Every profession has its appropriate dressing style; a doctor's dressing is different from that of an engineer.
- Politeness: Part of professional values and ethics is being polite to your bosses, colleagues, customers, and even junior colleagues. This helps you to have a good working relationship. This earns you respect from people and keeps your relationship healthy with them.
- Punctuality: There is a famous saying that "punctuality is the soul of business." Turning up on time shows that you have passion for the job and you are happy with it. Getting to work late or not showing up at all is a sign of irresponsibility on the employee's side.
- Honesty: When working for a company, you can damage your own and your company's reputation by dishonesty. When you, as an employee, become very dishonest to customers and partners at work, it will chase people away from the company.



## UNIVERSAL AND APPROPRIATE VALUES FOR ALL PROFESSIONS AND SCENARIOS

- Respect for others: Another universal value that is very important in any profession is respect for others. Nobody deserves to be treated in a wrong way, irrespective of position or societal status. And every profession encourages it.
- Confidentiality: An employee, irrespective of the profession, must hide information and just let the people involved know not more than what they are expected to know.
- Responsibility and personal development: Part of responsibility as an employee is meeting deadlines for jobs and tasks at hand. Part of your responsibility is personal growth and development. It would help if you improved on yourself daily.



# MORALS VS ETHICS

Morality සඳාවාරාත්මක

- Every society has rules of conduct describing what people ought and ought not to do in various situations.
- A person may simultaneously belong to multiple societies, which can lead to moral dilemmas.

Ethics ආචාර ධර්ම

- is the philosophical study of morality, a rational examination into people's moral beliefs and behavior.



# MORALS

Morals are the principles that guide individual conduct within society.

Some examples of absolute moral principles include:

Don't steal

Speak the truth.

Be careful with what you say and do to others.

Respect the property of others.

Examples of relative moral principles are:

It is morally right to care for our planet and preserve it for future generations.



## Morality

The origin of the word morality is in the Greek works of literature. It is adapted from the word "Mos" meaning custom. Morals are beliefs in the social or cultural or religious sphere which determines the fine gap between right and wrong.

These are set and unsaid rules of society that every person is expected to follow while deciding. These beliefs are not objectively right but should be right in every situation. Generosity and patience are its examples.



# ETHICS

- At its simplest, ethics is a system of moral principles. They affect how people make decisions and lead their lives.
- Ethics is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and is also described as moral philosophy.



## Ethics

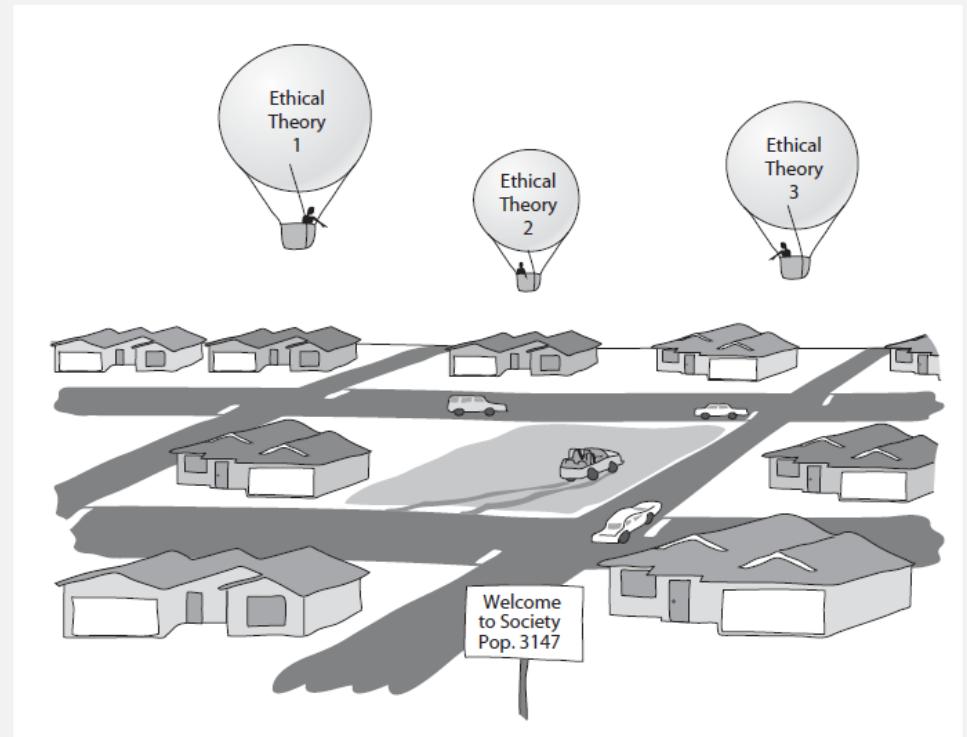
Descended from the Greek word “Ethikos” indicating character, ethics helps shape our behaviour. This is a moral philosophy that encounters conducting principles of a person or a group of persons.

These standards are predetermined and are not flexible. Some of the ethics expected to be followed by any individual in his or her life are loyalty, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, respect, etc. Treating a person with partiality or making a decision with a biased opinion is considered to be an ethical breach.



# ETHICS AND MORALITY

- Society is like a town full of people driving cars.
- Morality is the road network within the town.
- People ought to keep their cars on the roads.
- Those who choose to “do ethics” are in balloons floating above the town.
- From this perspective, an observer can evaluate individual roads (particular moral guidelines) as well as the quality of the entire road network (moral system).
- The observer can also judge whether individual drivers are staying on the roads (acting morally) or taking shortcuts (acting immorally).
- Finally, the observer can propose and evaluate various ways of constructing road networks (alternative moral systems).



<b>Ethics</b>		<b>Morals</b>
<b>What are they?</b>	The rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions or a particular group or culture.	Principles or habits with respect to right or wrong conduct. While morals also prescribe dos and don'ts, morality is ultimately a personal compass of right and wrong.
<b>Where do they come from?</b>	Social system - External	Individual - Internal
<b>Why we do it?</b>	Because society says it is the right thing to do.	Because we believe in something being right or wrong.
<b>Flexibility</b>	Ethics are dependent on others for definition. They tend to be consistent within a certain context, but can vary between contexts.	Usually consistent, although can change if an individual's beliefs change.
<b>The "Gray"</b>	A person strictly following Ethical Principles may not have any Morals at all. Likewise, one could violate Ethical Principles within a given system of rules in order to maintain Moral integrity.	A Moral Person although perhaps bound by a higher covenant, may choose to follow a code of ethics as it would apply to a system. "Make it fit"
<b>Origin</b>	Greek word "ethos" meaning "character"	Latin word "mos" meaning "custom"
<b>Acceptability</b>	Ethics are governed by professional and legal guidelines within a particular time and place	Morality transcends cultural norms

## ETHICS

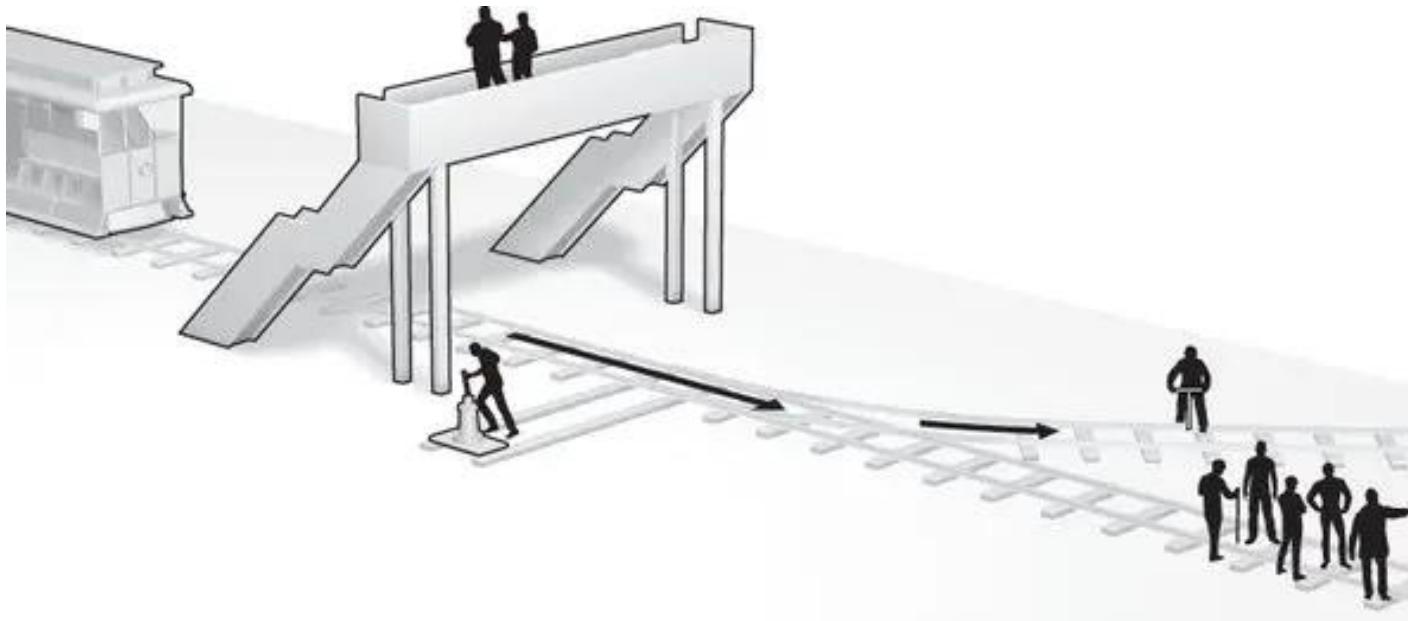


- Ethics is not the same as feelings. Feelings provide important information for our ethical choices. Some people have highly developed habits that make them feel bad when they do something wrong, but many people feel good even though they are doing something wrong. And often our feelings will tell us it is uncomfortable to do the right thing if it is hard.
- Ethics is not religion. Many people are not religious, but ethics applies to everyone. Most religions do advocate high ethical standards but sometimes do not address all the types of problems we face.
- Ethics is not following the law. A good system of law does incorporate many ethical standards, but law can deviate from what is ethical. Law can become ethically corrupt, as some totalitarian regimes have made it. Law can be a function of power alone and designed to serve the interests of narrow groups. Law may have a difficult time designing or enforcing standards in some important areas, and may be slow to address new problems.



- Ethics is not following culturally accepted norms. Some cultures are quite ethical, but others become corrupt -or blind to certain ethical concerns (as the United States was to slavery before the Civil War). "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" is not a satisfactory ethical standard.
- Ethics is not science. Social and natural science can provide important data to help us make better ethical choices. But science alone does not tell us what we ought to do. Science may provide an explanation for what humans are like. But ethics provides reasons for how humans ought to act. And just because something is scientifically or technologically possible, it may not be ethical to do it.

# RAILROAD (TROLLEY) PARADOX



## EXAMPLE

- The IEEE code of ethics, as part of the IEEE policies, begins with the phrase: “to accept responsibility in making engineering decisions consistent with the safety, health and welfare of the public, and to disclose promptly factors that might endanger the public or the environment”.
- This clearly outlines that the safety of the public and environment is of utmost importance to the IEEE.



## EXAMPLE

- ACS code of professional conduct identifies six core ethical values and the associated requirements for professional conduct.
- The ACS requires its members to abide by these values and act with responsibility and integrity in all of their professional dealings (ACS 2014).



# SAMPLES

- Australian Computer Society Code of Ethics, <https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-documents/Code-of-Ethics.pdf>
- Australian Computer Society Code of Professional Conduct, [https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-documents/ACS%20Code-of-Professional-Conduct\\_v2.1.pdf](https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-documents/ACS%20Code-of-Professional-Conduct_v2.1.pdf)
- Australian Computer Society Core Body of Knowledge for ICT professionals (CBOK). <https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-accreditation/CBoK%20V3.2.pdf>
- BCS Code of Ethics: <https://www.bcs.org/media/2211/bcs-code-of-conduct.pdf>
- Sri Lanka: [https://ideaboostorg.github.io/cssl\\_web/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CSSL-Code-of-Ethics\\_and-Code\\_of-Conduct.pdf](https://ideaboostorg.github.io/cssl_web/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CSSL-Code-of-Ethics_and-Code_of-Conduct.pdf)

# CSSL Code of Ethics

## 1. Public Interest

You shall:

- a. have due regard for public health, privacy, security and wellbeing of others and the environment.
- b. have due regard for the legitimate rights of Third Parties.
- c. conduct your professional activities without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, nationality, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion, age or disability, or of any other condition or requirement.
- d. promote equal access to the benefits of IT and seek to promote the inclusion of all sectors in society wherever opportunities arise.

## 2. Professional Competence and Integrity

You shall:

- a. only undertake to do work or provide a service that is within your professional competence.
- b. **NOT** claim any level of competence that you do not possess.
- c. develop your professional knowledge, skills and competence on a continuing basis, maintaining awareness of technological developments, procedures, and standards that are relevant to your field.
- d. ensure that you have the knowledge and understanding of Legislation\* and that you comply with such Legislation, in carrying out your professional responsibilities.
- e. respect and value alternative viewpoints and, seek, accept and offer honest criticisms of work.
- f. avoid injuring others, their property, reputation, or employment by false or malicious or negligent action or inaction.
- g. reject and will not make any offer of bribery or unethical inducement.



Every CSSL member is expected to uphold and respect the dignity, honour and value of being a professional. CSSL stresses that every professional should act as a responsible Sri Lankan first and foremost before he/she can become a successful professional. CSSL, at all instances, expects the conformance of all individuals involved to have as per the following CSSL Code of Ethics:

## 1. Professionalism

That you will work to improve the value and virtue of the society and respect all its members while protecting the safety, welfare and health of the community.

## 2. Professional Development

You will always work in your professional interests to develop your career while also enhancing the professional development of your colleagues and fellow staff.

## 3. Added Value to Sri Lanka

You will work diligently to strive to enhance the value of Sri Lanka and its citizens in any possible way and place the interests of your country above those of personal sectional interests.

## 4. Honesty

Maintain honesty in all dealings and in your representation of knowledge, skill and services. In addition to that, you are required to strive in order to protect the public from misinformation and misinterpretation.



The ACS Code of Ethics is part of the ACS Constitution. As an ACS member you must uphold and advance the honour, dignity and effectiveness of being a professional. This entails, in addition to being a good citizen and acting within the law, your adherence to the following Society values:

### 1 The Primacy of the Public Interest

You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests.

### 2 The Enhancement of Quality of Life

You will strive to enhance the quality of life of those affected by your work.

### 3 Honesty

You will be honest in your representation of skills, knowledge, services and products.

### 4 Competence

You will work competently and diligently for your stakeholders.

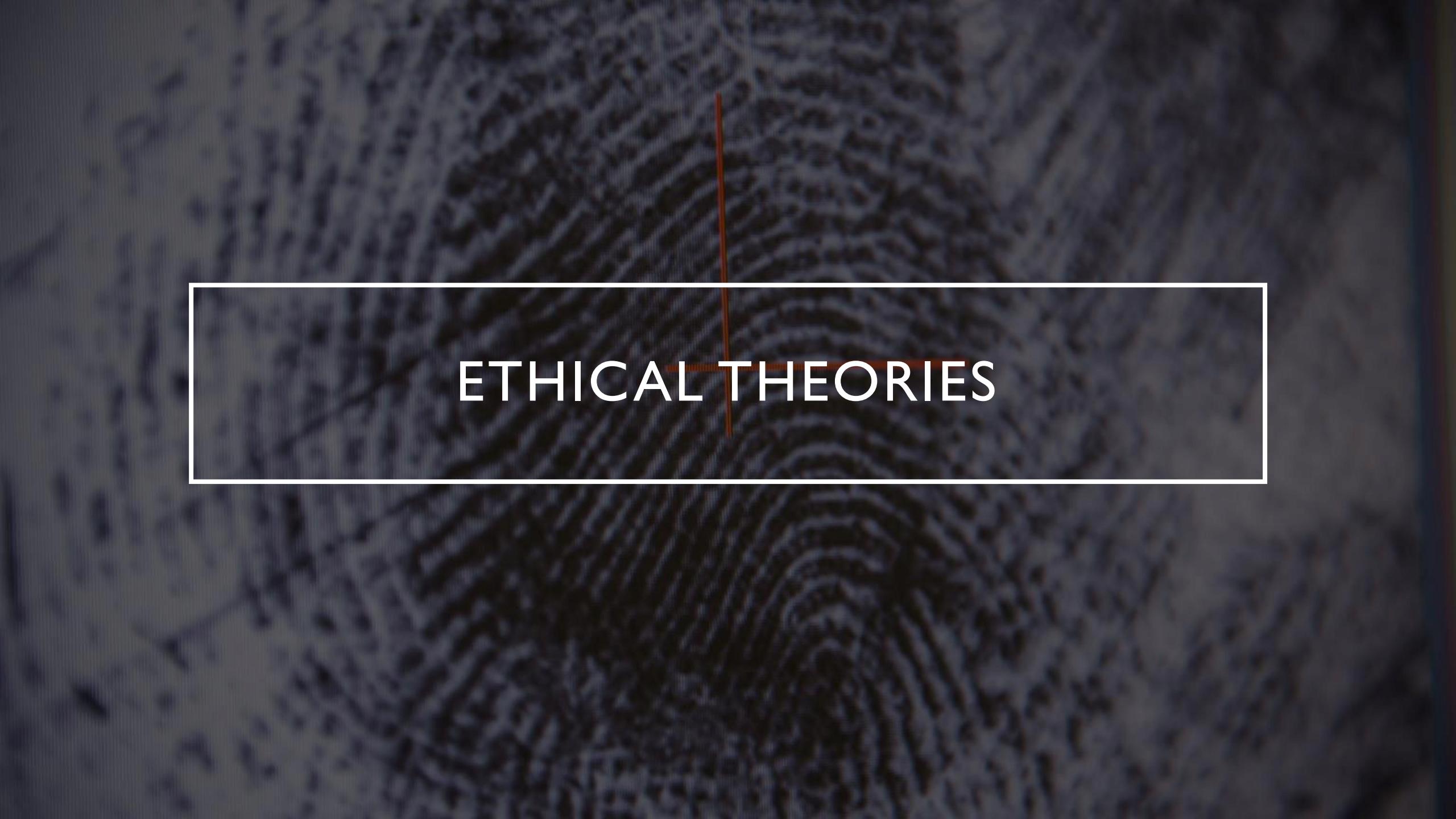
### 5 Professional Development

You will enhance your own professional development, and that of your colleagues and staff.

### 6 Professionalism

You will enhance the integrity of the Society and the respect of its members for each other.

This Code of Ethics applies to all ACS members regardless of their role or specific area of expertise in the ICT industry.



# ETHICAL THEORIES



## ETHICAL THEORIES – WHY ?

- People who take the ethical point of view may still disagree over what is the proper course of action to take in a particular situation.
- Sometimes the facts of the matters are disputable. At other times, different value judgments arising from competing ethical theories lead people to opposite conclusions.
- For this reason, it is worthwhile to have a basic understanding of some of the most popular ethical theories.

# SUBJECTIVE RELATIVISM

- **Relativism** is the theory that there are no universal moral norms of right and wrong.
  - According to this theory, different individuals or groups of people can have completely opposite views of a moral problem, and both can be right.
  - Two particular kinds of relativism we'll discuss are subjective relativism and cultural relativism.
- **Subjective Relativism** holds that each person decides right and wrong for himself or herself.
  - This notion is captured in the popular expression, "What's right for you may not be right for me."
- Cases for:
  - Well-meaning and intelligent people can have totally opposite opinions about moral issues.
  - Ethical debates are disagreeable and pointless.



# CASES AGAINST SUBJECTIVE RELATIVISM

- With subjective relativism the line between doing what you think is right and doing what you want to do is not sharply drawn.
  - People are good at rationalizing their bad behavior. Subjective relativism provides an ideal last line of defense for someone whose conduct is being questioned.
- By allowing each person to decide right and wrong for himself or herself, subjective relativism makes no moral distinction between the actions of different people.
  - The fact is that some people have caused millions to suffer, while others have led lives of great service to humanity. (Hitler vs Mother Theresa)
- We should not give legitimacy to an ethical theory that allows people to make decisions based on something other than reason.
  - If individuals decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong, they can reach their conclusions by any means they see fit.

# CULTURAL RELATIVISM

Cultural relativism is the ethical theory that the meaning of “right” and “wrong” rests with a society’s actual moral guidelines.

These guidelines vary from place to place and from time to time.

Cases for:

Different social contexts demand different moral guidelines.

It's unrealistic to assume that the same set of moral guidelines can be expected to work for all human societies in every part of the world for all ages.

It is arrogant for one society to judge another.

Anthropologists have documented many important differences among societies with respect to what they consider proper and improper moral conduct.



# CASES AGAINST CULTURAL RELATIVISM

- Just because two societies do have different views about right and wrong doesn't imply that they ought to have different views.
  - Perhaps one society has good guidelines and another has bad guidelines. Perhaps neither society has good guidelines.
- Cultural relativism does not explain how an individual determines the moral guidelines of a particular society.
  - Suppose I am new to a society and I understand I am supposed to abide by its moral guidelines. How do I determine what those guidelines are?
- Cultural relativism does not explain how to determine right from wrong when there are no cultural norms.
  - Sometimes different groups within a society disagree about whether a particular action is right or wrong. This situation often occurs when a new technology emerges.
- Cultural relativism provides no framework for reconciliation between cultures in conflict.
  - Think about the culture of the Palestinians who have been crowded into refugee camps in the Gaza Strip for more than 60 years. Some of these people are completely committed to an armed struggle against Israel.

# ETHICAL EGOISM

- The philosophy that each person should focus exclusively on his or her self-interest.
- In other words, according to ethical egoism, the morally right action for a person to take in a particular situation is the action that will provide that person with the maximum long-term benefit.
- Case for:
- Ethical egoism is a practical moral philosophy.
  - We are naturally inclined to do what's best for ourselves because each of us has only one life to live, and we want to make the best of it.
- It's better to let other people take care of themselves.
  - We can't know for sure what is good for someone else. All too often, a "good deed" backfires and actually does more harm than good.
- The community can benefit when individuals put their well-being first.
  - When individuals act in their own self-interest, they often benefit not only themselves but others as well.

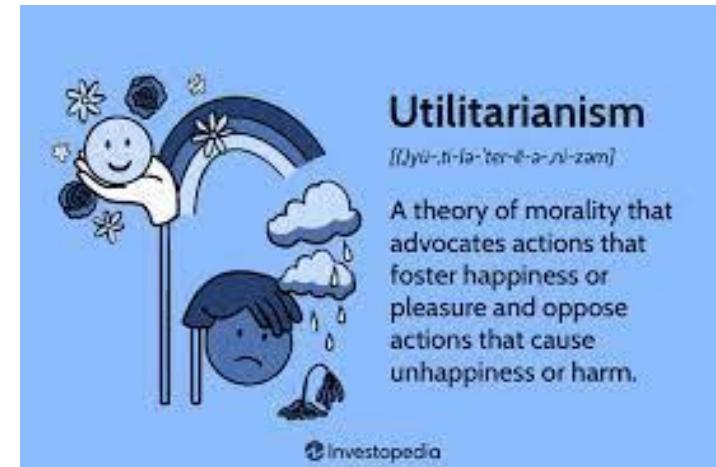


# CASES AGAINST ETHICAL EGOISM

- An easy moral philosophy may not be the best moral philosophy.
  - The fact that it may be easier to live by a particular moral philosophy is no proof that it is the best moral philosophy to live by.
- We do, in fact, know a lot about what is good for someone else.
  - As we noted at the beginning of the chapter, practically everyone shares the “core values” of life, happiness, and the ability to accomplish goals. It’s not that hard to figure out what would help another.
- A self-interested focus can lead to blatantly immoral behavior.
- People who take the good of others into account live happier lives.
  - In order to create and maintain close relationships with other people, it is necessary to consider what is good for them

# ACT UTILITARIANISM

- Utility is the tendency of an object to produce happiness or prevent unhappiness for an individual or a community.
- Depending on the circumstances, you may think of “happiness” as advantage, benefit, good, or pleasure, and “unhappiness” as disadvantage, cost, evil, or pain.
- Ethical theory, called **Utilitarianism**, is based upon the principle of utility, also called the Greatest Happiness Principle.
- Principle of Utility (Greatest Happiness Principle) - An action is right (or wrong) to the extent that it increases (or decreases) the total happiness of the affected parties.



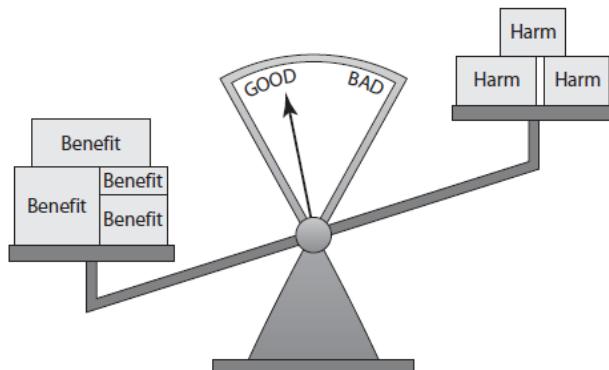
## Utilitarianism

*[yoo-ti-lit-er-e-uh-ni-zm]*

A theory of morality that advocates actions that foster happiness or pleasure and oppose actions that cause unhappiness or harm.

# ACT UTILITARIANISM

- We can use the principle of utility as a yardstick to judge all actions in the moral realm.
- Suppose in a particular situation we have a set of possible actions.
- For each possible action, we must determine, for each affected person, the increase or decrease in that person's happiness and then add up all of these values to reach a grand total:
- The overall increase or decrease in happiness caused by that particular action.
- We repeat this procedure for every action in the set of possible actions.
- The moral action is the one that produces the maximum increase in happiness. (If every possible action results in a decrease in happiness, then the moral action is the one that minimizes the decrease in happiness.)



# ACT UTILITARIANISM

- Act utilitarianism is the ethical theory that an action is good if its net effect (over all affected beings) is to produce more happiness than unhappiness.
- Suppose we measure pleasure as a positive number and pain as a negative number.
- To make amoral evaluation of an action, we simply add up, over all affected beings, the change in their happiness.
- If the sum is positive, the action is good. If the sum is negative, the action is bad.

## ACT UTILITARIANISM

"A utilitarian theory of ethics that states that a person's act is morally right if and only if it produces the best possible results in that specific situation" (Brubaker, 2022, p. 121).

### DEFINITION

Act utilitarianism is a moral theory stating that the right action is the one that produces the best overall consequences. So, an individual should choose to do an act if it provides the most benefit, or "utility," for everyone affected.

### CORE PRINCIPLES

1. **Greatest Happiness:** pleasure or positive utility, such as improving well-being, should be maximized.
2. **Impartiality:** you should evaluate each action without bias or prejudice.
3. **Consequentialism:** the morality of actions should be judged by their outcomes.

# CASES AGAINST ACT UTILITARIANISM

- The case for:
  - It focuses on happiness.
  - It is practical
    - The utilitarian calculus provides a straightforward way to determine the right course of action to take.
  - It is comprehensive.
    - Act utilitarianism allows the moral agent to take into account all the elements of a particular situation
- The cases against:
  - it is not clear where to draw the line, yet where we draw the line can change the outcome of our evaluation
  - It is not practical to put so much energy into every moral decision.

# RULE UTILITARIANISM

- The ethical theory that holds that we ought to adopt those moral rules that, if followed by everyone, lead to the greatest increase in total happiness over all affected parties.
- Hence a rule utilitarian applies the principle of utility to moral rules, while an act utilitarian applies the principle of utility to individual moral actions.

## RULE UTILITARIANISM

Rule utilitarianism is an ethical theory that proposes that an action should be considered morally right if it follows a rule leading to the best overall outcome for individuals in society.

### DEFINITION

Nathanson (2011) states that: "...according to rule utilitarians, we should judge the morality of individual actions by reference to general moral rules, and the correct moral rules are those rules whose general acceptance would maximize well-being" (p. 194). For example, if a rule states that stealing is wrong, then all instances of stealing should be judged as wrong regardless of context.

### EXAMPLES

- **Refraining from lying:** Lies should be avoided as a general rule and in all instances without exception because they can lead to mistrust and deception in society.
- **Abide by laws and regulations:** For society to function properly, individuals must abide by the legal laws and regulations, regardless of context and without exception.

## ACT UTILITARIANISM VERSUS RULE UTILITARIANISM

### ACT UTILITARIANISM

A utilitarian theory of ethics that highlights the morality of an action is determined by its usefulness to the people

Morality is on the effect of a good action that benefits most people

Consequences are on the action

### RULE UTILITARIANISM

A utilitarian theory of ethics that highlights the morality of an action is when it conforms to a certain rule that leads to the greatest good or happiness of the people

Morality is on following a certain rule or code of conduct (when doing an action) that has benefits to most people

Consequences are on the rule(s) followed

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## ACT VS RULE UTILITARIANISM

Act and rule utilitarianism are both forms of utilitarianism, an approach to morality that states an action is right if it produces the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

### ACT UTILITARIANISM

Act utilitarianism focuses on the consequences of individual actions and assesses them based on their expected utility or benefit. It evaluates actions separately, considering each one in terms of its effect on happiness or pleasure. Act utilitarianism means an act may be considered morally right even if it violates traditional notions of justice or individual rights.

### RULE UTILITARIANISM

Rule utilitarianism considers larger sets of actions rather than just individual acts. It looks at how certain rules or norms can maximize utility for society when followed by everyone. This approach considers justice and individual rights, as it promotes rules that benefit everyone in the long run without disadvantaging certain groups more than others.

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QUESTIONS