



16GE301 PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
UNIT IV RESPONSIBILITIES & RIGHTS
PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS – EMPLOYEE RIGHT

Professional Rights

The rights that engineers have as professionals are called Professional Rights. These professional rights include –

- The basic right of professional conscience.
- The right of conscientious refusal.
- The right of professional recognition.

Right of Professional Conscience

- This is a basic right which explains that the decisions taken while carrying on with the duty, where they are taken in moral and ethical manner, cannot be opposed.
- The right of professional conscience is the moral right to exercise professional judgement in pursuing professional responsibilities.
- It requires autonomous moral judgement in trying to uncover the most morally reasonable courses of action, and the correct courses of action are not always obvious.

There are two general ways to justify the basic right of professional conscience.

- The exercise of moral reflection and conscience that justifies professional duties is necessary, with respect to that duty.
- The general duties to respect persons and rule-utilitarianism would accent the public good of allowing engineers to pursue their professional duties.

Right of Conscientious Refusal

- The right of conscientious refusal is the right to refuse to engage in unethical behavior. This can be done solely because it feels unethical to the doer.
- This action might bring conflicts within the authority-based relationships.
- The two main situations to be considered here are –
 - When it is already stated that certain act is unethical in a widely shared agreement among all the employees.
 - When there occurs disagreement among considerable number of people whether the act is unethical.



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- Hence it is understood that engineers and other professionals have a moral right to refuse the unethical acts such as bribery, forging documents, altering test results, lying, padding payrolls or coercing employees into acting by threatening, etc.

Right to Recognition

- An engineer has a right to the recognition of one's work and accomplishments. An engineer also has right to speak about the work one does by maintaining confidentiality and can receive external recognition.
- The right for internal recognition which includes patents, promotions, raises etc. along with a fair remuneration, are also a part of it.
- The fulfillment of right to recognition motivates the employee to be a trustful member of the organization, which also benefits the employer.
- This makes the employee morally bound which enhances the ethical nature to be abide by the professional ethics.

Employee Rights

- An employee right can be any right, moral or legal, that involves the status of being an employee.
- They involve some professional rights also, such as the right to be paid according to the salary mentioned in one's contract.
- Privacy and equal opportunity can be considered essential rights too.

Privacy

- The right to privacy refers to the right of having a private life, off the job. It is the right to control the access to and the use of information about oneself.
- The examples of situations where the functions of employers conflict the rights of employees will be when the job-related queries or any other tests conducted in a job, includes questions relating to personal life such as alcohol usage or sexual conduct.
- The instances when a supervisor unlocks and checks the desk of his subordinate in his absence or when the management questions about his likes, dislikes or posts on social media regarding his personal opinions where it has nothing to do with the company.

Employers should view the relationship with their employees concerning confidentiality that cannot break the trust.



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The personal information in such cases is given based on the special professional relation and trust.

Equal Opportunity – Non-discrimination

- The demeaning of a person based on trivial factors such as one's sex, race, skin color, age or political or religious outlook can be understood as Discrimination.
- Such a discrimination should never be allowed at any workplace; this is where everyone has to be treated equally.
- These things internally affect the person's self-identity and self-respect which is pernicious within the work environment, where the work itself should represent a person's self-image.

Equal Opportunity – Sexual Harassment

- In today's world, there is an increase in the number of sexual harassment cases across the world.
- This is quite an unfortunate scenario. There were a number of cases where the charges were levied since last two decades, which kept on growing.
- A definition of **Sexual harassment** is, "The unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of a relationship of unequal power".
- Sexual harassment is a display of power and aggression through sexual means. It takes two forms, quid pro quo and hostile work environment.

Equal opportunity – Affirmative Action

- Affirmative action refers to the preference given to a person or a group who was denied equal importance in the past.
- For example, the women and the minority communities were not given equal treatment and were ill-treated in the past
- . So to compensate that, amendments were made in recent laws to provide them special quota for reservations in education, employment and social sectors.



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