Case: Abusive Workplace Behavior

The case study describes the abusive behaviour of a team leader, who had a high reputation in the augmented reality field. His eruptive behaviour and personal attacks, triggered by minor mistakes made by the employees, frequently violated several principles of the ACM code of Ethics.

In this case example, most of the violations were related to the general ethical principles, followed by the professional leadership principles. Violations of the former principles included failure to contribute to human well-being with the acknowledgment that all people are stakeholders in computing (1.1) and lack of respect toward the work required to produce new ideas, inventions, creative works, and computing artifacts (1.5). This was evident through the action of removing the contributor’s names from the journal manuscripts, which clearly violates the right of stakeholding. Similarly, BSC Code also prohibits claiming the work of others. In addition, the women were particularly berated, which aligns with the prohibition against discrimination based on gender, as stated in the BCS Code of Conduct and indicator 1.4 in the ACM Code of Ethics.

On the other hand, violating professional leadership principles could be seen through the lack of actions that would have addressed the problems. Rather than that, Diane's compliments to the manager were unheard (3.4) and the manager’s responses didn't address the well-being of Diane and the team (3.3). Rather than that, she was perceived as immature.

In addition to the above violations, the actions of the team leader were far away from professional (2.2). His standards didn't align with the professional communication, ultimately leading to the violation of multiple ethical practices outlined in ACM and BCS code of conducts.