

Date: Tue, 12 Nov 1996 16:36:14 -0500  
From: PRP1@AOL.COM  
Reply to: Professional Competence Standards Task Force  
          <PRFCMP-L@UTKVM1.BITNET>  
To: Multiple recipients of list PRFCMP-L <PRFCMP-L@UTKVM1.BITNET>  
Subject: Re: Code of Ethics

Yes your email did get to me.

Peter Ron Prinzivalli, IEEE Member  
San Jose, CA

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FYI...

Subj: Re: code of ethics  
Date: 96-11-11 00:48:38 EST  
From: PRP1  
To: gotterba@seasva.gwu.edu  
CC: PRP1

November 10, 1996

Hi Don:

RE: Code of Ethics

Well, I would have sent these comments to you as "edits" to the original 10/08/96 version, however, the file was corrupted after I saved it to my hard drive.

General questions and comments:

What is the next step for the final Code after this working group is finished with its work? Does it get approved by the Computer Society Governing Board and DC Staff? What is the intended means of propagation and maintenance?

Does this apply to programmers with no formal education or programmers who are not software engineers by university/trade school degree? Does software engineer herein mean EE-SWEng?

Specific suggested changes:

#### INTRODUCTION

..... software engineers 'must'; or 'shall' commit themselves ....

..... And respected profession.      Comment: I do not believe software engineering practice/job can be equated to a profession such as lawyer/doctor/engineer unless the activity/practice/job has a dually licensed requirement by a State agency empowered by the appropriate legislative authority.

#### Rule 1: PRODUCT

..... completed on time and at a reasonable cost and free of significant error....

This is not possible unless there is an acknowledged "professional" process of supervision of this requirement. E. G. The typical programmer/software engineer is not financially responsible for his/her individual actions to the extent of all damages as a professional lawyer/doctor/engineer would. There are no formal Professional Quality over-site bodies that manage redress for this quasi profession. This form of public over-site would be usual and customary if a legislative body established law to manage the activity.

Commercial law redress is not adequate in this case. Their license to perform an activity must be at stake; e.g. errors and omissions insurance availability or practice liability.

1.01..... put in writing. CHANGE TO 'documented'. This covers all electronic documentation too.

General comment: Change proper to 'approved'. Proper is too qualitative.

1.10 ..... respect the privacy... Change respect to 'maintain'.

1.11.....Change software is accurate.. to software 'development' is accurate..

Rule 2 PUBLIC

2.01.....Change persons to 'authorities'

2.02.....Change appropriate to 'required'

Rule 3: JUDGEMENT

3.03.... Change no payback, to no 'lawful' payback

3.06 How does this relate to industrial consortia membership such as Unix Open, Semantec, etc.. ?

Rule 4: CLIENT AND EMPLOYER

4.02 .. This should also include the SWEng's personal equipment too..

4.07.... or otherwise turn out badly. This should be rephrased or eliminated. It is weakly qualitative and detracts from the Code's veracity.

Rule 5: PROFESSION

5.10... reputable businesses.. Change businesses to 'enterprises'. This would then encompass universities, et. al.

Rule 6: COLLEAGUES

6.10..... Change an employee... to 'anyone'

6.11 What does this mean??

6.12 Change Attract employees to 'Recruit colleagues'

6.13 This does not seem to fit here. This is within the purview and responsibility of management or owners of the enterprise and not the SWEng individual contributor.

6.14 I'm not sure what the intention of this statement was, however, it should be eliminated or restated, e.g. 'No software engineer shall interfere in the professional career progression of any colleague.'

Rule 7:SELF

7.2 ...at reasonable cost and within reasonable time. This last part of the item is too qualitative and should be eliminated. We might consider changing the term reasonable to 'contractual' cost and schedule. This would at least allow or acknowledge redress in the civil contract's law process.

And lastly Don, congratulations on getting the process this far. I have participated in several IEEE software development standards, Software Standards Conferences, as well as on the Society's Standards Activity Board. Consensus and participation is always difficult to shepherd into a productive useful Standards and Codes. Good luck with the final stages of authorization and publication.

I'd suggest that the Society provide sessions at all of our Conferences and Tutorials to propagate the Code. Each member and non-IEEE member should be able to attend these sessions, and the Society should maintain a Registry of all individuals who have formerly agreed to follow the Code.

I do not think that the Registry would expose the Society or IEEE to any commercial risk, and should provide a positive venue for membership drives and sustaining the high standards of conduct for the Society. You might want

to pass this by Michael Elliott, Society Director.

Best regards,

Pete

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