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Analyzing Ethics of Cambridge Analytica

1. PUBLIC - Software engineers shall act consistently with the public interest.

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.

3. PRODUCT - Software engineers shall ensure that their products and related modifications meet the highest professional standards possible.

4. JUDGMENT - Software engineers shall maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgment.

5. MANAGEMENT - Software engineering managers and leaders shall subscribe to and promote an ethical approach to the management of software development and maintenance.

6. PROFESSION - Software engineers shall advance the integrity and reputation of the profession consistent with the public interest.

7. COLLEAGUES - Software engineers shall be fair to and supportive of their colleagues.

8. SELF - Software engineers shall participate in lifelong learning regarding the practice of their profession and shall promote an ethical approach to the practice of the profession.

       This grid analyzes the ethics for the Cambridge Analytica scandal using a code of ethics laid out by the ACM/IEEE. The first code that the software engineers broke was the "Public". This is quite easy to see, as collecting data and using it without the users knowledge is unethical and would not be in the public interest. Next up was the "Client and Employer" rule that was unethically broken in this case. The employer was not acting in the public interest when they issued this project to their software engineers, and thus this goes hand in hand with breaking the "Public" rule. I did not think that the software engineers broke the "Product" principle, since we do not know a lot about the actual product that was able to source this information, but it must have been good enough to collect accurate information to be used in an election. For the "Judgement" principle, I chose to say that the software engineers violated this as well. During the project and the presedential election, the software engineers worked and made sure they made the project and software correctly, which should have been unethical in their personal judgement. Then, after the fact, one of the software engineers came forward with information about what they had been doing. Since it wasn't until a while after, I believe the judgement of the software engineers was thus unethical.

       For the "Management" principle in this example, it is very obviously unethical. If there was a ethical management process going on in this case, the managing software engineers would have never asked the working software engineers to do such a thing, because it was clearly an unethical project. When it comes to the "Profession" of the software engineers, this was very clearly unethical. The software engineers were working on a unethical and possibly illegal project, which if they would be caught, which they were, would paint a bad image not only on them but also on software engineers as a whole. This negatively affected their reputation and thus they were not "Professional." For the principle of "Collegues," I said that this was handled in an ethical manner. During the project we do not know much about how they were treating each

other, but it seems a professional approach would have been taken to treating each other in a workplace. After the fact, there was no way to conceal the identity of the working software engineers on this project, and thus this would still be treated as a fair scenario, even to the person who leaked information about the project. Lastly, for the principle of "Self," this was not done in an ethical manner by the software engineers. In order for it to be ethical, the engineers would have needed to promote and practice an ethical approach to their profession, which in this case by working on such a project they were not doing. So overall, I got that the unethical principles done by the software engineers in the Cambrige Analytica example were the "Public," the "Client/Employer," the "Judgement," the "Management," the "Profession," and the "Self."