# **FISh Ethical Decision-Making Framework**

Ethical issues and dilemmas around the use of technology in today's digital world are a reality of everyday practice for the computing professional.

If you are presented with a complex ethical situation, it is beneficial to take a more structured approach to decision-making to ensure that only the established ethical principles of the computing profession, not your own personal values or beliefs, guide your decision-making.

This FISh Ethical Decision-Making Framework document is provided for your collaborative work, that you can copy and use for each topic, as you work in your PBL Group. After you have completed your group work, discuss what you want to share with the other groups and how to present it. Choose a tool for presenting your work. Share your presentation by submitting your PBL Group work in the Tribe Space or even the Community Space.

The FISh Framework consists of the following components:

**1. FOCUS**

1.1. Identify the Ethical issue

The first step in assessing a complex ethical dilemma is to identify the key ethical issues presented by the situation.

1.2. Identify the Stakeholders

The next step is to identify who the stakeholders are in the situation. After all the stakeholders have been identified, you will then identify the concerns and values associated with each stakeholder. One way to do so is to 'step into someone else's shoes'. This is a useful way for students to develop citizenship skills in understanding different perspectives, even though they may not agree with them.

**2. INVESTIGATE**

2.1. Gather the Facts

The first step in your investigate work is to determine which facts relevant to the situation are known and which still need to be researched.

2.2. Apply Codes of Ethics

The next step is to apply relevant codes of ethics to the given situation. Examples of resources that can be considered with this case are:

* The ACM codes of ethics and professional conduct
* The Software Engineering Code of Ethics

2.3. Evaluate Possible Solutions

Students will need to evaluate possible options for solutions, based on the resources identified, including relevant ethical standards. This is a brainstorming exercise, in order to generate a wide range of ideas. Each idea can then be analyzed to consider which ethical principles are prioritized in each case.

2.4. Act and Justify

Student then select an option from the possible solutions that are identified. There will be a tendency to jump to a decision or position quickly, without justification. The justification is a key element of the FISh model. Students should practice on clarifying their reasoning by bringing in their understanding of principle ethics.

2.5. Review and Reflect

Students should consider the outcome of their decision and reflect on what the outcome may have been if they had chosen a different option. They can review the outcome in relation to the standards in the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and other applicable resources and reflect on whether the outcome meets the requirements outlined in these resources. They can also use this opportunity to consider what you may do differently if presented with a similar situation in the future.

**3. SHARE**

3.1 Share and Discuss

The last step is to share their learning with peers in the PBL Group. This will involve choosing a tool for presenting their group work and then sharing their presentation in the Tribe Space / Community Space.

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| **Ethical Decision-Making Framework** |

**I. FOCUS**

(A) Identify the Ethical Issue

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| WHAT is the ETHICAL ISSUE? |

(B) Identify the Stakeholders

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| WHO are the stakeholders? Which individuals or groups have an important stake in the outcome? Identify the concerns and values associated with each stakeholder. | |
| Stakeholder | Concerns / Values:  1.  2.  3. |
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**II. INVESTIGATE**

(A) Gather the Facts

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| KNOWN: What are the FACTS? WHERE to go for ANSWERS to your QUESTIONS?  UNKNOWN: What additional facts, information, or evidence would be USEFUL? |

(B) Apply Codes of Ethics

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| What does our Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct say about this situation?  Is there any research or literature to inform and support you? |

(C) Evaluate Possible Solutions

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Solutions | Pros | Cons |
| Option 1 |  |  |
| Option 2 |  |  |
| Option 3 |  |  |

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| As you weigh each option, consider the following:  Duties: What are my obligations in this situation, and what are the things I should never do?  Virtues: What kind of person should I be (or try to be), and what will my actions show about my character?  Outcomes: What kind of outcomes should I produce (or try to produce)?  Principles: Does the option address the ethical principles (respect, do no hard/ do good, and fairness, etc) involved? |

D. Act and Justify

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| What is your decision?  Justify your decision, using the language of ethical principles described above.  1.  2.  3. |

E. Review and Reflect

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| After implementing your decision, you can evaluate it afterwards. Was the decision fair and just? What did I learn from the situation? |

**II. SHARE**

1. Share learning with your peers in the PBL Group.

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| How did you experience your group work? Feelings? What went well? What would you like to do differently in your work ahead? |

1. Discuss what you want to share with the other groups and how to present it. Choose a tool for presenting your work. Share your presentation by submitting your PBL Group work in the Community Space.