

Professional Ethics

Definition 0.1

Professional ethics refers to the moral principles that govern the behavior of individuals in a professional context.

How are Professional Ethics Different?

- Customers don't know the domain, so they rely on the honesty, knowledge, and expertise of the professional
- Professionals' products affect lots of people
 - People affected may be connected indirectly
 - Didn't have a chance to choose the professional
- Special responsibility not just to the customer, but to the public

ACM Code of Ethics

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
3. **Product** - Software Engineers shall ensure that their products meet the highest possible standards possible
4. **Judgement** - Software Engineers shall maintain integrity and independence in a professional Judgement
5. **Management** - leaders shall subscribe to and promote an ethical approach to software development and maintenance
6. **Profession** - Software Engineers shall advance the integrity and reputation of the profession consistent with 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 profession

Definition 0.2

Exclusive Responsibility: "I am responsible for paying this bill" **Not exclusive:** "My boss is responsible for this, and so am I" Moral responsibility is typically not exclusive

When the public can trust the competence and integrity of the members of a profession, every one of its members benefit. Thus, professionals have a stake in ensuring that fellow members of profession are capable and act properly.

Especially because software engineers don't have formal certification and licensing, it is important that they act professional and take professional responsibility to develop their ethical decision making skills.