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Ethics Essay

Through my CPRE 394 class, I have learned about the importance of practicing moral behavior in the workforce. Establishing a Code of Ethics is the best way to ensure that companies abide by a set of ethical standards. The primary purpose that a Code of Ethics serves is to establish a standardized method for engineers to behave in their professional careers. Also, a Code of Ethics aims to reduce the error between what's lawfully and morally right.

In class, we discussed various issues surrounding ethics in engineering, such as Volkswagen cheating emission tests and the Amazon Echo tapping into private phone calls. Overall, my classmates and I came to similar conclusions on how we would resolve these issues most ethically; however, there were some disagreements. For the Volkswagen issue, we all agreed that it is wrong for Volkswagen to skip crucial emission tests before selling their cars. The fact that the vehicles released were capable of up to 40 times more pollution than allowed in a car is concerning. On the flip side, the Amazon Echo situation stirred some disagreement. Some people felt strongly that a device in one's home should not be allowed to record conversations under any circumstance. Others believed that it was ok as long as a search warrant is present. In the end, these discussions significantly shaped how I go about making ethical decisions.

Going about making a decision when facing an ethical situation can be a difficult task. The problem is that there are many ways of approaching and understanding an ethical scenario, but our goal is to find the most efficient and meaningful solution. I think gut instinct and intuition are the number one ways to combat ethicality. It is all about common sense in putting

human life above profits. I believe that when something doesn't feel right, it most likely isn't right, even if it is legal.

Furthermore, there are some essential virtues and values that comprise ethical behavior. Examples of values that closely match the case studies that we studied in the discussion are honesty, integrity, and responsibility. Honesty is compromised when a company secretly participates in unethical activity. Integrity is a trait that closely resembles the Volkswagen situation because the company risked sacrificing its integrity and trust with its consumers. Amazon lacked responsibility when they tapped into a private phone call without permission.

As you can see, after learning more about ethical behavior in engineering, I have developed my own strategies and opinion on the matter. These skills will be critical, moving forward in my career.