

Zack Wedding

Prof. Julie Henderson

CSCI 325 01

November 2022

Ethics Paper

As with any profession, an ethics issue is bound to pop up at some point throughout our career. These issues are not limited to just the workplace, either, as even in college we are sometimes faced with ethical issues. It is important to acknowledge these issues and know how to treat them, as if they are not treated properly, a small issue could turn big and there could be severe consequences. To understand the ethics of computer science, sources such as the ACM Code of Ethics and IEEE Code of Ethics should be used. The perfect source, however, is the Bible, as God has laid out a lot of scripture that we should use. As Christians, we should look upon the Bible to help with everything, so this does not stop when looking at ethics. It is the best book of ethics out there, put together by our perfect, loving God.

As much as you can try to avoid ethical issues, they will arise whether you like it or not. There are, of course, some issues that I believe I will likely face more than other issues when in the realm of computer science. Upon doing some research, I felt as though there were some guarantees that I would have to face at some time while in the workplace. One of these issues that I would consider to be a guarantee is, according to *Michigan State University Online*, “questionable use of company technology”. While this may not seem like a big deal, it can be very costly, as this leads companies to deal with “lost time, worker productivity, and company dollars”, which makes sense if you think about it. This time that employees spend doing non-

work-related activities means that they, obviously, are not working. Less work leads to less money being made. The university also goes on to explain how, according to a survey conducted, “64% of employees visit non-related websites during the workday”. I will be the first to admit that this will likely be myself a time or two. I get distracted easily when doing my schoolwork, so I imagine this will likely translate to the workplace. I know that this is not only myself that struggles with this a lot, too. I believe that a lot of people in my generation will fall victim to this, as we are used to constantly being on technology. It is a technology-based world we live in today. Principle 2.1 of the ACM Code of Ethics tells us, “Strive to achieve high quality in both the processes and products of professional work.” We should always want to produce the best quality work possible. When we are misusing company technology and getting distracted, we are limiting ourselves in the quality of work in which we are able to produce. To help deal with this dilemma, whether it be myself or another person struggling with it, I would likely ask if what were going on can happen at home. The answer will more than likely be a “yes”, which will then hopefully get the individual in the right mindset. Colossians 3:23 – 24 tell us, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” As Christians, we are always representing the Lord, even at work. This should encourage us to work hard and diligently so that we perform to the best of our ability. Another ethical dilemma, one that I did not think about, is stealing on the job. Whether you take home a pen from the office or some tape, it is stealing. *Chron* said it best when they stated, “It may seem like a small thing, but when every employee takes something, it does add up against company profits,” which certainly makes sense and will always hold true. If every employee were to steal something that they believe is small from the office, it could wind up being very costly to the company. This cost to the company could then

come full circle and directly impact the employees, as a drop in revenue will “affect everyone in the company, even future raises, bonuses or layoffs”. I believe that checking security cameras regularly and all employees, no matter what rank, having a close relationship to each other would limit this from happening. Close relationships build trust, and I do not think that anybody wants their trust with a close individual be broken due do something such as stealing from the workplace. One of the Ten Commandments clearly states, “do not steal”. God clearly tells us not to steal. Again, we are constantly representing the Lord as Christians, so why would we want to give God a bad reputation? Lastly, the ethical dilemma of lacking diversity and discrimination is another one I believe I will see in the workplace. Unfortunately, there are still many instances of this occurring in the workplace, and it likely will not stop any time soon. This discrimination can be based on race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, and many more things. According to *startupguys*, “61% of employees in America reported seeing or experiencing discrimination”. To help with this ethical dilemma, I would suggest educating employees on various cultures, races, etc. It would also be helpful to hire employees of all different kinds of backgrounds so that there is not any lack of diversity among staff. Principle 1.4 of the ACM Code of Ethics states, “Be fair and take action not to discriminate.” We should always make sure that we are not discriminating against anyone. There is no excuse to take part in discrimination. After all, we are the same in God’s eyes, which is all that matters. Galatians 3:28 says, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” In our creator’s eyes, we are all valued so much, and none of us are more valued than another.

Both the ACM Code of Ethics and the IEEE Code of Ethics are great sources for what you should do to avoid ethical issues. Many of the principles found in these two sources align with what God says in the Bible. Principle 1.3 in the ACM Code of Ethics is “be honest and

trustworthy”, which seems rather obvious and is simple. We are told many times throughout the Bible that we need always be honest. Proverbs 19:1 states, “Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool.” God tells us that it is better to be poor, weak, but honest rather than rich, strong, and dishonest. We are to always be truthful, as this opens the doors for many great things. Principle 1.08 of the IEEE Code of Ethics states, “Be encouraged to volunteer professional skills to good causes and contribute to public education concerning the discipline.” We should always be willing to help one another. All of us need help at some point in time, so why not just lend a hand? 1 Peter 4:10 tells us, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,” which commands us to use the gifts that we have for good and help those that need it. We all have God-given talents, so we need to put them to use!

Though we should always try our best to avoid ethical issues, they are bound to occur at some point in time. It is important to have a course of action and know what to do when dealing with ethical issues, for they can lead to much bigger issues if they are not resolved. No matter what, though, we should always be looking to represent our Lord as best as we can.

Works Cited

- Michiganstateuniversityonline.com*,
<https://www.michiganstateuniversityonline.com/resources/leadership/common-ethical-issues-in-the-workplace/>.
- Rafner, Don. "Common Ethical Workplace Dilemmas." *Small Business - Chron.com*,
Chron.com, 6 Feb. 2019, <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/common-ethical-workplace-dilemmas-748.html>.
- Torralba, Vaughn. "8 Most Common Ethical Issues and How Can Businesses Prevent Them?"
StartupGuys.net, 5 Sept. 2022, <https://www.startupguys.net/common-ethical-issues-in-business/>.
- "The Code Affirms an Obligation of Computing Professionals to Use Their Skills for the Benefit of Society." Code of Ethics, <https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics#h-2.6-perform-work-only-in-areas-of-competence>.
- "Code of Ethics: IEEE Computer Society." *IEEE Computer Society Code of Ethics Comments*,
<https://www.computer.org/education/code-of-ethics>.
- "Topical Bible." Topical Bible - Bible Verses by Topic, <http://www.openbible.info/topics/>.