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Feedback and Planning:

15 minutes from the end of this session, bring the group together, and with a flip chart or paper, discuss how participants felt about this session.

Focus on:

- What the group enjoyed
- What the group didn’t like
- What items they found most relevant to their needs

As a group, plan the next session taking this feedback into consideration. Agree on mentors for the next session.

Remember to allow 5 minutes at the end of each session for participants to fill in their “Personal Learning Diary”.
INTRODUCTION

In this section we will examine the principles that should ideally govern our behaviour as we work with others.

We will term this ethical networking and we will attempt to define its main features and establish some basic guidelines.

By the end of this section, you should be able to have a useful basis for discussion and be able to establish guidelines that are suited to the circumstances of your particular network or group.

To agree an ethical approach will help to ensure that the well-being of all members of the network is important.

Activity N.5.a

Discuss the following questions in your group and see if you can come to a conclusion about what is right and wrong.

• Do different members of your group have different ideas as to where the boundaries are?

• Is it ethical for a salesperson to offer a bribe to a purchasing agent as an inducement to buy?

• Is it ethical for someone to use a company car for private use?

• How about company telephone for personal calls?

The term ethics refers to the rules and principles that define right and wrong conduct. Many decisions that people make require them to consider who may be affected – in terms of the result as well as the process.
FACTORS THAT AFFECT ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Stages of Moral Development

Substantial research confirms the existence of three levels of moral development, each composed of two stages.

At each successive stage, an individual’s moral judgment becomes less and less depend on outside influences. The three levels and six stages are described in Figure 5-1.

Research of these stages allows us to draw several conclusions.

First, people proceed through the six stages step by step.

They gradually move up a ladder, stage by stage.

Second, there is no guarantee of continued moral development.

Development can terminate at any stage.

Third, the majority of adults are at Stage 4. They are limited to obeying the rules and will be predisposed to behave ethically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description of Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principled</td>
<td>6. Following self-chosen ethical principles even if they violate the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Valuing rights of others and upholding absolute values and rights regardless of the majority’s opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>4. Maintaining conventional order by fulfilling obligations to which you have agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Living up to what is expected by people close to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preconventional</td>
<td>2. Following rules only when doing so is in your immediate immediate interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Sticking to rules to avoid physical punishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on L. Kohlberg

Figure 5-1. Stages of Moral Development
**Individual characteristics.** Individual variables have been found to influence an individual’s actions according to his or her beliefs about what is right or wrong are values, ego strength and locus of control.

**Values** are developed in an individual’s early years – from parents, teachers, friends, and others – these values represent basic convictions about what is right and wrong.

Note that although values and stage of moral development may seem similar they are not.

The former are broad and cover a wide range issues; the latter is specially a measure of independence from outside influences.

**Ego strength** is a personality measure of strength of person’s convictions. People who score high on ego strength are likely to resist impulses and follow their convictions more than those who are low in ego strength. That is, individuals high in ego strength are more likely to do what they think is right.

**Locus of control** is a personality attribute that measures the degree to which people believe they are masters of their own fate.

People with an internal locus of control believe that they control their own destinies; those with an external locus believe that what happens to them in life is due to luck or chance.

From an ethical perspective, externals are less likely to take personal responsibility for the consequences of their behavior and are more likely to rely on external forces.

Internals, on the other hand, are more likely to take responsibility for consequences and rely on their own internal standards of right and wrong to guide their behavior.
Legislation. Formal rules and regulations reduce ambiguity. Written codes of ethics are examples of formal guides that promote consistent behavior.

Social culture. The content (norms, values, beliefs) and strength of a social culture of surrounding community also influence ethical behavior.

Issue intensity. The final factor that affects a person’s ethical behavior is the characteristics of the ethical issue itself. As Figure 3-3 shows, six characteristics have been identified as relevant in determining issue intensity.

![Figure 5-2 Characteristics that Determine Issue Intensity](image)

- Concentration of Effect
- Consensus of Evil
- Probability of Harm
- Immediacy of Consequences
- Proximity to Victim
- Greatness of Harm
CODE OF ETHICS

A code of ethics is a formal document that states an organization’s primary values and the ethical rules it expects its members to follow.

A survey of business ethics found that their content tended to fall into three categories:

- Be a member of the organization
- Do not do anything unlawful or improper that will harm the organization
- Be a good to customers.

Effectiveness of code of ethics depends heavily on whether leaders and members of networking support them and how people who break the codes are treated.

1. How great a harm (or benefit) is done to victims (or beneficiaries) of the ethical act in question?
   Example: ........................................................................................................

2. How much consensus is there that the act is evil (or good)?
   Example: ........................................................................................................

3. What is the probability that the act will actually take

4. What’s the length of time between the act in question and its expected consequences?
   Example: ........................................................................................................

5. How close do you feel (socially, psychologically, or physically) to the victims (or beneficiaries) of the evil (beneficial) act in question?
   Example: ........................................................................................................

6. How large is the concentrated of the ethical act on the people involved?
   Example: ........................................................................................................

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According to these guidelines, the larger the number of people harmed, the greater the consensus that an act is evil, the higher the probability that an act will take place and actually cause harm, the shorter the length of time until the consequences of the act surface, and the closer the observer feels to the victims of the act, the greater the issue intensity.

These six factors determine how important an ethical issue is.

**Activity N.5.d**

Discuss the following questions as a group

- What is ethics and why is it important for people in networking to be aware of ethics?

Describe the stages of moral development and how they might affect a person’s ethics.

- What individual characteristics might affect an ethical behaviour?
- How does a social culture influence ethical behaviour?
- What determines the degree of intensity of an ethical issue?
- What are codes of ethics, and how can their effectiveness be improved?

Whether a person acts ethically or unethically is the result of complex interaction between the person’s stage of moral development and several moderating variables including

- individual characteristics
- legislation
- norms and values of social culture of community
- the intensity of the ethical issue.
Figure 5-3 Factors that Affect Ethical and Unethical Behaviour

HUMAN RIGHTS

The question of human rights is central to the well being of our daily existence.

There is the right to associate with others or to have freedom of movement.

Other basic rights include the right to shelter, food, education and work. The question is also a controversial one.

Governments and societies define human rights in a variety of ways.

Social rights like divorce, contraception or abortion may be contested.

The right to free speech may operate alongside legislation against incitement to hatred.

People protest when countries suppress human rights.
Governments disregard the issue of suppression of rights when economic profit or security becomes important.

Human rights therefore is a complicated matter.

**Activity N.5.b**

**Materials: Flipchart and Pens**

Discuss the following questions and write down some conclusions from the group.

- What is your experience of human rights?
- Do you feel that you can discuss this openly? Why?

Much concern about human rights centres on how we conduct ourselves in the workplace. People speak of the dignity of the worker and legislation attempts to provide for this.

This is important as it gives valuable status to the role and contribution of the worker.

In practice, much yet needs to be done. Workers continue to complain of stress, discrimination and bullying to an extraordinary extent.

People are still treated differently because of their sex, their colour, their politics, their religion or lack of, their age; immigrants still continue to face hostility in host communities.

So, why is this still happening? How solid is our ethos of equality and human rights? Such questions are outside of our scope as participants on this course. However, we can consider how we can make a difference in the way that we interact with others.

*It is crucial to the well being of the network that ROUTES adopts an ethical networking stance.*
We have seen therefore that in practice human rights has a complex history.

Yet, it is easy to establish some guidelines or rules that will go to ensure good ethical practice.

This is especially necessary in the case of the ROUTES participant given that you are likely to be working with people in your locality with whom you must maintain good relations.

It is important, therefore, to discuss at a formal level how you intend to establish ethical guidelines.

Such rules can and will be broken, of course.

However, to have a formal statement in place should make this more difficult.

It might also be worthwhile having a period review of the guidelines and their practical application.

It is also important to consider the question in relation to confidence building.

Studies suggest that poor working conditions, especially where bullying exists, affects self-esteem and confidence.

In extreme cases, this leads to poor health or people resigning from their jobs.

A good working environment, on the other hand, helps you to build up your confidence and achieve your potential as a human being.

**A positive working environment, without bullying, is a basic human right**
ESTABLISHING A GOOD CODE OF PRACTICE

To help in establishing a good code of practice, the following questions raise some of the main issues in establishing a good code of practice in networking.

*How do you judge other people?*

Sometimes people pre-judge in a way that leads to stereotyping. Often this is based on superficial evidence such as: clothes, accent, sex, colour or age. In a rural area, people may be prejudiced against the outsider while in an urban area, people may be prejudiced against the country person.

**Activity N.5.c**

*Materials: Flipchart and Pens*

Discuss the following as a group:

The following categories of people

- Politicians
- Tabloid Readers
- Immigrants

are an example of the way we divide our society. This shapes our attitude and is often the basis for how we judge other people.

Add some of your own categories and describe your attitude to them as individuals.

- Do the members of the group differ in their attitudes to various groups?
Do you bully others?

In order to understand what is meant by bullying, the following list should be helpful. As you will see it is quite extensive and covers issues that might not normally be regarded as bullying.

When someone speaks during a meeting do you

- Listen?
- Doodle?
- Pass Notes?
- Show disinterest (IE in the way that you sit)?
- Ridicule a speaker?

People might also be described as bullies if they

- do not share information,
- give little notice for meetings
- seek to exclude in any other manner.

It is important not to embarrass, harm, cause anxiety or stress to other members of your network or group.

Activity N.5.e

Use the following information to set up a code of ethics for your group.

- Introduce the issue of Ethical Guidelines on the agenda of your first meeting. If this is not possible, introduce it as soon as possible thereafter. The important thing is that Ethics is regarded as a formal topic for discussion.
- Agree a code of conduct that takes into account the well being of all members.
• Agree a method of resolving any difficulties that arise. How will you resolve any breaches of this code in a way that will not be harmful to the person(s) in question?

• Decide to have periodic review of the Code.

• Circulate any information that emerges on the question

• Consider inviting a guest speaker on the question.

**Giving credit**

*As part of the building of good networking practice, members must agree to give credit as truthfully as possible.*

In this session, we have drawn attention to issues that are at once simple and complex. By setting up some guidelines, and deciding to review progress on a periodic basis, we can hope to ensure that group members enjoy human rights and dignity to the best that this can be achieved.
UNIT | 5| ETHICAL NETWORKING

References:
Appendix A

Personal Learning Diary

Session: __________

What are the most important things I have learned in this session?

Record your thoughts, impressions and reactions during the session. This personal learning diary is strictly for your own use.
Appendix B

Photocopy the following questionnaire and distribute to the group.
Give the group a few minutes to fill in the questionnaire and then compare your scores with the other members of your group

Instructions: Indicate your level of agreement with these 18 statements about business ethics using the scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The only moral of business is making money.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A person who is doing well in business does not have to worry about moral problems.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Every businessperson acts according to moral principles, whether he or she is aware of it or not.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Act according to the law, and you can’t go wrong morally.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ethics in business is basically an adjustment between expectations and the ways people behave.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Business decisions involve a realistic economic attitude and not a moral philosophy.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Moral values are irrelevant to the business world.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Business ethics” is a concept for public relations only.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Competitiveness and profitability are important values.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Conditions of a free economy will best serve the needs of society. Limiting competition can only hurt society and actually violates basic natural laws.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. As a consumer, when making an auto insurance claim, I try to get as much as possible regardless of the extent of the damage.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. While shopping at the supermarket, it is appropriate to switch price tags on packages.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. As an employee, I can take home office supplies; it doesn’t hurt anyone.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I view sick days as vacation days that I deserve.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Employees’ wages should be determined according</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. If you want a specific goal, you have to take the necessary steps. 5 4 3 2 1
17. The business world has its own rules. 5 4 3 2 1
18. A good businessperson is a successful businessperson. 5 4 3 2 1