

Unit 7 – Ethical Leadership

Practical Class

Time allocation	Cumulative time	Intervention
5 mins	5 mins	Welcome
10 mins	15 mins	1. Personal Ethics: Paying the copy assistant for a copy of the test in advance (Quiz questions 1 & 2)
35 mins	50 mins	2. Discussion of scenarios (Quiz questions 3 & 4)
<i>Break (10 mins)</i>		
5 mins	55 mins	Hand out Issues 3 and 4 of Case Study 2. Recap of Case Study 2 and reading of Issues 3 and 4. Also show this on the screen. Ask whether students have any questions.
45 mins	100 mins	Students complete the task for Issue 3 and submit their attempts onto Blackboard before they leave. Remind students that: • Issue 4 of Case Study 2 is due for submission on 18 April. • Peer review of Issues 1 and 2 is due today, 16 April. • Peer review for Issues 3 and 4 is due on 23 April.

Make use of <https://quizizz.com/> to set-up quiz questions for class. Remember to keep a record of students' participation (per unit & date) as this will form part of their predicate/year-mark.

Copies:

Students need to receive printouts of Case Study 2, Issues 3 and 4.

1. Personal Ethics

You are a university tennis player and were selected for the first team this year. This is a dream come true! The only challenge is that the biggest inter-university tennis tournament is the week before your test week. You will certainly not have time to study as much as you should. You will play multiple games each day, leaving you tired and in need of rest in the evenings to enable you to perform at your best the next day. You are representing the UFS – you cannot disappoint the university or your coach, who has invested so much time and effort into your training. There

are scouts for the national team present at the tournament as well. Nothing can distract you from your game and preparation for each following day.

You received a sports bursary to study at the UFS. All the time you have put into tennis has taken its toll on your academics. Your marks are not looking great. If you don't pass, you will lose your bursary, which means you cannot study further and you cannot continue playing for the UFS Tennis team.

At your friend's recent birthday party, you met a lady who told you that she is the assistant in the copy room in your faculty – the one where all the tests are printed. You also heard that she is really struggling financially.

Desperate times call for desperate measures. To ensure that you perform at your best in the tennis tournament and your tests, you offered her R2 000 to give you copies of two tests written the week after the tennis tournament. As you need to study the test and figure out the solution, you will gain knowledge and improve your understanding of the module, but you will save a lot of time not having to study all the work at once. As you won't have the solution to the test, the copy of the paper will basically just give you a scope of what to study.

Quiz:

What is your opinion on this scenario?

- a. It is completely ethical
- b. It is not entirely ethical, but there is good motivation for the actions taken
- c. I am not sure how I feel about this
- d. This is not ethical, but because you don't have the solution, it is not the end of the world
- e. It is completely unethical

Discussion:

Guide students to think of the different consequences and discuss it amongst themselves:

- What can happen to the student/"you"
- What can happen to the copy room assistant
- What about the credibility of your degree
- How fair is it towards your employer one day, who will believe that you have the knowledge one would expect from a student with your degree, but you actually never studied the entire module
- Use the decision-making framework:
 - o Is it legal? (I.e. does university rules allow it?)
 - o Does it align with university/your own values? Honesty/Integrity?
 - o Is it fair towards all stakeholders? (The assistant, the employer of the future, etc.)
 - o Can it be disclosed? (How would your parents feel if they knew you did this?)

Repeat the quiz to determine whether students came to a different result.

2. Discussion of scenarios linked to Unit 7 lecture

Scenario:

Sarah is the CEO of a software development company known for its innovative products and collaborative work culture. One of Sarah's top performers, Mark, has been with the company for several years and is highly skilled in his role as a senior software engineer. However, over the past few months, Sarah has noticed a change in Mark's behaviour. He has become increasingly arrogant and dismissive towards his colleagues, often belittling their ideas during team meetings and refusing to collaborate on projects. Despite Sarah's attempts to subtly address the issue with Mark privately, he continues to exhibit disrespectful behaviour, causing tension within the team and impacting the morale, and ultimately the productivity, of the team.

If Sarah aims to be an ethical, trusted leader, how should she deal with the situation?

Quiz question:

After reading the scenario, which ethical principle should Sarah prioritize when deciding how to address Mark's behaviour?

- a. Maximizing company profits
- b. Ensuring employee job satisfaction
- c. Fostering a culture of respect and collaboration**
- d. Avoiding confrontation and maintaining harmony within the team

Explanation: Sarah, as a leader, should prioritize upholding ethical principles that contribute to a positive work environment, such as respect and collaboration. While company profits and employee satisfaction are important considerations, creating a culture where all employees feel valued and respected should be the primary focus in this scenario.

Options to discuss in class (students can form groups):

- Confront Mark directly and provide him with specific examples of his behaviour, expressing the impact it has on the team and the company's culture. Sarah could offer support and resources to help Mark address any underlying issues contributing to his behaviour, such as stress or burnout.
- Implement a formal disciplinary process, including warnings and performance improvement plans, if Mark's behaviour persists despite attempts to address it informally. Sarah could emphasize the importance of respect and collaboration in the company's values and communicate clear consequences for violating these principles.
- Seek input from other team members and stakeholders to gather perspectives on the situation and assess the broader impact of Mark's behaviour on the team's morale and

performance. Sarah could involve HR professionals or external consultants to provide guidance on conflict resolution and workplace dynamics.

- Explore alternative solutions such as transferring Mark to a different team or role within the company where his skills can be utilized effectively without causing disruption. Sarah could prioritize finding a win-win solution that addresses both the company's needs and Mark's professional development.

Consider the ethical responsibilities of leaders to foster a positive work environment and uphold the company's values, even in difficult situations involving high-performing employees.

Depending on how Sarah responds to the ethical dilemma, students can determine whether she exhibits qualities of ethical leadership.

Final quiz question:

Which of the following scenarios presents the greatest ethical challenge for a leader?

- Choosing between two equally qualified candidates for a job opening.
- Deciding whether to invest in a new project with uncertain outcomes.
- Handling a situation where a subordinate is caught violating company policies.
- Balancing the interests of shareholders with those of other stakeholders, such as employees and the local community.**

Explanation: Balancing the interests of various stakeholders is a complex ethical challenge for leaders, as it requires considering the needs and concerns of different groups while making decisions that align with the organization's values and long-term sustainability. This scenario often involves navigating conflicting priorities and requires leaders to demonstrate integrity, fairness, and transparency in decision-making.

Developed with input from ChatGPT.