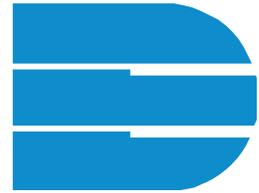


Thoughts on Ethical Behavior

Drebelbis Engineering

Forensic Engineering • Building Technology



*from the presentation of
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at the NSPE 2016 Annual Conference*

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Competence

Don't work outside your area of competence, unless you have skilled guidance.

Engineering companies whose work is primarily performed by unlicensed individuals seem to have more legal problems than companies who populate their staff with competent, licensed engineers.

For engineers, the Standard of Care is the Ethics defined by their Engineering Board.

Surround yourself with competent individuals.

If you work for someone who is less skilled in your profession than you, you won't learn much, and you may get into trouble.

Never assume that something is simple or easy just because it looks simple or easy. We've known about gravity since Isaac Newton, and still don't fully understand it.

Coordination

Don't discount the importance of the knowledge of other disciplines.

Listen to old guys, because they occasionally offer wisdom and insight.

When your work depends on others properly designing their portion of the engineering system, make sure everyone understands how the coordinated system should work.

If you fail to coordinate your work with others and the system fails as a result, you and the person with whom you should have coordinated, will both be held responsible for the outcome.

When working on a project, the objective is to serve the client's needs, NOT to build a monument to yourself.

Delegation

Construction you fail to detail in your contract documents, is delegated to the imagination of the contractor, and often someone less enlightened than you.

If you delegate your design responsibility to the contractor, you are still responsible for the outcome.

Only authority can be delegated. You can't delegate responsibility. If you could delegate responsibility, murder for hire would be legal.

Responsibility

If someone orders you to do something you know is wrong, be sure their responsibility for the action is clearly defined.

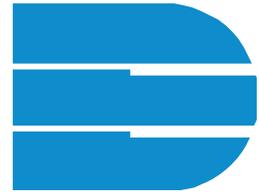
If you know an action is wrong, don't do it.

Don't tell lies.

If you don't know something that is important, take it upon yourself to change that condition. In the meantime, the response "I don't know" works well.

The excuse, "Everyone does it" didn't work with your mother and it doesn't excuse bad engineering.

"Be sure you're right and then go ahead" - *Davy Crockett*



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Fayol's 14 Principles of Management

1. **Division of Work** – When employees are specialized, output can increase because they become increasingly skilled and efficient.
2. **Authority** – Managers must have the authority to give orders, but they must also keep in mind that with authority comes responsibility. (*Parity of authority and responsibility*)
3. **Discipline** – Discipline must be upheld in organizations, but methods for doing so can vary.
4. **Unity of Command** – Employees should have only one direct supervisor.
5. **Unity of Direction** – Teams with the same objective should be working under the direction of one manager, using one plan. This will ensure that action is properly coordinated.
6. **Subordination of Individual Interests to the General Interest** – The interests of one employee should not be allowed to become more important than those of the group. This includes managers.
7. **Remuneration** – Employee satisfaction depends on fair remuneration for everyone. This includes financial and non-financial compensation.
8. **Centralization** – This principle refers to how close employees are to the decision-making process. It is important to aim for an appropriate balance.
9. **Scalar Chain** – Employees should be aware of where they stand in the organization's hierarchy, or chain of command.
10. **Order** – The workplace facilities must be clean, tidy and safe for employees. Everything should have its place.
11. **Equity** – Managers should be fair to staff at all times, both maintaining discipline as necessary and acting with kindness where appropriate.
12. **Stability of Tenure of Personnel** – Managers should strive to minimize employee turnover. Personnel planning should be a priority.
13. **Initiative** – Employees should be given the necessary level of freedom to create and carry out plans.
14. **Esprit de Corps** – Organizations should strive to promote team spirit and unity.

Henri Fayol 1916

“With great power there must also come great responsibility.”

Spider-Man (as drawn by Stan Lee)

“I shall not today attempt further to define [it], but I know it when I see it.”

Justice Potter Stewart