



A Universal Ethics Framework

Since first published in an article on the University of British Columbia's Centre for Applied Ethics website in 1997, the following guide has been used by governments, corporations, churches, schools, hospitals, professional associations, law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to teach the underlying principles of ethics, develop codes of ethics, assess ethical dilemmas and conduct research.

As of 2018, the framework had also been included in a wide range of presentations, professional journals, textbooks and other educational materials, and reprinted by diverse faculties at nineteen universities and eight colleges. With no reported controversy, it has been used worldwide by people from diverse cultures and faiths.

A Framework for Universal Principles of Ethics (2018)

Interpersonal Ethics (morality)

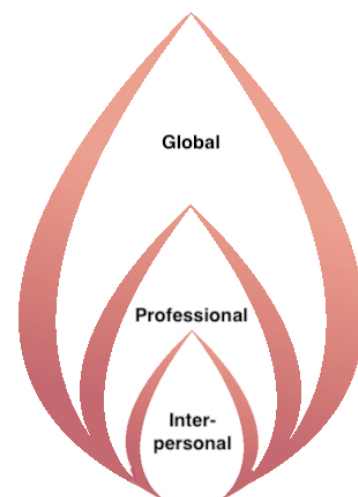
- Concern for the well-being of others
- Respect for the autonomy of others
- Trustworthiness & honesty
- Benevolence (doing good)
- Preventing harm
- Basic justice (being fair)
- Willing compliance with the law (with the exception of civil disobedience)

Professional Ethics

- Impartiality (objectivity)
- Openness (full disclosure)
- Confidentiality
- Due diligence (duty of care)
- Fidelity to professional responsibilities
- Avoiding potential or apparent conflict of interest

Global Ethics

- Reverence for life (in all its forms)
- Interdependence & responsibility for the 'whole'
- Society before self / social responsibility
- Global justice (as reflected in international laws)
- Environmental stewardship
- Reverence for place



To read the article explaining how to use this framework, see www.universalethics.com.



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A Scenario to Discuss

Principles of professional ethics can overlap and sometimes come into conflict with basic principles of morality. Consider the following true story.

In 1995, the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* honoured a Russian scientist, Vil Sultanovich Mirzayanov with their *Scientific Freedom and Responsibility Award*. Dr. Mirzayanov won the award for revealing his involvement in the secret development and continuing manufacture of dangerous chemical weapons in violation of international agreements. He was subsequently fired, arrested and imprisoned.

Which principles come into play here? Which ones are in conflict? (Think of the scientist's professional duties, and possible repercussions if the secret is kept or divulged. Think of who might be impacted by the scientist's decision.)

- Choose one or more relevant principles from each column to discuss.

<i>Basic Moral Principles (Interpersonal)</i>	<i>Principles of Professional Ethics</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> concern for the well-being of others	<input type="checkbox"/> impartiality (objectivity)
<input type="checkbox"/> respect for the autonomy of others	<input type="checkbox"/> openness (full disclosure)
<input type="checkbox"/> trustworthiness & honesty	<input type="checkbox"/> confidentiality
<input type="checkbox"/> benevolence (doing good)	<input type="checkbox"/> due diligence (duty of care)
<input type="checkbox"/> preventing harm	<input type="checkbox"/> fidelity to professional responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/> basic justice (being fair)	<input type="checkbox"/> avoiding a potential or apparent conflict of interest
<input type="checkbox"/> willing compliance with the law (with the exception of civil disobedience)	

- Does the situation change if the scientist *sells* the information for personal gain?
