Ethical Leadership and Professional Life

Dr. Andrew Fiala
afiala@csufresno.edu
www.andrewfiala.com
@PhilosophyFiala

Description and Plan

THESIS: Good leaders embody key virtues. They inspire by building consensus around shared values. And they respond in ethical ways to the world.

1. Ethical Leadership
2. Ethical Decision-Making
3. Professional Ethics and Ethical Culture
Active Learning

- It is by learning and study, which are motions, that the soul gains knowledge and becomes a better thing. But in a state of rest, when the soul does not study or learn, we fail to acquire knowledge and forget what we have already learned.
  — Socrates in Plato’s *Theatetus*

---

PART 1: ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is “Good Leadership”

- *We don’t call for good leadership—we expect, that it will be good.*
- “*Bad” leadership implies no leadership.***
  — James MacGregor Burns
Ethics and Leadership

• Ethical behavior is needed at all levels within organizations. It is an essential part of living well for all human beings.

• Ethical leadership is necessary for success in any field and at all levels of the organization. Ethical organizations are led by role models who embody the values of the organization.

• Ethics can be taught. Ethical culture is supported by reinforcement of shared values through discussion and practice. Ethical behaviors, habits, and attitudes can be developed through reflective practice.

• Ethical organizations are socially responsible and internally responsive. They consider the needs of all stakeholders, including the least advantaged.

Group Brainstorm

• Identify 3 leadership role models
• List 5 Qualities/Virtues of good leadership
Rival Leadership strategies

- **Unethical Leadership**
  - Threats
  - Bribes
  - Favoritism
  - Power

- **Transactional**
  - OUTCOMES: Efficiency, order, and accomplishment
  - Egoistic assumptions
    - Rewards and Punishments

- **Ethical Leadership**
  - Responsibility
  - Transparency
  - Honesty
  - Fairness

- **Transformational**
  - GOODS: justice, autonomy, greater good
  - Ethical Assumptions
    - Larger vision and shared values

Leadership v. Management

Management is about persuading people to do things they do not want to do, while leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could.

— Steve Jobs —
Ripped from the Headlines
The Houston Rockets and China


• Houston Rockets General Manager Daryl Morey posted a tweet Friday expressing support for the pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong. Morey quickly deleted the tweet and posted a clarification, saying he "did not intend" to offend any Chinese fans, but damage to the league's lucrative relationship with China — a country with billions of dollars invested in the sport — was already done. The NBA's Chinese partners suspended ties with the franchise, Chinese sponsors pulled their money and Chinese TV outlets said they would no longer broadcast Rockets games.

• Mike Bass, an NBA spokesman, said in a statement Sunday that Morey's tweet was "regrettable" and "deeply offended" many of the league's Chinese fans. He added that Morey's views did not represent the Rockets or the league, although he suggested Morey had a right to express his view...

• The NBA's Chinese social media account, meanwhile, posted a version of the statement that had several discrepancies, including that Morey's statement was "inappropriate" and severely hurt the feelings of Chinese fans, prompting Bass to clarify that the statement in English was the official one.
Ripped from the Headlines
Houston Rockets and China


• Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., joined the chorus of voices expressing outrage at the NBA’s response, tweeting that the league was “throwing” Morey “under the bus to please the Communist Chinese Govt.” Rubio also pointed to the league’s reputation as the most progressive of the four major U.S. sports leagues — one where its athletes, coaches and executives often speak out on hot button political issues. “Disgusting,” he added. “They allow #China to punish a U.S. citizen for free speech in order to protect NBA’s market access in China. Grotesque.”

• Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., tweeted that with the Rockets under pressure from China to fire Morey, the ordeal will prove to be a “moment of truth for” the league. “Will they bow to pressure from repressive, authoritarian govt?” he tweeted...

• Sen. Rick Scott, R-Fla., tweeted that it was “clear” the NBA “is more interested in money than human rights.” “The NBA is kowtowing to Beijing to protect their bottom line and disavowing those with the temerity to #standwithHongKong,” he added. “Shameful!”

• Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, wrote he was “proud” to see Morey’s tweet, adding that the league, "in pursuit of big" money, was "shamefully retreating."

• Democrats expressed dismay over the episode, as well. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., tweeted: “No one should implement a gag rule on Americans speaking out for freedom.”

Discussion:
Leading on Social Justice

1. Should good leaders speak out about issues related to social justice?
2. Should organizations avoid political speech in the name of profit or to avoid controversy?
3. What would you do about the Houston Rockets-China controversy if you had a leadership role in the NBA?
4. What institutional changes could help in such a case?
5. Whose side are you on in this controversy?
PART 2: ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING

1. RESEARCH the facts
2. UNDERSTAND who has an obligation (and to what extent)
3. CLARIFY the nature of your value judgment
4. APPLY value systems
5. RECOGNIZE the depth of Value Conflicts
6. REFLECT, RE-ASSESS, REFORM

Professional Obligation

Who has an obligation to do what; and to what extent?

- **Standards of Professional Practice**
  - Behavior required by a professional code
- **Negligence**
  - conduct that fails to do what is professionally required—or that falls below a standard of due care expected of a reasonably prudent person
- **Supererogation**
  - Going above and beyond the call of duty
Value Systems

- Divine Command: God as source and motivation
- Natural Law: Purposes and functions of things
- Virtue Ethics: Character, habits, role models
- Utilitarianism: Happiness for all
- Respect and Rights: Universal respect for persons
- Social Contract: Reciprocity and mutuality
- Care Ethics: Care and Relationship

Conflicts of Values

- Dilemma:
  - good v. good or right v. right
- Temptation:
  - right v. wrong or good v. evil
- Dilemma Paradigms
  - Truth v. Loyalty
  - Individual v. Community
  - Short term v. Long term
  - Justice v. Mercy
Ripped from the Headlines
Former Teacher Blames Education Policymakers For Atlanta Cheating Scandal NPR, Feb. 16, 2019
https://www.npr.org/2019/02/16/695344751/former-teacher-blames-education-policymakers-for-atlanta-cheating-scandal

• A 2011 Georgia state report found unethical behavior in the school system, including teachers and principals changing wrong answers on standardized tests. Two years later, a grand jury indicted the Atlanta school superintendent and 34 other educators. Some agreed to lesser charges; 12 eventually went to trial, and all but one of them were found guilty of racketeering in 2015 — a felony charge often used to prosecute the mafia.
• Teacher Shani Robinson said, “I think the criminalization of black educators was the next legacy” in “Atlanta’s history of displacement and the destruction of black communities.”

Discussion:
Blowing the Whistle on Cheating

• You suspect that there is cheating going on in your organization.
• EXAMPLES in Education: Atlanta, New York, Flint
  – Assistant Principal erased student answers
  – Students coached during testing
  – Students left without proctors
  – Students allowed to re-write essays

• What should a teacher, colleague, principal do?
• Who should you talk to?
• How should ethical organizations and leaders prepare?
• How do you deal with larger social/political issues?
PART 3: Professional Ethics

Professional Life

- Social Role
- Self-Regulation
- Community Benefit
- Representative Function
- Individual Values
- Legal Requirements

Professional Ethics Basics

The Three C’s

1. **Compliance** with the Rules
2. **Contributions** to Society
3. **Concern for Consequences**

Also:

- Conformity (professional standards)
- Culture (ethical culture)
- Care (justice and golden rule)
What is a Profession?

- Autonomy, Expertise, and Self-sufficiency
  - Specialized knowledge used to regulate objectives, standards, and procedures

- Ethical Self-Regulation
  - Reflective agents articulate and abide by codes governing best practices while exhibiting key virtues

- Social Benefit
  - Role autonomy and self-regulation provide a service to the community

- Representational Function
  - Individuals occupy roles that represent the profession to the public

- Trust

Professions and Ethics

- Virtues: excellences defined within practices

- Practice: *Any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.*
Most trusted professions
Gallup Poll 2018

Trust, Responsibility, Accountability

How do you demonstrate and model: trust, responsibility, accountability?
Brain Storm

- What are the **internal goods** of the practice of your profession?
- What are the **ethical standards and virtues** of excellent performance?
- How are those standards and goods related to **social responsibility and trust**?
- What can your profession do to cultivate social trust?

The Challenge of Complexity

Shapiro and Stefkovich, *Ethical Leadership & Decision Making in Education*  
Routledge, 2001
Brain Storm

- What challenges remain in developing an ethical organization?
- How should leaders be selected and trained?
- How should ethical behavior be promoted and developed?

Key Virtues and Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Virtues</th>
<th>Individual Virtues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance</td>
<td>Courage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10/17/19
Conclusion

- Dilemmas exist
- Temptations abound
- No one is perfect
- We can improve
- We are improving

Accept finite disappointments but never lose infinite hope.

Martin Luther King, Jr.