The Leader's Choice - Five Steps To Ethical Decision Making

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Abstract

Making ethical decisions when confronted with a dilemma is a key to success along the project leadership journey. Using a framework to guide those decisions can be crucial to advancing project leadership competence. This paper describes the **strong connection between ethical decision-making and project leadership success**, depicts the role that an ethical decision-making model can play, and presents the new five-step PMI Ethical Decision-Making Framework (EDMF) created by the Ethics Member Advisory Group (Ethics MAG) and released PMI-wide. A realistic ethical dilemma is explored using the EDMF. A summary is included of the benchmarking of other organizations indicating that PMI is at the front of the ethical decision-making trend.

Introduction

The Problem

Project management is, for the most part, an activity undertaken with others. While we may refer to these others as team members, stakeholders, or coworkers, we, as project managers, depend on them for the success of our projects. And the projects we are frequently trying to succeed at managing involve having these others do, or not do, just what is needed in an environment where we have far less authority then responsibility. This limitation of authority that characterizes the project manager's role propels the most successful project managers to demonstrate leadership (Juli, 2011, p. 11). Consequently, leadership is a key to unlocking the solution to motivating with limited authority; it is the currency that is spent achieving project success. And central to leadership is trust (Covey, 2006, p. 3); without trust, there are no followers. Fortunately, the **speed of trust building in relationships can be accelerated through ethical behavior** (Hosmer, 1985, p. 329).

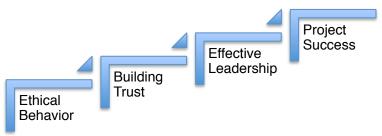


Exhibit 1 – Ethical Importance

This logical progression, which is depicted in Exhibit 1, draws a direct link between ethical behavior, leadership, and project success. The exhibit highlights the central role that ethical behavior plays in building the trust needed by project managers with limited authority to motivate team members and others to achieve project success.

Background

Recognizing the important role ethics plays in project success, PMI formed the Code Implementation Advisory Committee (CIAC) with the **chartered purpose to advance ethical behavior by members and**

credential holders. This group of volunteers, under the oversight of the PMI Vice President and General Council and with reporting responsibility to the PMI Board of Directors, revised the previous Code of Professional Conduct and released the existing PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct; since its release in 2006, all PMI members and credential holders have agreed to adhere to this code.

Building on the broad dissemination of the code, the Ethics MAG (formerly CIAC) undertook the development of the EDMF. This development, which lasted 11 months and involved over 600 hours of labor, was conducted in accordance with a project plan with tasks to baseline existing ethical decision-making models, develop requirements for a PMI ethical decision-making model, develop and test the EDMF, develop and conduct EDMF awareness and training, and release EDMF PMI-wide. Formal project management methods and documentation were used to carryout the project plan. **Feedback regarding the EDMF was solicited and acted upon throughout the entire project**; including a survey conducted of 474 PMI members where virtually all respondents (98.9%) felt that the EDMF circulation draft they were presented with was clear and understandable, virtually all of the respondents (97.4%) felt that the EDMF would be a good "hands-on" companion for the code, and virtually all of the respondents (95.4%) felt that the EDMF would help to raise ethical awareness.

During the effort to baseline ethical decision-making models, twenty-nine organizations were examined. Findings from that baselining effort revealed that professional organizations tended to create EDMF's to address the ethical challenges of their practitioners, and corporations tended to create EDMFs for decision-making to benefit the organization itself. EDMFs were more likely to be found in organizations related to health care and less likely to be found in professional organizations; this information suggests that **PMI as a professional organization, in creating an EDMF, falls at a leading edge in the industry**. EDMF's that encouraged users to "think before acting" were found to have received more favorable reviews then EDMFs that attempted to prescribe specific actions for predefined situations. Similarly, EDMFs that favored simplicity, brevity, and ease of use were more favorably received then those that attempted precision and completeness.

Leadership and Ethics

Leadership Connected To Ethics

Although ethics and leadership are intuitively perceived as strongly connected, the concept of ethical leadership has been redefined recently in its strong relation with the concept of followership (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005, p. 120).

Ethical Leadership is the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making.

Ken Johnson has focused on this connection to identify four tightly interrelated components ((Johnson, 2003, p. 1) of ethical leadership:

- Purpose the ethical leader inquires reasons and acts with organization purposes firmly in mind.
- Knowledge the ethical leader has knowledge to inquire, judge and act prudently.
- Authority the ethical leader has the power to ask questions, make decisions and act, but also recognize
 that all those involved and affected must have the authority to contribute what they have towards shared
 purposes.
- Trust the ethical leader inspires, and its beneficiary of, trust throughout the organization and its environment.

All four of these elements are critical in an environment, such as project management, where authority is limited by the temporary nature of the project and by the all-to-common matrix relationship between the project manager and project team members.

Leadership Requires Trust

The Leadership Challenge (Kouzes, 2008, p. 32), which continues to be a bestseller after four editions and twenty years in print, is the gold standard for research-based leadership, and is the premier resource on becoming a leader. The text informs us that leadership requires trust:

It's clear that if people anywhere are to willingly follow someone - whether it be into battle or into the boardroom, the front office or the front lines - they first want to assure themselves that the person is worthy of their trust.

The establishment of a **direct linkage between leadership and trust** is based on the extensive studies of the characteristics of admired leaders conducted by the authors in; the characteristic "honest" scored first in each study (Kouzes, 2008, p. 25). Honesty and trust are considered synonymously shared characteristics by the authors; over time, leaders and their followers tend to adopt similar and complementary characteristics. This trust-based view of leadership dovetails nicely with the four components of ethical leadership identified above (Johnson, 2003, p.1) as well as with his characterization "without trust, knowledge, and purpose, people are afraid to exercise their authority." In a recent study conducted by the UV University Amstedam (Akker, Heres, Lasthuizen, and Six, 2009, p. 1) the authors explored the expectations of followers. They found that the "more a leader the acts in a way that followers feel is the appropriate ethical leader behavior, the more a leader will be trusted."

Trust Requires Ethics

Trust, however important, can only be established if the conditions are just right. And those conditions must remain; they can not be a one-time occurance. Those **conditions require**, **above all**, **openly ethical behavior by the leader** (Kouzes, 2008, p. 15):

Exemplary leaders know that if they want to gain commitment and achieve the highest standards, they must be models of the behavior they expect of others. Leaders model the way.

Although it could be argued that an organization might develop its own ethical fabric without direction, it is the leader's responsibility to lead the organization in this regard (Bennis, 1985, p. 186):

The leader is responsible for the set of ethics or norms that govern the behavior of the people in the organization. Leaders set the moral tone.

And the models of behavior and the moral tone that is required to establish trust enable organizations to do business more effectively and at lower costs (Fukuyama, 1996, p. 27).

Ethics Codes and Frameworks

Wise leaders understand that a shared and credible statement of the organization's ethical standards must complement a shared recognition of the leader's ethical beliefs. Usually the organization's ethical expectations of itself and of its members are stated in its code of ethics and professional conduct (PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, 2006). If the leader speaks and models the ethics code and expects those around him or her to model the shared values within, managers and employees who are put on notice that the codes are an important part of the organizational culture, will be encouraged to follow suit.

It is not uncommon for **ethical challenges to arise that can not be easily addressed with a simple or quick intrepretation of an ethics code**. Time-consuming complex dilemmas are a frequent part of the leader's decision-making portfolio; careful resolutions take time and effort. Leading-edge organizations have condensed the critical elements of their codes into a sequenced "ethical decision-making model" or "framework" that **guides the decision-maker through a series of steps** that direct him or her to making the best choice possible. The practical ethical decision-making framework is carefully tied to the values and codes of the organization, uses language

familiar to members of the organization, and can be illustrated with examples of situations commonly encountered by the organization's members.

Although no code or EDMF can resolve definitively most specific ethical dilemmas, a good code and EDMF can help to clarify the situation, eliminate poor choices, and illuminate better possibilities. No tool builds a cathedral, nor does it repair an automobile, or clear a blocked artery. The tool, in this case a code coupled with an EDMF, is only as useful as the skill of the person wielding it. Leaders need to develop ethical decision-making skills; codes and decision-making frameworks help leaders do that.

The PMI Ethical Decision-Making Framework (EDMF)

Concept

The underlying concept for the EDMF is that well-intentioned project managers, when confronted with an ethical dilemma, can benefit from applying critical thinking to the situation; the EDMF is intended to aid in that critical thinking. As project managers, many of us have an appreciation for the benefits of applying a structured thought process to our projects; this practice is entirely consistent with the process related aspects of project management itself. **The EDMF exists at the intersection of critical thinking and structured process**; it offers a structured step-by-step process to guide the critical thinking associated with addressing an ethical dilemma.

Since the EDMF is intended to be used as a guide for critical thinking throughout the entire ethical decision-making process, it is represented as a sequence of steps with sub-questions to stimulate the user; it begins with the recognition and assessment of the issue and ends with a decision and action. Critical to the successful use of the EDMF is the recognition that the answers to the questions raised by the EDMF are the responsibility of the user; the EDMF does not presume to offer those answers. Note that the EDMF can also be used effectively at the end of a decision-making process, when a decision is about to be made, to reflectively look back to see if the important steps have been taken and if the important considerations have been made.

Although the EDMF is presented as a logical linear sequence of steps, it is understood that the EDMF users will likely find it useful to loop back-and-forth between steps. Since the EDMF is not prescriptive and does not include every possible step or question useful for making an ethical decision, users are encouraged to be stimulated by EDMF to **challenge themselves with additional steps and questions**. Whereas compliance with the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is mandatory for all PMI members and credential holders, the EDMF is entirely optional. Users are encouraged to use the EDMF, along with other ethics related resources of their own choosing, to help them act in accordance with the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is at the heart of the successful use of the EDMF. As such, it helps to frame problems, clarify goals, examine assumptions and options, discern hidden values, evaluate evidence, and assess conclusions. "Critical" in this context connotes the importance or centrality of the thinking to an issue, question or problem of concern; it does not suggest disapproval or negative judgment. "Thinking" in this context honors the sequence of thought before action where the actions that are taken have been informed by the preceding thoughts. Critical thinking is proactive. One definition that has resulted from considerable research (Ennis, 2003, p. 295) is an excellent fit in the context of ethics "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do." This definition is consistent with the philosophy, originating over 2,500 years ago in Buddha's teachings, that people are responsible for their own actions.

Critical thinkers tend to share some common skills (Facione, 2011, p. 5), including observation, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and explanation. Critical thinkers tend to follow a process that includes:

- Recognize the problem
- Recognize optimal solutions that represent a balance of factors
- Gather pertinent information and recognize assumptions
- Interpret and evaluate information

- Draw and test conclusions
- Evaluate consequences

Using EDMF

The EDMF contains five steps (PMI Ethical Decision-Making Framework, 2012). Facts about the ethical dilemma are gathered prior to using the EDMF. Applying this framework involves assessing the gathered facts about the dilemma, considering alternative choices, identifying and analyzing the candidate decision, applying ethical principles to the candidate decision, and making the decision. Exhibit 2 contains the five EDMF steps. Each of the five steps is supplemented with a series of sub-questions as listed in Exhibit 3.

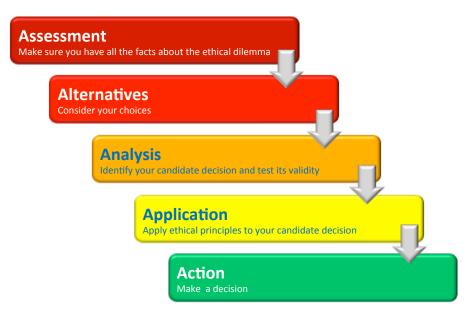


Exhibit 2 – PMI EDMF Steps

1. Assessment: Make sure you have all the facts about the ethical dilemma and ask these questions:

- Does it abide by the law?
- Does it align with the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct?
- Does it agree with your employer's and client's code of ethics and conduct?
- Does it align with your ethical values and those of the surrounding culture?

If it does not abide by the law, seek legal council. If the answers to the above questions provide substantial facts to make a case, go to the next step. If you are not sure, you may need to gather more facts or ask a trusted person for advice.

2. Alternatives: Consider your choices by asking the following questions:

- Have you listed possible alternative choices?
- Have you considered pros and cons for each possible choice?

If the answers to the above questions result in a viable solution, go to the next step to analyze your candidate decision. If not, you may need to gather more facts and complete your research.

3. Analysis: Identify your candidate decision and test its validity with these questions:

- Will your candidate decision have a positive impact or prevent harm to project managers, PMI staff or volunteers, clients, your employer's organization, other stakeholders, the environment, or future generations?
- Does your candidate decision take cultural differences into account?
- Looking back, will this decision seem like a good idea a year from now?
- Are you free from external influence to make this decision?
- Are you in a calm and unstressed state of mind?

If the possible impacts are acceptable, proceed to check your decision against ethical principles in the next step. If not, consider taking time to test another candidate decision, review your options and/or your case.

4. Application: Apply ethical principles to your candidate decision by asking these questions:

- Would your choice result in the greatest good?
- Would your choice treat others as you would like to be treated?
- Would your choice be fair and beneficial to all concerned?

If these or other traditional philosophical questions evoke doubts or seem to create a new dilemma, you might need to reconsider your decision, review the facts, the options and the implications.

If the answer is "Yes" and your candidate decision seems consistent with other ethical principles, move to the next step to decide and take action.

5. Action: Make a decision after considering these questions:

- Are you willing to accept responsibility for your decision?
- Could you make your decision public and feel good about it?
- Are you ready to act?

If you are comfortable with your decision, take action. If not, retrace these steps to discover a better solution.

Exhibit 3 - PMI EDMF Subquestions

Exhibit 4 contains a fictional ethical dilemma that can be used as the basis for applying the EDMF. This particular fictional ethical dilemma has been used at **PMI Leadership Institute Meetings in workshops with component leaders interested in ethics**. These leaders found that this fictional ethical dilemma provided a realistic situation with sufficient complexity to allow for a serious discussion about ethical decision-making; they also found it lent itself well to increasing their appreciation for and understanding of the EDMF. In this dilemma we see that a project manager has concerns about the observed behavior of his boss in a small company who is also a fellow volunteer at the local PMI chapter; the project manager is specifically concerned about actions he, or others, should take to address the situation. The dilemma is silent about whether the project manager's boss is using the chapter information for her company's benefit or vice versa, or both. The ethical dilemma for the project manager includes the questions: what are the project manager's responsibilities as an employee, what are the project manager's responsibilities to bring the issue to the attention of the company and/or the PMI chapter, what are the consequences of raising or not raising the issue, and how can the project manager lead himself and others by building levels of trust?

- Assessment: Make sure you have all the facts about the dilemma. This first step includes a question that relates to much of the dilemma "Does it align with your ethical values and those of the surrounding culture?" The source of Andy's uneasiness with the dilemma may be his own ethical values; for some people, this belief is reason enough to proceed with caution. Interestingly, the situation may not represent much of a dilemma for Sarah; perhaps her ethical values are different, or perhaps she is not yet undertaken the necessary amount of introspection to evaluate the situation. This step also includes a question, "Does it align with the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct?" A mandatory standard in that document requires that unethical or illegal conduct be reported. Andy may be weighing how best to do just
- Alternatives: Consider your choices. This second step asks, "Have you listed possible alternative choices?" and "Have you considered pros and cons for each possible choice? One of Andy's choices is to do nothing. While doing nothing over the long term may not resolve the dilemma, doing nothing over a short term may allow for continued collection of information and continued assessment of the dilemma. Some situations do resolve themselves favorably. However, in this situation, the dilemma appears to center on events that have already occurred in the past. That being the case, doing nothing fails to address the question about Sarah's previous use of the information. Given that Andy's future employment seems dependent on decisions by Sarah, he may be reluctant to be the one to raise the issue. Andy may be more comfortable having someone else raise the issue with Sarah or to raise the issue with chapter leadership.

Andy works in a temporary job as a project manager in a small training and consulting company that is run by his boss, Sarah. Since business is growing fast, due in part to Sarah's effective use of potential client lists, Andy is increasingly hopeful that his job will become permanent.

Andy and Sarah each have a PMP® certification and serve as volunteers at the local Project Management Institute chapter. Sarah's volunteer role at the chapter includes responsibility for membership where she has used her communication and marketing skills to help increase the chapter membership significantly.

After only ten months of volunteering at the PMI chapter, Sarah reports that her growing business workload precludes her from continuing in her volunteer role. She withdraws from her volunteer role with the recommendation for Andy to take over her role; the chapter leadership accepts her recommendation.

In his new volunteer role Andy discovers that the chapter's membership list is strikingly similar to the potential client lists that Sarah had been using at work. Andy suspects that the chapter and work lists might be related – or the same.

Exhibit 4 - Ethical Dilemma

- Analysis: Identify your candidate decision and test its validity. This third step calls for a considerable amount of critical thinking in response to questions including "Will your candidate decision have a positive impact...?" and "Are you free from external influence...?" and "Looking back, will this decision seem like a good idea a year from now?" Andy certainly seems to be in a situation where he is not free from external influence; consequently, he may benefit from visualizing the situation as involving someone other than himself. Furthermore, Andy may benefit from visualizing from a point in time well in the future after the situation has already happened with the resulting consequences. These types of visualizations, involving "removing" oneself from the situation, can bring some independent clarity, and they can help shift the perspective from short-term self-interest to that of long-term greater good.
- Application: Apply ethical principles to your candidate decision. This fourth step draws upon several of the dominant ethical theories. Utilitarianism, put forward by Aristotle and others, addresses the question, "Would your choice result in the greatest good?" The "golden rule" ethical theory, which is sometimes referred to as the ethics of reciprocity, is represented by the question, "Would your choice treat others as you would like to be treated? This theory appears prominently in many religions in the form of "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As Andy considers his candidate decision in terms of greatest good, he may be reminded that others in Sarah's company and others in his PMI chapter may be affected by the actions he takes or does not take.
- Action: Make a decision. This fifth step includes the challenging questions. "Are you willing to accept responsibility for your decision?" and "Could you make your decision public and feel good about it?" These questions call for consequential evaluation, not just of the decision itself, but also of the resulting impact of the decision. This resulting impact, which could be emotional, social, and professional, could extend well beyond those directly involved in the dilemma. Andy's future could very well be shaped by his decision.

Exhibit 5 contains another fictional ethical dilemma that can be used as the basis for applying the EDMF. This particular fictional ethical dilemma has been used at **PMI Global Congresses in presentations with project managers interested in ethics**. These project managers found that this fictional ethical dilemma provided a realistic situation with sufficient complexity to allow for a serious discussion about ethical decision-making; they also found it lent itself well to increasing their appreciation for and understanding of the EDMF. In this dilemma we see that two consultants, who are working to satisfy a client, are actively supporting other clients, and are also active in a professional Community of Practice (CoP); they are concerned about the overlap and separation between these activities. The ethical dilemma for the consultants involves a client who appears insensitive to the propriety of information the consultants may have received from other clients or the CoP; it includes the questions: how can professionals make use of their experience without jeopardizing confidentiality, how can professional expertise be distinguished from proprietary information, and what consequences can be expected when actions that align with ethical standards appear to conflict with client needs?

• Assessment: Make sure you have all the facts about the dilemma. This first step includes a question that relates to much of the dilemma "Does it agree with your employer's and client's code of ethics and conduct?" The source of Sarah and Andy's uneasiness with the dilemma may be the relationship between the code of ethics and conduct for their respective clients and CoP. Perhaps these differ in ways that cause the interests of one party to conflict with the interests of another party; if so, this is reason enough to proceed with caution. Interestingly, the situation may not represent much of a dilemma for the new client; perhaps their ethical values are different, or perhaps they have not yet undertaken the necessary amount of introspection to evaluate the situation.

- Alternatives: Consider your choices. This second step asks, "Have you listed possible alternative choices?" and "Have you considered pros and cons for each possible choice? One of Sarah and Andy's choices is to do nothing. While doing nothing over the long term may not resolve the dilemma, doing nothing over a short term may allow for continued collection of information and continued assessment of the dilemma. Some situations do resolve themselves favorably. However, in this situation, the dilemma appears to center on events that are just occurring. That being the case, doing nothing fails to address the question about the new client's interest in what may be proprietary information. Given that Sarah and Andy's future consulting with the new client seems dependent on decisions now being made, they may be reluctant to raise the issue. Sarah and Andy may be more comfortable having someone else, such as a CoP member, raise the issue with the new client. This dilemma may require nothing more than having neutral third party share information with the new client.
- Analysis: Identify your candidate decision and test its validity. This third step calls for a considerable amount of critical thinking in response to questions including "Will your candidate decision have a positive impact...?" and "Are you free from external influence...?" and "Looking back, will this decision seem like a good idea a year from now?" Sarah and Andy certainly seem to be in a situation where they are not free from external influence; that is part of the dilemma. Consequently, they may benefit from visualizing the situation as involving someone other than themselves. Furthermore, Sarah Andy may benefit from visualizing from a point in time well in the future after the situation has already happened with the resulting consequences. These types of visualizations, involving "removing" oneself from the situation, can bring some independent clarity, and they can help shift the perspective from short-term self-interest to that of long-term greater good.
- Application: Apply ethical principles to your candidate decision. This fourth step draws upon several of the dominant ethical theories. Utilitarianism, put forward by Aristotle and others, addresses the question, "Would your choice result in the greatest good?" The "golden rule" ethical theory, which is sometimes referred to as the ethics of reciprocity, is represented by the question, "Would your choice treat others as you would

Sarah and Andy are consultants specialized in the development of business models for start-ups in the IT industry.

Part of the process to develop a business model is the analysis of competitors. Andy and Sarah noticed that a new client was very keen to know about a specific competitor, which had been one of their clients last year. Sarah and Andy tried to be as neutral as possible about former clients but the new client alleged that he was buying their expertise and therefore had the right to get as much knowledge as they had.

Sarah is also PMP and member of the Consulting Community of Practice, but she was not sure how to use this CoP or other resources that PMI offers.

Sarah and Andy would like to draw upon their professional experience to help their client while proper treating information that may be proprietary.

Exhibit 5 – Ethical Dilemma

- like to be treated? This theory appears prominently in many religions in the form of "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As Sarah and Andy consider their candidate decision in terms of greatest good, they may be reminded that their other clients and the CoP may be affected by the actions they do or don't take.
- Action: Make a decision. This fifth step includes the challenging questions. "Are you willing to accept responsibility for your decision?" and "Could you make your decision public and feel good about it?" These questions call for consequential evaluation, not just of the decision itself, but also of the resulting impact of the decision. This resulting impact, which could be emotional, social, and professional, could extend well beyond those directly involved in the dilemma. Sarah and Andy's future consulting business could very well be shaped by his decision.

Information and Follow-Up

Within PMI

PMI continues to promote and support ethical decision-making with a number of resources that members and credential holders can refer to for guidance:

- PMI Ethical Decision-Making Framework (EDMF): Official copy of the EDMF: http://www.pmi.org/About-Us/Ethics/~/media/PDF/Ethics/Ethical Decision Making Framework FINAL.ashx
- PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (Code): Official copy of the Code: http://www.pmi.org/en/About-Us/Ethics/~/media/PDF/Ethics/ap_pmicodeofethics.ashx
- **PMI Ethics Resources:** Includes ethics-related articles: http://www.pmi.org/About-Us/Ethics/Ethics-Resources.aspx
- PMI Ethics Community of Practice (Ethics CoP): Worldwide network for learning and sharing ethics best practices: http://ethics.vc.pmi.org
- PMI Ethics Complaints: Process to file an official ethics complaint: http://www.pmi.org/About-Us/Ethics/Ethics-Complaints.aspx
- **PMI Ethics Member Advisory Group (Ethics MAG):** Volunteers responsible for the Code, for the EDMF, and for helping to advance ethical behavior within PMI: ethics.mag@pmi.org

Outside of PMI

Other organizations have made resources available that can be useful to those individuals interested in advancing their ethical practices:

- **Institute for Global Ethics:** Nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting ethical action in a global context: http://www.globalethics.org
- Society for Business Ethics: International organization of scholars and others interested in business ethics: http://www.societyforbusinessethics.org
- Center for Applied Ethics: Interdisciplinary academic center to advance the research agenda of applied ethics: http://www.ethics.ubc.ca/index.php
- European Business Ethics Network: Cross-national network dedicated to the promotion of business ethics, broadly defined, in academia, business, public sector and civil society: http://www.eben-net.org
- Hong Kong Ethics Development Centre: Working to counter corruption and bribery: http://www.icac.org.hk/hkedc/

Conclusion

Ethical decision-making is key to building the levels of trust necessary for project leaders with limited authority to motivate followers to achieve project success. The PMI EDMF contains five steps with multiple sub-questions that can be used as a guide for critical thinking throughout the entire ethical decision-making process.

The annual membership survey conducted by PMI contains several ethics-related; the responses for 2011 revealed that 83% of PMI members and credential holders were aware of the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and 30% have looked at the code to help resolve an ethical or professional conduct issue questions (Scarborough, 2012). That survey also revealed that 60% of PMI members had viewed the ethics page on the PMI website looking for ethics-related resources. Trending of the ethics-related survey questions during the preceding six years shows a pattern of increased ethics awareness. This trend of increasing ethics awareness, when examined in light of the EDMF circulation draft survey results where virtually all responded most favorably, is suggestive of a time in the PMI organization where structured ethical decision-making increasingly will be performed as part of an important linkage to leadership and project success.

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