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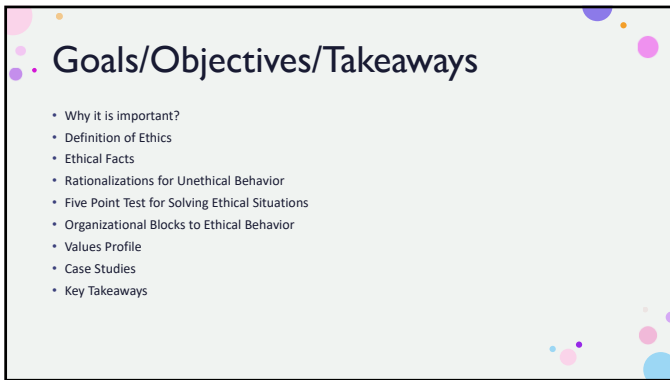
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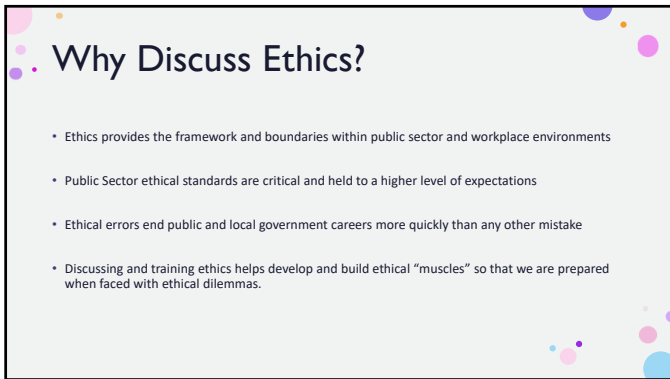
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## Definition of Ethics

- Origin of the word..... Greek ethos.....the science of morals
- Merriam Webster dictionary – the meaning of ethic is a set of moral principles; a theory or system of moral values.
- Online definition – a set of principles of right and wrong behavior guiding, or representative of, a specific culture, society, group or individual.
- Google – the rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a profession.
- Code of Ethics – Code of Conduct.....know and understand the code governing city/county

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## Ethical Facts

- Ethics is everyday and affects organizational decisions daily
- Ethics is **reasoning** not emotional; it is easier to know what is right than to do what is right.
- Disciplined reasoning is necessary to be ethical in organizations
- Ethical frameworks are important. They give employees and leaders multiple perspectives on ethical issues and provide a psychological set for dealing with ethical dilemmas.
- Ethics is not simply a philosophical exercise. It is one of the ways we **define the limits** of administrative and regulatory discretion.
- Case studies are valuable source of organizational learning and can help shape and maintain organizational ethic.

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## Rationalization for Unethical Behavior

- ❖ Belief that it the activity is withing reasonable ethical or legal limits – “its not really” that bad
- ❖ Belief that the activity is in the individuals or agency’s best interest – that the individual would somehow be expected to undertake the activity.
- ❖ Belief that activity or behavior is “okay” because it will never be found out or publicized.
- ❖ Belief that because it helps agency, agency will condone it and even protect person who does it
- ❖ Belief that although the activity is unethical, everyone else does it too.

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### Five Point Test for Solving Ethical Situations

- ✓ Does the course of action seem logical? Does it make sense; never mind what anyone else says?
- ✓ Does it pass the test of fair play? If everyone followed this same course of action, the results would benefit all?
- ✓ Where will the plan of action lead? How will it affect others? What will it do to you?
- ✓ Will you think well of yourself when you look back at what you did?
- ✓ Hold the decision up to "publicity test". Would you want it to appear in the news or as a headline?

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### Organizational Roadblocks Affecting Ethical Behavior

- Strict Line of Command – if employee feels they cannot ever go out of command, issues of ethical dilemmas often go unreported for fear of retribution.
- Unethical Leadership and Trainers – creates culture and environment that perpetuates and cements unethical behavior is accepted.
- Task Group Cohesiveness – because of the power of the group, individuals may fear speaking up or out on ethical or legal issues.
- Ambiguity of Priorities – organizations may have inconsistent and conflicting objectives. Be clear and discuss dilemmas that may surface to establish an ethic framework for the employees.
- Separation of Decisions – strategies or policies set in place without consideration to the ramifications to those who carry out those policies, leaving some in ethical dilemma.
- Culture of Quiet – creating an atmosphere that prevents open and honest discussion of ethical dilemmas.

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### Challenges to Ethics – Public Sector

- General expectation of higher ethical behavior for public leaders and employees
- Increased level of public presence
- Power of holding public funds/dollars responsibility
- Subject to changing political environments and leadership

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**Case Study**

- A staff person and Board member are “friendly” and the staff person shares personal information with the Board member about his/her personal life. The Board member feels badly for the employee since his/her partner left and their three children. The Board member gives her \$100.00. Should he/she accept it?

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**Case Study**

- You are the Chair of the city’s Planning and Zoning Board and someone you know has applied to be on the Board you serve on. You knew this person years ago as you both worked in a large corporation. This person was fired from the corporation for stealing from the company. Although the person was not criminally charged you saw the evidence which clearly shows that the person stole from the company. What do you do?

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**Case Study**

- You went out of your way to help a resident/consumer get something they needed at city hall. The resident is happy and they send you a thank you card with a \$50.00 gift card in it. What do you do?

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## Case Study

- Your Grant is due at 3:00 pm on Friday. At 2:30 pm you call a friend of yours who works at the government office and tell him you are running late and you will be there at 3:15pm. You ask him can he do you a favor and accept your grant and stamp it with a 3:00pm receipt. He said yes. Is this ethical?

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## Key Takeaways

- Ethics is about reasoning and actions and behavior
- Ethical behavior is constant and in your everyday actions
- Practice ethical discussions and scenario training to build knowledge and understand AND to make it an important topic for all
- Standard question to ask when faced with an ethical challenge – will this build goodwill?
- Be authentic and sincere in all decisions

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## Thank you!

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