Introduction to the April 2013 Advances in PM Series Article

The recently published sixth edition of the APM Body of Knowledge states that: “a key requirement of a profession is that individual members should act ethically”.

It is useful to remember that the concerns of practitioners extend beyond the financial aspects and considerations of a project, or even beyond the issues raised as part of the typical constraints of cost, time, scope and quality. The APM Body of Knowledge reminds practitioners that trust and respect are essential elements of professional practice and must underpin the actions of practitioners. Trust is gained by working consistently and transparently in a moral, legal, responsible and socially appropriate manner. Respect results from how professional conduct is perceived by relevant stakeholders and participants.

Yet, acting responsibly is never simple. Multiple stakeholders engage different perspectives, values and preferences. Their concerns and considerations reflect their role, personal position and interests. The more parties involved, the greater the challenge in reconciling and negotiating between their concerns. Untangling the complex web of politics, deception and coercion demands exceptional negotiation skills and insightful thinking.

Given the different sets of competing values and concerns, it is already clear that ethics is not about separating ‘right’ from ‘wrong’. Multiple participants will have relevant considerations that need to be addressed. It is never as simple as avoiding the wrongs.

In problem solving parlance the simpler distinction between good or bad is often utilised. This is not an absolute judgment, but is rather an expression of the ‘goodness’ of a solution. A solution is good if it satisfies the key concerns expressed in the problem. While it indicates acceptance that a solution is not right, but simply good enough, it still does not do justice to the tapestry of concerns, views and values embedded in every non-trivial project.
The tapestry of perspectives implies that the natural tendency to choose between black and white needs to be overhauled and replaced by the capability to cope with and distinguish between different shades of grey. All actors and participants have legitimate concerns that merit fair consideration. Prioritisation and trade-offs between incompatible, and often competing sets of values can nonetheless be challenging and involve political posturing and expectation management.

Project managers can utilise stakeholder management and decision making tools in making some of the more complex decisions. However, they also need to adopt a more questioning stance that enables ethical considerations to be addressed in an appropriate manner.

The article by Michael Cavanagh offers an essential, yet very simple tool for addressing ethical dilemmas. It is a tool that can be easily and quickly applied and offer fresh insights whilst challenging long held thinking patterns. This basic tool is the application of the question ‘why?’.

Understanding the basis of decisions and preferences can uncover assumptions and challenge expectations. It provides much needed rationale for aspects that are never explored or addressed and is thus a welcome addition that can be easily utilised by professional and responsible project managers.

Michael’s article identifies some of the reasons and justifications for using this tool. Michael is the author of the book Second Order Project Management, published by Gower as part of the Advances in Project Management series. The book explores some of the issues related to outcomes and ethics, and that discussion is expanded through the present article.

Projects, by their nature, imply some amount of choice between ethics and expediency. Making the correct choice is of crucial importance.

Distinguished author, humanist and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel reminds us that “there may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest”. As our projects and change endeavours continue to shape society and its future, project managers are increasingly expected to adopt a responsible and professional stance. Considering ethical argument and moral principle, and questioning the rationale and motivation for decisions, assumptions, and actions may take us some way towards developing our capacity for dealing with ethical dilemmas and developing trust and respect as the hallmarks of our growing responsibility and professionalism.

Editor’s note: Darren Dalcher is the editor of the series of books on Advances in Project Management published by Gower in the UK. Information about the Gower series can be found at http://www.gowerpublishing.com/advancesinprojectmanagement. The above article is an introduction to the invited paper this month in the PMWJ by Gower author Michael Cavanagh. You can find previously published articles by Prof Dalcher and Gower authors at www.pmworldlibrary.net.
About the Author

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Darren Dalcher, Ph.D. HonFAPM, FRSA, FBCS, CITP, FCMI is Professor of Project Management at the University of Hertfordshire, and founder and Director of the National Centre for Project Management (NCPM) in the UK. He has been named by the Association for Project Management (APM) as one of the top 10 “movers and shapers” in project management in 2008 and was voted Project Magazine’s “Academic of the Year” for his contribution in “integrating and weaving academic work with practice”. Following industrial and consultancy experience in managing IT projects, Professor Dalcher gained his PhD in Software Engineering from King's College, University of London. Professor Dalcher has written over 150 papers and book chapters on project management and software engineering. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Software Process Improvement and Practice*, an international journal focusing on capability, maturity, growth and improvement. He is the editor of the book series, *Advances in Project Management*, published by Gower Publishing of a new companion series *Fundamentals of Project Management*. Heavily involved in a variety of research projects and subjects, Professor Dalcher has built a reputation as leader and innovator in the areas of practice-based education and reflection in project management. He works with many major industrial and commercial organisations and government bodies in the UK and beyond. He is an Honorary Fellow of the APM, a Chartered Fellow of the British Computer Society, a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, and the Royal Society of Arts, and a Member of the Project Management Institute (PMI), the Academy of Management, the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and the Association for Computing Machinery. He is a Chartered IT Practitioner. He is a Member of the PMI Advisory Board responsible for the prestigious David I. Cleland project management award and of the APM Professional Development Board. Prof Dalcher is an academic editorial advisor for the *PM World Journal*. He can be contacted at d.dalcher2@herts.ac.uk.
Freedom is one of the most complex philosophical categories that determine the essence of man. It is the ability of the individual to think and perform certain actions, proceeding solely from one's own intentions, interests and desires, and not under the influence from outside. Against this background, a rhetorical question emerges: “Does a person have real freedom or does everything he does are dictated by social rules and norms within which this individual exists?” First of all, freedom is a conscious choice regarding worldview and behavior. In addition, the right - the guarantor of the freedom under consideration, a means of its protection and its protection. Due to the fact that it is a legitimate scale, the law is able to objectively reflect the achieved level of social development. Professionalism deals with trust. so, professional ethics is important to do better. Difference between ethics and positive morality? There is no difference between ethics and positive morality. The two of them are interrelated and have to be applied collectively. You cannot have ethics and lack positive morality and vice versa. Ethics are what you believe is the right thing to do love. What is the difference between ethics today and tomorrow? As we do not know what the ethics of tomorrow will be we cannot compare them. What is difference between ethics and politics? The main difference between law and ethics is that law indicates what journalists must do while ethics indicate what they should do. The law governs their actions while the ethics guide them. Professionals. Teaching and practicing Professionalism and Ethics is considered to be a remedy to improve the image of medical profession. While medical ethics has been. It indicates that the right to information and respect for the patient has. been maintained. Each patient has the right to know about his/her disease, available. treatment options, risks involved, cost of treatment, prognosis or expected outcome etc. Once the patient satisfactorily understands the treatment plan and willingly agrees, it is. Try this amazing Business Quiz: Professionalism & Ethics quiz which has been attempted 22210 times by avid quiz takers. Also explore over 49 similar quizzes in this category. Ability to describe what is the right and wrong about ethics & the containment of unethical practices. 19. Which philosopher was concern with the strength of character involving both feelings and actions? This is a new 10-question quiz to test your knowledge of the ethical practice of public relations. If you have already taken an earlier PR ethics quiz, Questions: 10 | Attempts: 21385 | Last updated: Jun 17, 2020. Sample Question. You are having a briefing meeting with a new client and want to be sure to capture all of their comments, so you bring a tape recorder to the meeting. Knowing the right questions to ask - does not imply that you know all the answers to the questions - it simply means you know what some of the wrong questions to ask are and also therefore does not mean you know everything. In a completely philosophical sense, in contrast to knowing ALL (infinitely) - you will go further in life because you will still exist. In the real world - knowing all the answers (not infinitely like in a God like sense, but relatively more than most) will get you further because asking all the right answers mean you will ask the right questions anyway. In a philosophical world - knowing all the right answers will mean you cease to exist and therefore - you will go further in life asking all the right questions. Excuse my typos - this was typed on a phone. 2.