



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.33

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Unit. Stage One of Development—ME
Problem Area.

How Do I Begin to Grow?

Precepts.I3: Demonstrate professional ethics. N3: Make ethical decisions.

National Standards.

NPH-H.9-12.5 Using Communication Skills to Promote Health — Demonstrate ways to communicate care, consideration, and respect of self and others.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Identify ethical and unethical behavior.
- 2 List benefits of making ethical decisions in the workplace.
- 3 Define ethics.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.

Resources

Ricketts, Cliff. *Leadership: Personal Development and Career Success Second Edition*. Albany, New York. Delmar Publishing, 2003.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Writing tools
- ✓ Poster paper and pens
- ✓ HS.33.TM.A–B
- ✓ HS.33.Assess.A—one per student
- ✓ HS.33.Assess.B—one per student
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ List of information on HS.33.TM.B on cards hidden throughout the room

 **Key Terms.** The following term is presented in this lesson and appears in bold italics:

- ▶ Ethics



Interest Approach

As the class enters the room, pull one student aside and plan the following skit. Student walks into the room, goes to the teacher's desk and picks up a pencil, a highlighter and some notepaper. The teacher says, "What are you doing?" Student defends behavior, arguing that his actions are acceptable. For example, "I needed it." "I lost mine." "We're entitled to a free education...." Teacher argues that his actions are not acceptable. For example: "You're responsible for bringing your own materials to class." "I buy office supplies with my own money." "You're not entitled to take my things." "If you use all the supplies, then I won't have money in the budget for the field trip." Involve the class:



What do you think? How do we know that it's not okay to take other people's property? *Anticipated Responses:* "Because it's against the law." "We'll get in trouble." "Because it's not right." "Because our parents taught us."

So then, what we're saying is that our group has certain expectations of behavior that are acceptable.

Write "Each group has certain expectations of behavior that are acceptable" on the writing surface.





How do we know what those expectations are? Take our classroom for example. How do you know what behaviors are expected in the classroom?

Anticipated Responses: It's the school rules. There's a poster. We sign a contract.



Very good! Thank you for your input. It seems that we agree that the rules have to be communicated to the group in some way. Write, “Expectations must be communicated to the group” on the writing surface.



Today, we're going to investigate the concept of ethics. We're going to refine our thoughts on what ethical behavior is. Then, we're going to look at some questions that will help us to decide what ethical behavior is. Finally, we will take a few minutes to imagine what would happen in the world of work if people weren't bound to ethical behavior.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Identify ethical and unethical behavior.

Read the scenarios aloud one at a time and instruct the students to write their opinion, be prepared to discuss it with their neighbor and share with the class.



You are going to listen to some situations that occur pretty commonly. You will want to listen to the scenario, think about the situation and write your thoughts about whether or not the decision the person made was ethical or unethical. Be prepared to discuss your opinions.

Read the first scenario.



Here's the first scenario: Susie bought a dress to wear to the prom. The day after, she took the dress back to the store for a refund. Is this ethical or not? Take out your paper and pen or pencil now.

Allow 30 seconds for students to write their responses and 30 seconds to share with the person next to them.



You have 30 seconds to write your decision, and explain why you feel that way. Now, take 30 seconds to turn to the person next to you and share your response.

Call on students and come to a consensus. Anticipated Responses: Sure, she only wore it once. No, that's disgusting. No, that's cheating. Yes, the dress is still clean. They can sell it again.



What are your thoughts? Is it ethical to return a piece of clothing that you've worn once?

Read the second scenario.





Freddie's show steer stood in a pen in full sun for 2 months before the show and the black hair was bleached out. Freddie's advisor suggested that Freddie should dye his steer black before the show.

Allow 30 seconds for students to write their responses and 30 seconds to share with the person next to them.



You have 30 seconds to write your decision, and explain why you feel that way. Now, take 30 seconds to turn to the person next to you and share your response.

Call on students and come to a consensus.

Anticipated Responses: Yes, everybody does it. It's ethical as long as the steer's natural color is black. It's unethical to dye a red steer black. No, Freddie should have put the steer in the shade in the first place.



What are your thoughts? Is it okay to restore the steer's natural color?

Write, "Sometimes there isn't a right or wrong answer with ethical decisions" on the writing surface.



Now, we've discussed two different scenarios and one thing's for sure: sometimes there just isn't a right or wrong answer with ethical decisions. So let's talk about some things we can do to help determine whether a decision is or is not ethical. What criteria did you use?

Listen to comments. Jot down responses on the writing surface. Show transparency master HS.33.TM.A.



Here are six key questions that might help us to make consistent decisions. Let's see how many of them we already touched on.

I. Ethical Decision Making Criteria

- A. Is it legal?
- B. Would you want the same thing to happen to you?
- C. Ask a mentor? Does that person believe it's ethical?
- D. What are the benefits and costs to all parties involved?
- E. Would you want it to be universally accepted?
- F. Would you be proud to have your action appear on TV or in the newspaper?

Apply the Hieroglyphics Moment to allow students to illustrate the questions from the overhead. Ask members of the class to share and explain their drawings.



Now, let's look at one more scenario together and apply the questions. After you listen to the scenario, get into groups of six and each person will answer one of the questions and decide whether the behavior is ethical or not.

Write the scenario on the writing surface.





Here we go: Jenny is running for Rodeo Queen. She borrows a horse to use for the Queen's Horsemanship contest from a professional trainer.

Organize the class into groups of six after the scenario is read.



Get into groups of six. Ask the questions. Discuss your responses and decide. You have three minutes.

Listen responses from the classes.



What did your group decide?

Read final scenario.



Now the last one we do individually. Listen to the scenario in preparation to write your response in paragraph form. Be sure to use your best reasoning because your answers will be collected. On this last scenario: Joey downloads an article on water quality. He cuts and pastes the key items and turns it in as an assigned essay for his English class. Now take five minutes to think about the ethical decision-making questions, formulate your decision, and write your opinion in a paragraph form over the next five minutes.

Collect papers when students are finished. Use the Rubric, HS.33.ASSESS.B to grade their paragraphs.

Objective 2. List the benefits of making ethical decisions.



Now that we've experienced how to tell the difference between ethical and unethical decisions, let's take a step further. The question is, is it worth the trouble? What are the benefits of making ethical decisions?

Use a Go Get It Moment to help students receive this content.

Show HS.33.TM.B. Discuss and have student's copy into their notes.

II. Effects of ethical and unethical behavior.

A. Ethical Behavior

1. Gain respect from others
2. Gain the trust of others
3. Accountability of people you deal with.
4. Security
 - a. Provides a guideline for the actions of those around you.
5. Fairness
 - a. Insures that people in power will treat you fairly.

B. Unethical Behavior

1. Loss of respect
2. No dependable expectations for those around you.
3. Cost to group or company
4. Legal consequences



Objective 3. Define ethics.



You know, we've been talking about ethics this entire class, but haven't even defined the term! Let's take what we've learned and define ethics in our notes.

Write the word “Ethics” and the definition on the writing surface. Have students write the definition in their notebooks. Discuss how the definition relates to previous class discussion.

III. Define Ethics

- A. Each group that we are involved with has a set of behavioral expectations that are accepted by that group that tell us what's acceptable and what's not. We call those rules or expectations **ethics**.
 - 1. Ethical behaviors can be ambiguous
 - 2. Must be communicated clearly to the members.



Review/Summary

Use the Eye Witness Moment to have the students review their knowledge on determining an ethical decision, why ethical decisions are "worth it," and the definition of ethics.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

“Encouraging ethical decision-making.” Have students make a poster that encourages students to make ethical decisions. Have students collect current event articles that deal with ethics in agricultural production and business.

►FFA Activity:

Read the FFA Code of Ethics and create a skit that depicts an ethical decision at an FFA event, such as a conference or CDE contest.

►SAE Activity:

Hold an essay contest: Why are livestock ethics important? Why are ethics important in the work place? Publish the winner in the local newspaper or school newspaper. Conduct a livestock ethics seminar. Have students read and sign the FFA livestock ethics agreement.



Evaluation

Collect the paragraph written on the fourth scenario and score according to the score sheet on HS.33.Assess.A. Hang the posters on “Encouraging ethical decision-making” in class and score according to the score sheet on HS.33.Assess.B.



Answers to Assessment:

HS.33.Assess.A

Score according to Assessment

HS.33.Assess.B

Score according to Assessment



RUBRIC FOR RESPONSE TO ETHICAL SCENARIO #4

Up to 10 points for correct spelling, punctuation and grammar

Up to 10 points for clear topic sentence

Up to 10 points for three to five supporting sentences

Up to 20 points for applying ethical decision-making criteria

Total points: 50 points

50–45 Well written; good to excellent use of spelling, punctuation and grammar with fewer than three errors; clear, comprehensive topic sentence with four to five supporting sentences; logical, thorough application of ethical decision-making criteria

44–40 Reasonably well written; with five or fewer errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar; clear topic sentence with three supporting sentences; application of some of the ethical decision-making criteria

39–34 Somewhat well written with more than six to eight errors in spelling; punctuation and grammar; topic sentence is somewhat complete; three or fewer supporting sentences; and only minimal reference to ethical decision-making criteria.

34–30 More than eight errors in spelling; punctuation and grammar; topic sentence is unclear; three or fewer supporting sentences with no reference to ethical decision-making criteria

29–25 Poorly written with more than 10 errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar; no clear topic sentence; no reference to the ethical decision-making criteria

Less than 25 One or two sentences expressing personal opinion with no consideration to paragraph structure or ethical decision-making criteria



RUBRIC FOR ETHICS POSTER

Up to 10 points for creativity

Up to 10 points for neatness

Up to 10 points for accuracy

Total points: 30 points

30–25 Unique, or imaginative approach conveyed in an artistic manner; Easily read or seen from a distance; Correct spelling; Logical application of ethical concepts

24–20 Conveys accurate application of ethical concepts neatly; easily or somewhat easily seen or read from a distance

19–15 Superficial or simplistic application of ethical concepts; Minimal artistic effort; Must be viewed from a short distance

14–10 Inaccurate use of ethical concepts; Minimal artistic effort; more than one or two spelling errors; Difficult to read or see

34–30 More than eight errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar; Topic sentence is unclear; Three or fewer supporting sentences with no reference to ethical decision-making criteria

29–25 Poorly written with more than 10 errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar; No clear topic sentence; No reference to the ethical decision-making criteria

Less than 25 One or two sentences expressing personal opinion with no consideration to paragraph structure or ethical decision-making criteria



ETHICAL DECISION MAKING CRITERIA

- ◆ **Is it legal.**
- ◆ **Would you want the same thing to happen to you.**
- ◆ **Ask a mentor. Does that person believe it's ethical.**
- ◆ **What are the benefits and costs to all parties involved.**
- ◆ **Would you want it to be universally accepted.**
- ◆ **Would you be proud to have your action appear on TV or in the newspaper.**



EFFECTS OF ETHICAL VS. UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- ◆ **Gain respect from others**
- ◆ **Gain the trust of others**
- ◆ **Accountability of people you deal with.**
- ◆ **Security**
- ◆ **Fairness**

UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- ◆ **Loss of respect**
- ◆ **No dependable expectations for those around you.**
- ◆ **Cost to group or company**
- ◆ **Legal consequences**

