Knowledge tools for academics and professionals

Module Series on Integrity and Ethics

Module 7
Strategies for Ethical Action

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
Vienna

UNODC Module Series on Integrity and Ethics

MODULE 7
STRATEGIES FOR ETHICAL ACTION

UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Background information

The UNODC Module Series on Integrity and Ethics offers 14 Modules focusing on a range of core issues within these two areas. This includes universal values; ethics and society; the importance of ethics in the public and private sectors; diversity and pluralism, behavioural ethics; and ethics and gender mainstreaming. The Modules also illustrate how integrity and ethics relate to critical areas such as the media, business, law, public service, and various professions.

The Modules are designed for use by both academic institutions and professional academies across the world. They are built to help lecturers and trainers deliver ethics education, including those who are not dedicated ethics lecturers and trainers but would like to incorporate these components into their courses. Lecturers are encouraged to customize the Modules before integrating them into their classes and courses. The Modules include discussions of relevant issues, suggestions for class activities and exercises, recommended class structures, student assessments, reading lists (with an emphasis on open access materials), PowerPoint slides, video materials and other teaching tools. Each Module provides an outline for a three-hour class, as well as includes guidelines on how to develop it into a full course.

The Modules focus on universal values and problems and can easily be adapted to different local and cultural contexts, including a variety of degree programmes as they are multi-disciplinary. The Modules seek to enhance trainees and students' ethical awareness and commitment to acting with integrity and equip them with the necessary skills to apply and spread these norms in life, work and society. To increase their effectiveness, the Modules cover both theoretical and practical perspectives, and use interactive teaching methods such as experiential learning and group-based work. These methods keep students and trainees engaged and help them develop critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, all of which are important for ethics education.

The topics of the Modules were chosen following consultations with academic experts who participated in a meeting of experts convened by UNODC, both at a global level in Vienna in March 2017, and in three regional workshops held in different parts of the world in April 2017. The experts emphasized the need for increased integrity and ethics education globally and advised on core areas to be addressed through the Modules. They considered it paramount that the Modules prepare university students and trainees for value driven effective action, keep students engaged, lend themselves to adaptation to different regional and disciplinary contexts, and allow lecturers to incorporate them as ethics components within non-ethics courses.

To achieve these objectives, the experts recommended that the Modules have a range of characteristics, ultimately being able to:

» Connect theory to practice	» Draw on good practices from practitioners
» Emphasize the importance of integrity and ethics to everyday life	» Link integrity and ethics to other global issues and the SDGs
» Encourage critical thinking	» Adopt a multi-disciplinary and multi-level approach
» Stress not only the importance of making ethical decisions but also demonstrate how to implement the decisions	» Focus on global ethics and universal values while leaving room for diverse regional and cultural perspectives
» Use innovative interactive teaching methods	» Employ non-technical and clear terminology
» Balance general ethics with applied ethics	» Be user-friendly

Drawing on these recommendations, UNODC worked for over a year with more than 70+ academic experts from over 30 countries to develop the 14 University Modules on Integrity and Ethics. Each Module was drafted by a core team of academics and UNODC experts, and then peer-reviewed by a larger group of academics from different disciplines and regions to ensure a multi-disciplinary and universal coverage. The Modules passed through a meticulous clearance process at the UNODC headquarters before finally being edited and published on its website as open-source materials. In addition, it was agreed that the content of the Modules would be regularly updated to ensure that they are in line with contemporary studies and correspond to current needs of educators.

The present knowledge tool has been developed by the UNODC Corruption and Economic Crime Branch (CEB), as part of the Education for Justice initiative under the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration.

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Introduction

This Module introduces practical strategies for taking ethical action in the workplace (in the public or private sectors), university, community and in life more broadly. Acting ethically is often not easy. As discussed in Module 6 (Challenges to Ethical Living) and Module 8 (Behavioural Ethics) of the E4J Integrity and Ethics University Module Series, there are numerous psychological quirks and contextual pressures that often make it difficult to do the right thing. The present Module discusses several practical strategies that can help well-meaning people overcome at least some of these obstacles. The strategies explored in the Module go beyond merely raising awareness of the challenges and pitfalls that obstruct ethical behaviour. They are action-based approaches or methods that build capacity to act ethically. For example, the Module shows the extent to which script writing, action planning, rehearsal and peer coaching can help navigate challenging ethical situations even in circumstances that can lead ethical people to act in ways that contradict their genuine commitments. These action-based approaches draw on research and experience suggesting that capacity for ethical action can be built through training and good practice examples.

Learning outcomes

• Understand how to overcome common psychological and contextual impediments for taking ethical action

• Adopt strategies for taking ethical action that have been developed in different sectors and areas

• Craft, refine and deliver scripts for enacting ethical action and build the habit to do so

• Become more effective change agents

• Apply peer-coaching techniques around workplace ethics conflicts

Key issues

Most people generally know what the right thing to do is, and may even take decisions to act on this knowledge. However, due to numerous impediments, they fail to act in ways that mirror their honestly held commitments. This Module explores some of the practical strategies that can help implement ethical decisions. Its point of departure is a "post-decision making" stage or mind-set.

Practical strategies for ethical action can be broadly divided into two categories: those that apply on the organizational level and those that target the individual level. Organizational level approaches focus on creating environments in which individuals are encouraged to speak up without fear of retaliation. In the literature, this environment is also referred to as a just culture, a no-blame culture or a safe psychological environment. Many public and private sector organizations have started to embrace such an organizational culture in order to detect mistakes or unethical practices at the earliest possible opportunity and thus minimize damage. A no-blame culture not only promotes disclosure but it also enables the organization to learn and improve. By contrast, approaches on the individual level were developed to build the capacity of individuals to take ethical action even in difficult circumstances, including when the context or organizational culture are not conducive to ethical action. The individual-level approaches regard the capacity for ethical action as a "moral muscle" that can be trained and strengthened just like any muscle of the body. Both types of approaches are discussed in the following paragraphs and are demonstrated through the exercises of this Module.

> Organizational level: creating enabling environments

Research has shown that fear of consequences may keep individuals from speaking up when they make mistakes or detect unethical behaviour (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). Fear not only originates from bad experiences but may also stem from understanding what might happen after a disclosure in terms of retaliation or punishment. This fear has implications for organizations. For example, Company A produces automobile parts for a new car model that just went into mass production. At some point, the production manager of Company A discovers that the automobile parts are faulty, due to an issue in the production process that he or she is responsible for. The production manager fears that revealing the issue may mean that he or she will be punished or fired and therefore decides not to speak up. After a few months, it is discovered that the automobile parts of Company A show potentially dangerous material fatigue. Thousands of cars must be recalled in order to exchange the faulty parts, causing additional costs to Company A and damaging its reputation. The ensuing investigation shows that the damage would have been limited and potential danger averted if only the fault had been discovered at an earlier stage.

While the essence of the example above applies to all kinds of organizations, some sectors have been particularly proactive in taking measures to encourage employees to speak up. Such sectors include the aviation industry, healthcare and the military. In some of these sectors, the need to learn from mistakes is essential as safety issues may lead to incidents or accidents with potentially disastrous consequences. To encourage employees to speak up, the concept of just culture has developed. This concept refers to an environment in which individuals are encouraged to learn from their mistakes rather than being punished.

In a short article[1], the aviation organization Eurocontrol stresses the importance of a just culture in the aviation industry. It explains that punishing pilots with fines or a suspension of their licences can discourage them from reporting mistakes, with a consequent reduction in safety information. The article defines the concept of just culture as "a culture in which front-line operators and others are not punished for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them which are commensurate with their experience and training, but where gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated".

As stressed by this definition, embracing a just culture does not mean that individuals are above the law: gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated in a just culture. However, organizational responses to mistakes should be driven by a desire to improve the culture for the future, not just identify and punish someone. Only in an organizational culture where occurrences are reported, investigations conducted and mitigating measures administered (e.g. trainings, improved communication of rules and regulation, revision of processes) will near misses come to light.

The concept of just culture is also relevant to other safety-critical industries such as healthcare and the military. In the military, "after-action reviews" often follow missions and trainings to help soldiers learn from their mistakes and achievements. In the health sector, the concept has been defined as "a learning culture that is constantly improving and oriented toward patient safety" (Boysen, 2013)[2]. Unfortunately, in many large healthcare institutions, blame cultures still exist with disastrous results[3].

Similarly, the concept of a no-blame culture seeks to support employees that make mistakes in order to create an organizational culture that encourages problem-solving, transparency and high performance. If mistakes occur (rather than intentional violations), a root cause analysis is done to determine all contributing factors and the blame is most often put on the process rather than the individual employee. Thus, the organization can learn from mistakes and there is higher employee loyalty.

In addition, there is a growing body of research on speak-up culture and employee voice. In the literature, employee voice is defined as "informal and discretionary communication by an employee of ideas, suggestions, concerns, information about problems, or opinions about work-related issues to persons who might be able to take appropriate action, with the intent to bring about improvement or change" (Morrison, 2014). Organizations increasingly see the value of feedback as a means to find ways to improve, adapt and innovate. Asking for feedback is common in business-to-customer relationships (e.g. travel industry, online retail) and the same principle can be applied within companies or public sector organizations. Employees are also well placed to identify issues and provide critical feedback, but must feel that they will be listened to or they will not give feedback.

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[1] Available at www.eurocontrol.int/articles/just-culture.

[2] For a short video, explaining the relevance of just culture to the healthcare industry, see www.youtube.com/watch?v=zje765OEggs.

[3] For a recent example from the United Kingdom, see www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/06/21/gosport-nhs-blame-culture-must-end-prevent-another-hospital/.

Measures that organizations can take to encourage speaking up are outlined by the Center for Ethical Leadership at the University of Notre Dame[4]. These measures include:

- Proactively ask for feedback: Providing feedback should be an integral part of any evaluative process and organizations should proactively engage employees to solicit their feedback. It is important to follow up on the feedback received by showing what has been changed in response.

- Lead by example: Being outspoken and highlighting both positive and negative examples demonstrates to employees that an organization wants to hear their feedback.

- Provide regular feedback opportunities: Many organizations conduct formal annual appraisals. However, reviews and feedback opportunities should be ongoing, part of the regular communication process. Furthermore, organizations encourage communication and exchange across the hierarchy.

- Protect employees from retaliation: The organization should have training to prevent retaliation from happening and a process to deal with cases of proven retaliation by current employees or supervisors against the person that has spoken up.

Through these methods, organizations can foster enabling environments for individuals to speak up and thereby counter the barriers to ethical behaviour that are discussed in depth in Modules 6 and 8. However, what practical strategies can individuals adopt to help them act ethically in challenging circumstances? This question is explored in more detail in the following discussion.

⟩ The individual level: building skills for ethical action

While ethical action should be supported and encouraged by the organizational culture, it also has much to do with strategies on the individual level. Research and practical experience indicate that most of us want to act ethically and also know what the right thing to do is. Nevertheless, it can be very difficult to follow through and voice concerns. Research in the fields of psychology, neuroscience and behavioural economics suggests that individuals can handle ethically compromised situations more effectively when they are prepared and trained do to so. The notion that ethical action is something that can be learned and perfected through practice has informed several approaches to ethics education, including experiential learning methods that place learners in real-life ethical dilemmas and encourage them to devise solutions. These methods are employed, for example, by universities that encourage students to participate in legal clinics with ethical dimensions, or organizations that conduct action-based ethical training programmes (see discussion below). Another set of methods for enhancing individual ethical action is associated with the "Giving Voice to Values" pedagogical approach (Gentile, 2010).

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[4] For more information, see www.ethicalsystems.org/speak-up-culture/.

Giving Voice to Values (GVV)

What distinguishes the GVV approach from traditional ethics education programmes is that it does not delve into the question of what is right or wrong, but rather focuses on the 'post-decision making' stage. Its point of departure is a 'model decision' of how the situation should be handled, and students are asked to practice and rehearse the eventual action they would take to implement that model decision. As explained in further detail below, and illustrated through the Exercises of this Module, GVV proposes several practices and rehearsal techniques such as pre-scripting (writing down a plan for what one would do if X happens) and peer-coaching (a group of participants work together to craft effective responses). GVV synthesizes insights from different studies and disciplines to provide practical guidance on how to take ethical action more effectively. This approach has been introduced in universities across the world and in various organizations as a means to implement integrity and ethics in practice.

Research and interviews reveal that there are many ways to voice values: looking for a win/win solution; changing the supervisor's mind through persuasion and logic; going over the supervisor's head within the organization; building coalitions of like-minded employees; and so on. However, the pivotal moment is deciding to speak. According to Gentile, the following actions help to voice values:

- Reduce stress by realizing that ethical dilemmas occur in any job and are normal and even predictable.
- Treat ethical conflicts just like any other business issue, enabling the individual to tap into the same skills and strengths that serve them well in those situations.
- Develop a strong business case, gathering convincing arguments and figuring out whom to talk to – just like for any other business issue.
- Recognize common pitfalls such as rationalizations and reflect in advance on effective ways to re-frame and counter these pitfalls (some of these pitfalls are discussed in Integrity and Ethics Module 6 (Challenges to Ethical Living).
- Increase the effectiveness and the likelihood of taking ethical action by pre-scripting what to say and how to proceed in the matter.
- In many cases, it is also helpful to get some form of peer-coaching.
- Take advantage of psychological biases of listeners by framing the issue in the way that is most relevant for the audience.

According to Gentile, rehearsing and practicing are helpful in the process of voicing values. Practice and rehearsal techniques such as pre-scripting may increase the chances of taking ethical action when it is most needed, and doing so effectively. Another practical approach is peer coaching where the aim is to test arguments with a set of colleagues (see Exercise 3 of this Module). Peer coaching can be used when seeking the support of groups from both inside and outside the organization. It may even help to find new ways of expressing values that would not have come up otherwise. Peer coaching differs from role-playing in a significant aspect: In role-playing, there is often an implicit adversarial relationship between the individuals in each role. In other words, the person who plays the role of the listener will tend to see it as his or her job to resist or find flaws in the speaker's presentation. Peer coaching, on the other hand, seeks to create an atmosphere in which a group of participants work together to craft effective responses.

In resolving ethical dilemmas, it is important to be skilful, prepared and competent. In other words, there is no need to preach, just because ethical questions are addressed. Communication challenges that may arise when trying to solve ethical dilemmas can be approached with the same analytical and personal capabilities that would be used in any other situation, whether it is convincing a professor to give an extension on a final paper or negotiating a work contract. As with other communication challenges, needs and desires of the audience must be considered. Re-framing "voice" as "dialogue", which includes active listening, is another important ingredient in the recipe.

It should be stressed that there are many ways to voice values, and each individual may wish to use the communication style with which he or she is most skilled at and comfortable with. For example, if a certain person is most comfortable and effective when communicating by using metaphors and story-telling, then he or she may wish to play to these strengths by using metaphors and story-telling when voicing values. Even if certain personal communication techniques may not seem to be the most obvious choices in some situations (e.g. using metaphors may seem inappropriate in certain work environments), one can still have success when voicing values through using metaphors as this communication technique would come natural at a time of stress.

In order to take ethical action, communicating powerfully and persuasively in the face of strong countervailing organizational or individual norms, reasons and rationalizations, can be crucial. Drawing on successful examples and personal conviction can help to overcome common pitfalls. To develop this ability, it is useful to analyse the challenging situation carefully by answering the following questions:

- Who is the critical audience(s) or the key parties of the ethical dilemma? What is at stake for them?

- What are the main arguments that must be countered? What are the reasons and rationalizations that need to be addressed?

- How can those who actively or passively engage in unethical behaviour be influenced?

- What is the most powerful and persuasive response to the reasons and rationalizations that need to be addressed? To whom should the argument be made? When and in what context?

Additional guiding questions that can help in designing, reflecting upon and discussing responses to ethically challenging situations are as follows:

- What is the optimal timing for your effort? Should it be broken down into stages in some way? Sequenced?

- Will you do this solo? With allies? (If yes, whom?)

- Will you do this off-line or in public? One-on-one or in a group?

- Do you have all the information you need (research, interpersonal insights, examples of past successes or failures, etc.)?

- Do you have adequate sources of support, inside and/or outside the organization? You might brainstorm all the possible sources of support and what you think each of them may be best able to provide. For example, peers within the organization may have information and can confirm or disprove your data.

- Family members may be able to place the choice into a larger perspective, regarding your deepest values and your personal identity. It may also be helpful to discuss your situation with close family, as a way of engaging them in the process with you so that you are not on this journey alone, particularly when the risks may affect them as well. Otherwise, fear of admitting the risks to those close to us can hinder our sense of free decision-making.

- Given your own self-assessment of your typical reactions and/or blind spots, have you insured that you have consulted advisors who are best suited to raise what you are likely to miss?

- How would you describe the approach you take in your proposed response?
    » A learning stance: open-minded (e.g., "Help me to understand how you are thinking about this…")

    » Dialogue (e.g., "Can we keep this decision open for a while longer, so that we can consider other perspectives?")

    » Persuasion: You are convinced of your position but want to persuade the other (e.g., "I have done a lot of thinking about this situation and I have concluded… I would really appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective with you")

    » Adversarial: You are convinced of your position and your goal is to simply state yourposition and let the chips fall where they may (e.g., "I have done a lot of thinking about this situation and I have concluded…I am sorry if you disagree but I cannot pursue this course of action")

    » One-size-fits-all arguments, or somehow tailored for audience(s) (e.g., "It's not honest" is a one size fits all argument whereas "Our firm's reputation for honesty is its greatest asset. Remember how our customers stood by us when we discovered that data theft last year? That was because they believed we would never deceive them about their risks" is an example of a more tailored argument. Both can be effective in different situations, but it is best to be aware of our choices)

    » Problem-solving (e.g., "I see what's at stake here and why you are suggesting this course of action, but I am confident we can find another solution if we bring all our talents to bear here.")

    » Other approaches?

- What are the biggest challenges/thorniest arguments you face?

- What are your strongest arguments?

- What will it take to do this?
    » For your target listener: How will you need to frame this choice to tap into his/her commitment?

    » For yourself: How will you need to frame this choice to tap into your own commitment and courage?

These questions become the template for discussing, pre-scripting and action-planning around the case studies and scenarios shared in the Exercises section of this Module. Interestingly, these questions are not asking to apply ethical analysis. Rather they are about understanding the reasons and motivations that guide the behaviour and choices of those who need to be persuaded[5].

Experiential learning or problem-solving approaches

Building skills for taking ethical action can be achieved through an experiential learning approach. Also known as experience-based learning or action learning, experiential learning refers to a process that leads to an increase in knowledge based on concrete experience and reflective observation. When discussed in the context of ethics education, this basic idea of experiential learning is that individuals or groups experience a real-life ethical dilemma and try to devise solutions. They learn from reflecting on the process and results, and from experiencing the problem and seeking the solution.

Experiential learning is the foundation of many problem-solving or action-oriented ethical training programmes including those implemented by organizations such as Integrity Action and the Alliance for Integrity. Integrity Action is an international NGO that focuses on initiating social processes that curb corruption and empower citizens to act with and demand integrity. In the context of its Community Integrity Building project, the NGO encourages students and other participants to monitor public projects and speak up when noticing improper or unethical practices. This has yielded positive results in terms of improving the quality and ethicality of services.

The Alliance for Integrity is a business-driven multi-stakeholder initiative seeking to promote transparency and integrity in the economic system. The organization has a variety of projects including integrity trainings based on experiential learning. For example, its programme for business practitioners called De Empresas para Empresas ('From Businesses for Businesses') includes the following four steps:

- First, participants work in groups on ethical dilemma situations that they encounter in day-to-day business (concrete experience).
- Second, participants present their potential solutions in a joint discussion with all the participants of the training programme (reflective observation).
- Third, good practice solutions are shared with the participants, considering contextual factors (abstractive conceptualizations).
- Fourth, participants practice the solutions that have been proposed in further exercises and are encouraged to apply their knowledge in day-to-day business and report back or share their experience in working groups.

Depending on their knowledge and experience, participants can become trainers for their peers. Experience shows that this peer-coaching element benefits both training participants and trainers.

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[5] For more information about the GVV approach, see www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/voicing-values-in-the-workplace.

University clinical education

As noted earlier, universities can encourage their students to take ethical action through experiential learning programmes such as legal clinics. Although law and ethics are two separate concepts, they are closely related as discussed in depth in Integrity and Ethics Module 12 (Integrity, Ethics and Law). This close connection is especially apparent in certain areas such as anti-corruption law. Non-ethical behaviour often leads to corrupt conduct, and the mechanisms for protecting individuals who speak up against unethical or corrupt practices are similar. Such clinics provide a friendly environment where potential clients, including corruption victims and witnesses, can receive free legal aid or advice from students about the legality of actions and the availability of protections against retaliation. The aid or advice is usually provided pro bono, but the students participating in the clinic must still respect attorney-client privileges. Therefore, an anti-corruption legal clinic can serve as a law school programme where students learn how to identify and evaluate potentially unethical conduct of others, and advise on legal implications and possible remedial action (Whalen-Bridge, 2017).

Students participating in the clinics practice ethical action through their involvement in actual cases with ethical dimensions. The work can also improve their peer coaching skills. At the same time, legal clinics can be beneficial for the society as a whole. Students participating in legal clinics are future legal professionals. The experience they receive in the clinic will often be transposed into their future activities, as advocates for change or individual attorneys. Furthermore, as part of an attempt to foster an ethical culture and to build capacities for disclosing information related to non-ethical behaviour, public and private organizations can encourage employees to share ethical issues and dilemmas with anti-corruption university legal clinics.

In addition, organizations can collaborate with legal clinics on organizing trainings for employees, focusing for example on protections from repercussions (this may include whistle-blower protection but also other forms of protection deriving from labour law). Through such trainings, clinic students can convey to employees that protection is not only a matter of their organization's approach but is also a legal requirement. This, in turn, will increase the likelihood that ethically compromising situations will be discussed.

Another example relates to the issue of speak-up culture and employee feedback. Students who are involved in legal clinics can draft and publish a template for questionnaires on the clinic's website regarding the level of satisfaction regarding the superiors' conduct, inter-company relations, the perceived freedom to express one's attitude, the types of penalties for disciplinary breaches, the actual possibilities for a person to point out his or her opinion, the effects of this on work processes, and suggestions for improvement. Organizations can in turn access and adapt these templates to their own needs and use them as monitoring tools or as a basis for undertaking initiatives.

Anti-corruption legal clinics can also educate students who are not enrolled in the clinical programme. Thus, if a student from a certain university has concerns over unethical practices but does not know whether to disclose information, the student can consult the university's anti-corruption legal clinic. By discussing the matters with peers, the student can learn whether the unethical behaviour amounts to corruption from a legal perspective, and what are the protective mechanisms that would apply if he or she speaks up. For students, but also for other types of clients, legal clinics represent a friendly environment where issues are openly discussed and feedback is received from supportive students and peers.

To conclude, as illustrated in this Module, certain practical strategies can help implement ethical decisions. Some of these strategies apply on the organizational level, focusing on creating enabling environments. Other strategies target the individual level, seeking to build personal capacity to take ethical action even in difficult circumstances, including when the context or organizational culture are not conducive to ethical action. Through its explanations and interactive exercise, this Module familiarises students with both types of strategies.

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Exercises

This section contains suggestions for in-class and pre-class educational exercises, while a post-class assignment for assessing student understanding of the Module is suggested in a separate section.

The exercises in this section are most appropriate for classes of up to 50 students, where students can be easily organized into small groups in which they discuss cases or conduct activities before group representatives provide feedback to the entire class. Although it is possible to have the same small group structure in large classes comprising a few hundred students, it is more challenging and the lecturer might wish to adapt facilitation techniques to ensure sufficient time for group discussions as well as providing feedback to the entire class. The easiest way to deal with the requirement for small group discussion in a large class is to ask students to discuss the issues with the four or five students sitting close to them. Given time limitations, not all groups will be able to provide feedback in each exercise. It is recommended that the lecturer makes random selections and tries to ensure that all groups get the opportunity to provide feedback at least once during the session. If time permits, the lecturer could facilitate a discussion in plenary after each group has provided feedback.

All exercises in this section are appropriate for both graduate and undergraduate students. However, as students' prior knowledge and exposure to these issues vary widely, decisions about appropriateness of exercises should be based on their educational and social context. The lecturer is encouraged to relate and connect each exercise to the key issues of the Module.

> Exercise 1: Building a no-blame, just culture in an organization

Present the following scenario to the students: You are a group of consultants that has been sent to the customs authority of country X. The customs authority is a public organization and recently had a major scandal. To avoid such issues in the future, the customs authority seeks to build a no-blame culture.

In small groups, discuss the following questions:

- What are basic principles of a no-blame culture?
- What steps would you recommend for developing a no-blame culture in the customs authority?
- How can the no-blame culture be implemented in practice?
- How can the customs authority raise awareness among its staff for the no-blame culture?

Lecturer guidelines

The students should first discuss the questions in groups (15 minutes). Representatives of the groups should then present the groups' conclusions to the larger class (five minutes each). Subsequently, the lecturer facilitates an open discussion about the issues raised by the different groups, or an in-depth discussion on whether a no-blame culture would be of value at the university (15-20 minutes).

⟩ Exercise 2: A tale of two stories

This exercise has been adapted from the Giving Voice to Values (GVV) toolkit[6]. The exercise has three parts. In the first part the students reflect on a time when they voiced their values in a values conflict situation; in the second part they reflect on a time when they did not do so; in the third part the students engage in small group discussions and then the lecturer facilitates a class discussion. Answers to the Part 1 and 2 questions should be prepared in advance of the classroom discussion as they can be challenging to recall in the moment.

⟩ **Part 1: "Reflection on positive example"**. Students are asked to recall a time at work or university, or a family or social situation, when their values conflicted with what they were asked or felt pressured to do and they spoke up and acted to resolve the conflict. Students are then asked to consider the following four questions and write down their thoughts and brief responses:

- What did you do, and what was the impact?
- What motivated you to speak up and act?
- How satisfied are you with your response? How would you like to have responded? (This question is not about rejecting or defending past actions, but rather about imagining your ideal scenario.)
- What made it easier for you to speak/act (the "Enablers") and what made it more difficult (the "Disablers")? Were these things within your own control? Were they within the control of others?

⟩ **Part 2: "Reflection on negative example"**. Students are asked to recall a time at work or university, or a family or social situation, when their values conflicted with what they were asked or felt pressured to do and they did not speak up or act to resolve the conflict. Students are then asked to consider the following four questions and write down their thoughts and brief responses:

- What happened?
- Why didn't you speak up or act? What would have motivated you to do so?
- How satisfied are you with your response? How would you like to have responded? (This question is not about rejecting or defending past actions, but rather about imagining your ideal scenario.)
- What would have made it easier for you to speak/act (the "Enablers") and what made it more difficult (the "Disablers")? Are these things within your own control? Are they within the control of others?

The lecturer asks the students to share their positive examples only and their responses to the questions in small groups; they are then asked to discuss how their negative example differed and what may have made it easier to respond positively and effectively, without sharing the actual negative example; finally, the lecturer facilitates an open discussion.

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[6] Fore more information, see the short video at www.coursera.org/lecture/uva-darden-giving-voice-to-values/a-tale-of-two-stories-AjsbT.

Lecturer guidelines

In life or career, people routinely encounter situations that give rise to a values conflict. These are situations when one is pressured to act in a manner that conflicts with one's own values. Often it is not easy to align personal values and purpose with those of a boss, a co-worker, or a company at work; with classmates or friends at school; or with family, friends or acquaintances in life in general.

This exercise is designed to help students identify and develop the competencies necessary to achieve that alignment by reflecting on previous experiences, successful and less so, at effectively voicing and acting on values. Furthermore, it enables students to discover which conditions and problem definitions empower them to effectively act on their values, and which tend to inhibit that action.

The lecturers should note that for this exercise a "values conflict" refers to a disagreement that has an ethical dimension.

The lecturer asks students to complete the written part of this exercise before they come to class, and only the small and large group discussions take place during the class.

⟩ Exercise 3: Peer coaching and the value of feedback

This exercise has been adapted from the Giving Voice to Values (GVV) toolkit[7].

Students are asked to consider the following scenario:

Person A recently joined a communications firm as a **legal advisor**. Person B is a **manager** and responsible for acquiring new clients. One day, the manager asks the legal advisor to draft a contract for a new client and provides a couple of clauses that are to be included. The legal advisor notices that these clauses are vague and may pose a commercial risk to the client. The legal advisor informs the manager but the manager refuses to listen or discuss the matter, claiming that revenue targets must be reached. The legal advisor sets the contract aside for a couple of days and then decides to confront the manager again and to speak up against such unethical practices. For this purpose, the legal advisor has pre-scripted arguments and has prepared a strategy on how to approach the manager.

Students are asked to reflect individually on a strategy the legal advisor could employ to speak up, and on arguments that could be used for this purpose (10 min).

Students are asked to form small groups. In each group, one student assumes the role of the legal advisor and the remaining students act as "peer coaches". The student designated as the legal advisor explains to the peer coaches his or her strategy and scripted arguments (10 min). The participants are then asked to silently reflect on this explanation, according to the following guidelines.

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[7] Fore more information, see http://store.darden.virginia.edu/Syllabus%20Copy/Guidelines-for-Peer-Coaching.pdf.

Reflection guidelines for peer coaches

After listening to your colleague's proposed solution to the values conflict under discussion but before discussing it, take a moment to silently consider your responses to the following questions:

- What is your immediate response to your colleague's strategy and "script"?
- What are the strengths of this response?
- What questions do you still have for your colleague?
- If you were the target of this response, how do you think you would react?
- What might improve this response?

Reflection guidelines for the legal advisor

After sharing your solution to the values conflict under discussion but before discussing it, take a moment to silently consider your responses to the following questions:

- What do you see as the strengths of your response?
- What still concerns you?
- What do you think would be helpful in enabling you to respond more effectively? What would you like to ask for from your peers?

In their small groups, the students work together to improve the proposed strategy and scripted arguments (15 min).

Subsequently, the lecturer facilitates an open discussion with the larger class on whether peer coaching was helpful. The following questions could guide the discussion: How did the students playing the legal advisor feel about the input from the coaches? Did the students playing the coaches feel that they could contribute?

Lecturer guidelines

The exercise may also be followed with role-play, where a student designated as legal advisor enacts the strategy and speaks up against the manager, and the other students act as peer coaches. The students should still follow the above guidelines for reflection. However, role-playing should only be conducted at the end of the exercise, after the peer coaches have had a chance to refine and enhance their feedback while working in small groups. In addition, it is critically important to engage the students who are playing the manager in helping to improve the approach used to encourage ethical action; this is essential as the lecturer does not want to encourage rehearsal for unethical action and also because the lecturer does not want to give the impression that the unethical response is just as good as the more values-driven approach.

When designing, reflecting upon and discussing responses to values conflicts, the guiding questions in the Key Issues section of the Module are useful and may be distributed by the lecturer as an additional resource for students.

> **Exercise 4: Ethical business practices**

The lecturer asks students to imagine the following situation: You are working as an assistant to a manager of a company. Your company is bidding on a large, publicly tendered contract with a foreign government. After six months of expensive preparations and bidding, a government official assures you and the manager in a phone call that you will get the contract. Right before the contract is signed, someone from the government's purchasing department requests a last-minute "closure fee". Your company needs this contract to reach its revenue target for this year. The manager decides to go ahead and pay the closure fee to get the contract. You notice that your company does not receive a receipt for the payment. You decide to check the tender provisions but you find no mention of an official closure fee.

A) You are convinced that the payment violates your company's code of conduct and is indeed an act of corruption. You decide to go ahead and confront the manager, but the manager refuses to listen or discuss the matter. What sorts of excuses or rationalizations might the manager offer?

Students are asked to discuss this question first in groups. Subsequently, the rationalizations discussed in the groups are discussed with the larger class.

B) Groups are asked to pick one excuse or rationalization and to try to counter it by developing arguments to prove that the excuse is invalid. Students are encouraged to make use of action-planning and script-writing techniques. In particular, they should be encouraged to build their argument so that it relates to personal beliefs and values, or to the values and codes of ethics of their organization. They should also consider which communication method to choose (e.g. formal, informal, written, or personal talk).

Depending on time, the lecturer can ask a couple of groups to present their counter arguments to the rationalization they chose.

C) The lecturer asks the students to do a brief role-play in groups of two, where one student plays the manager putting forward the rationalization and the other student tries to voice his or her belief and counter the rationalization. Of course, this sort of role-play should only occur after the entire group has engaged in ethical problem-solving (as above) and as also mentioned above, it is critically important to engage the students who are playing the manager who proposed the unethical action in helping to improve the approach used to encourage ethical action; this is essential as the lecturer does not want to encourage rehearsal for unethical action and also because the lecturer does not want to give the impression that the unethical response is just as good as the more values-driven approach.

D) Depending on time, a couple of groups may be chosen to play their interpretation in front of the class.

Lecturer guidelines

While the dilemma situation in this exercise applies to the business context, lecturers can customize it to fit other contexts.

The main objective of this exercise is to encourage students to train their "moral muscle" and develop the skills in terms of the action-based approach to ethics and integrity.

When conducing the exercise, the lecturer can draw on the article Giving Voice to Values: How to Counter Rationalizations Rationally (referenced in the Core reading of this Module).

Possible class structure

This section contains recommendations for a teaching sequence and timing intended to achieve learning outcomes through a three-hour class. The lecturer may wish to disregard or shorten some of the segments below in order to give more time to other elements, including introduction, icebreakers, conclusion or short breaks. The structure could also be adapted for shorter or longer classes, given that class durations vary across countries.

Introduction (10 mins)

- Introduce relevant terms and provide an overview of the Module.

Enabling environments (50 mins)

- Discuss organizational approaches to fostering ethical environments and conduct Exercise 1.

Giving Voice to Values (GVV) (60 mins)

- Discuss the GVV approach and conduct Exercise 2 (A Tale of Two Stories).

Strategies for Acting Ethically (50 mins)

- Conduct Exercise 3 (Peer Coaching and the Value of Feedback) or Exercise 4 (Ethical Business Practices).

Conclusion (10 mins)

- Conclude the session with a discussion of the Module's main lessons.

Core reading

This section provides a list of (mostly) open access materials that the lecturer could ask the students to read before taking a class based on this Module.

Boysen, Philip G. (2013). Just culture: a foundation for balanced accountability and patient safety. *Ochsner Journal,* vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 400–406.
  » Available from www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3776518/.

Gentile, Mary C. (2017). Giving Voice to Values: How to Counter Rationalizations Rationally.
   » Available from https://ideas.darden.virginia.edu/2017/10/giving-voice-to-values-how-to-counter-rationalizations-rationally/.

Gentile, Mary C. (2016). Talking About Ethics Across Cultures: Five ways to help people act on their values, no matter the context. *Harvard Business Review,* 23 December.
  » Available from https://hbr.org/2016/12/talking-about-ethics-across-cultures.

Gentile, Mary C. (2010). Ways of Thinking About Values in the Workplace.
  » Available from http://store.darden.virginia.edu/Syllabus%20Copy/Ways-of-Thinking-About-Our-Values.pdf.

Haidt, Jonathan (2006). *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom.* New York: Basic Books. See especially pp. 145-149.
  » Available from www.happinesshypothesis.com.

Khatri, Naresh, Gordon Brown and Lanis Hicks (2009). From a blame culture to a just culture in health care. *Health Care Management Review,* vol. 34, pp. 312-322.
  » Available from www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19858916.

Kish-Gephart, Jennifer J. and others (2009). Silenced by fear: the nature, sources and consequences of fear at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior,* vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 163–193.
  » Available from www.researchgate.net/publication/238382691_Silenced_by_fear.

Morrison, Elizabeth Wolfe (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, vol 1, pp. 173-197.
  » Available from www.researchgate.net/publication/275508087_Employee_Voice_and_Silence.

Alliance for Integrity (2016). No eXcuses! Countering the 10 Most Common Excuses for Corrupt Behaviour: *A Pocket Guide for Business Practitioners*.
  » Available from www.allianceforintegrity.org/wAssets/docs/publications/es/cumplimiento-conductal/IN_No-eXcuses-Pocket-Guide.pdf.

Advanced reading

The following readings are recommended for students interested in exploring the topics of this Module in more detail, and for lecturers teaching the Module.

Dees, Gregory and Peter Crampton (1991). Shrewd bargaining on the moral frontier: toward a theory of morality in practice. *Business Ethics Quarterly,* vol. 1, No. 2 (April), pp. 146-164.

Dekker, Sidney (2016). *Just Culture: Restoring Trust and Accountability in Your Organization*, 3rd ed. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Edmonson, Amy C (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: how team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies,* vol. 40, No. 6 (September).

Gentile, Mary C. 2010. *Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Martin E. P. Seligman (2002). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfilment*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Morrison, Elizabeth and Frances J. Milliken (2000). Organizational silence: a barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 25, No. 4.

Rushworth M. Kidder (2005). Moral Courage: *Taking Action When Your Values Are Put to the Test*. New York: William Morrow. *See especially pp. 39-76.

Student assessment

This section provides suggestions for a post-class assignment for the purpose of assessing student understanding of the Module. Suggestions for pre-class or in-class assignments are provided in the Exercises section. To assess the students' understanding of the Module, the following post-class assignment is proposed:

Part 1: Develop a brief case study describing a specific workplace values conflict from your own experience, or a situation that you have witnessed or read about (approximately 1-2 pages long).

Part 2: Provide an action plan or script for acting on your values effectively (approximately 7 pages long).

- **Part 1** lays out the situation. This should be a brief description of an occasion when your values conflicted with what you were asked to do in the workplace or similar setting. You are also free to use other contexts, including internships, class working teams, summer jobs, or other situations relevant to emerging or current business professionals. All names of individuals and of organizations should be disguised. This case study should end at the point where the protagonist knows what he or she believes is the right and ethical thing to do but is wondering how to get it done; what to say; to whom; in what sequence; how to respond to objections; what data is needed to make one's point; etc. Include enough detail so that someone reading the case would be able to generate ideas and suggestions about how the protagonist might proceed.

- **Part 2** includes a short follow-up case which explains what happened (approximately 1 page) and the action plan or script for acting on your values (approximately 6 pages). When describing what happened, please indicate whether the protagonist found a way to voice and act on their values effectively, and provide as much detail as you can about what they said and did and why/how it worked. If the protagonist did not find a way to voice and act on their values, offer any insights you can into what they learned from the situation, and especially how they might have successfully enacted their values and how they might be able to change the outcome in the future.

The action plan or script should provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the values-based position that the protagonist (you) wants to take?
2. What is at risk or at stake for all affected parties, including the protagonist?
3. What are the main arguments or objections that the protagonist is trying to counter? That is, what are the "Reasons and Rationalizations" that the protagonist needs to address?
4. What are the most powerful responses to these "Reasons and Rationalizations"?
5. What will be the most effective approach/action plan for the protagonist to act on their values? What data do they need to gather? Whom do they need to speak to? In what sequence? How will they respond to objections? Will they do this alone or do they need to gather allies? Will this be a single action or will they need to develop a longer-term strategy?

Be sure to consider what information and research may be needed to design the most well-reasoned and persuasive approach. There are many resources available for free download at http://store. darden.virginia.edu/giving-voice-to-values which can provide guidance: for example, "Scripts and Skills Readings" and "Ways of Thinking about Values in the Workplace".

Additional teaching tools

This section includes links to relevant teaching aides such as PowerPoint slides and video material, which could help the lecturer teach the issues covered by the Module. Lecturers can adapt the slides and other resources to their needs.

> Video material

"Ethical Leadership through Giving Voice to Values." A MOOC offered online by UVA Darden and Coursera (free for auditors).
   » Available from www.coursera.org/learn/uva-darden-giving-voice-to-values.
   These videos can be viewed for free if students sign up to audit the Coursera MOOC.

Mary Gentile explaining the GVV approach on the GrassRoots Community Network.
   » Available from www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy15hS9ba1U.

McKinsey Quarterly interview.
   » Available from www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/voicing-values-in-the-workplace.

Video resource on speak up culture.
   » Available from www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ap2vRpS5jhs&feature=youtu.be.

> Other resources

Sample Syllabus: "Leadership When It Really Counts." A sample syllabus that introduced a full course on the topic of this Module along with a description of this course's main team project assignment.

Case studies: Case studies from the Giving Voice to Values Curriculum.
   » Available at http://store.darden.virginia.edu/giving-voice-to-values.

Faculty-Only Teaching Notes (as well as access to the "B Cases") are available to lecturers who register at sales@dardenbusinesspublishing.com. This registration and the materials are free.

Guidelines to develop a stand-alone course

This Module provides an outline for a three-hour class, but there is potential to develop its topics further into a stand-alone course. A full-term or full-year course will provide the students with more time to practice and build the skills (or moral muscle) that will enable them to take ethical action in their lives and careers. The scope and structure of such a course will be determined by the specific needs of each context, but a possible structure can be based on the sample syllabus "Leadership When It Really Counts", which is freely available from http://store.darden.virginia.edu/Syllabus%20Copy/leadership-when-it-really-counts-an-action-practicum.pdf.