

Workplace Ethics Project

As Richard Johnson-Sheehan describes in Chapter Four, “When faced with an ethical dilemma, it is tempting to walk away from it or pretend it isn’t there. In any ethical situation, you should take some kind of action” (p. 75). Workplace communication gives rise to multiple situations in which you will be forced to take some kind of action on an ethical issue. While ethical dilemmas are often complex and specific to a certain scenario, you can prepare yourself in advance to handle many ethical dilemmas in the workplace.

For this first project, you will report on the ethical considerations that professionals in your field might encounter as well as ethical guidelines that direct the process by which you would approach ethical concerns in your field. Drawing on secondary and primary sources, write a report on the ethical concerns as a communication professional in your intended career path. In addition to this report, please

Secondary Source Material: Workplace ethics issues often emerge into the public sphere. Look to news articles about ethical issues in your field, books on the subjects of ethics, policy statements of umbrella associations, national/state laws, etc. Additionally, scholars who do research in your particular field may have textbooks, articles, etc., that discuss the ethical concerns from a more academic viewpoint.

Primary Source Material: Consider the possible channels of information where you can gather information on ethical concerns. For example, interviews with professionals currently in your field, company press releases regarding ethical dilemmas,

Report

The primary deliverable for this project is a report on the ethical concerns in your current field of interest. Drawing from the data and information you collect from your primary and secondary research activities you will compose a short report (3-5 single-spaced pgs. with a space between paragraphs) that synthesizes your primary and secondary research findings about your issue.

When composing the report, you should imagine that the report’s purpose is to provide professionals in your field with information about ethical decision(s) they might encounter. Put another way, your team’s main goal is primarily not to persuade your readers about how to implement a specific plan to resolve or address an issue. Rather, your team’s primary goal is to provide information to your reader that both positions him/her to understand the nature of the issue as a whole and prepares him/her to consider a variety of factors that will influence an ethical decision.

When composing the short report, you should draw from the course textbook and online for examples of how to arrange information and design the document. Also consider the use of images or graphs to help convey information.

Quick Reference Document

When composing the quick reference document, you should list the ethical concerns that you examined in preparation of your report. Additionally, you might give an abbreviated discussion of these concerns for quick reference or to show how the ethical concern(s) you discuss in the report relate to other issues in the field.

Think of this deliverable as a document that someone could review quickly to understand your topic. You should include a brief annotated bibliography of research in this reference document.

Project Summary Memo

When writing your Project Summary, you should assume the role of an employee reporting to his/her supervisor who has asked for an accounting of the work that took place in the project. In particular, you are describing the successes and shortcomings of the work and providing an initial assessment of the documents you created.

Regarding the format of the project summary, you will compose a memorandum (1-2 pages) with appropriate sections, headers, and use of design components that facilitate the reading process. While you have a broad range of freedom in terms of what you write about in the reflection, your memorandums should conform to the general guidelines for composing memorandums, i.e. your memorandums should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion that describes the status of the work (next steps, the project is completed, etc.). Overall, you could imagine the memorandum as a cover sheet that will accompany all of the deliverables you are responsible for submitting in the project. If you choose to write your memorandum in this manner, be sure to account for the project deliverables as attachments to the memorandum.