



SNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Kurumbapalayam (Po), Coimbatore – 641 107

AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION



Approved by AICTE, New Delhi and Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai

CODES OF ETHICS

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The 'codes of ethics' exhibit, rights, duties, and obligations of the members of a profession and a professional society. The codes exhibit the following essential roles:

1. Inspiration and guidance. The codes express the collective commitment of the profession to ethical conduct and public good and thus inspire the individuals. They identify primary responsibilities and provide statements and guidelines on interpretations for the professionals and the professional societies.
2. Support to engineers. The codes give positive support to professionals for taking stands on moral issues. Further they serve as potential legal support to discharge professional obligations.
3. Deterrence (discourage to act immorally) and discipline (regulate to act morally). The codes serve as the basis for investigating unethical actions. The professional societies sometimes revoke membership or suspend/expel the members, when proved to have acted unethical. This sanction along with loss of respect from the colleagues and the society are bound to act as deterrent.
4. Education and mutual understanding. Codes are used to prompt discussion and reflection on moral issues. They develop a shared understanding by the professionals, public, and the government on the moral responsibilities of the engineers. The Board of Review of the professional societies encourages moral discussion for educational purposes.
5. Create good public image. The codes present positive image of the committed profession to the public, help the engineers to serve the public effectively. They promote more of self regulation and lessen the government regulations. This is bound to raise the reputation of the profession and the organization, in establishing the trust of the public.
6. Protect the status quo. They create minimum level of ethical conduct and promotes agreement within the profession. Primary obligation namely the safety, health, and welfare of the public, declared by the codes serves and protects the public.
7. Promotes business interests. The codes offer inspiration to the entrepreneurs, establish shared standards, healthy competition, and maximize profit to investors, employees, and consumers.

Limitations: The codes are not remedy for all evils. They have many limitations, namely:

1. General and vague wordings. Many statements are general in nature and hence unable to solve all problems.

2. Not applicable to all situations. Codes are not sacred, and need not be accepted without criticism. Tolerance for criticisms of the codes themselves should be allowed.
3. Often have internal conflicts. Many times, the priorities are clearly spelt out, e.g., codes forbid public remarks critical of colleagues (engineers), but they actually discovered a major bribery, which might have caused a huge loss to the exchequer.
4. They can not be treated as final moral authority for professional conduct. Codes have flaws by commission and omission. There are still some grey areas undefined by codes. They can not be equated to laws. After all, even laws have loopholes and they invoke creativity in the legal practitioners.
5. Only a few enroll as members in professional society and non-members can not be compelled.
6. Even as members of the professional society, many are unaware of the codes.
7. Different societies have different codes. The codes can not be uniform or same! Unifying the codes may not necessarily solve the problems prevailing various professions, but attempts are still made towards this unified codes.
8. Codes are said to be coercive. They are sometimes claimed to be threatening and forceful.