



How to Ensure Your Business Is Ethical

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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It sounds easy to merely state that you know what is "ethical." It should be common sense, right? Well common sense isn't that common, and it doesn't make sense to everyone.

It never ceases to amaze me how most people think that they are "right" about the way things should be done. This is very apparently, especially when it comes to divorcing parents who each not only believe but also strongly communicate the fact that they know what is best for the children and the other person doesn't.

People throw around the word "fair." Well, fair means very different things to different people.

It is therefore very important that in order to have an ethical business, you not only understand what your regulatory body outlines and ethical practice but also know the process for determining how issues will be resolved in an ethical manner.

There are several ways to ensure that you practice in an ethical manner:

1. Know if there is a Code of Ethics that would govern your profession.
2. Study the ethics and make sure that you understand what each of them means.
3. Surround yourself with people who you trust who will tell you the truth and use wisdom in their consultations with others.
4. Make sure that you have all the information from each of the parties involved in the situations in which you have been involved.
5. Keep good notes. Documentation is vital in any situation, but especially so if there is an unresolved problem.
6. Be prepared to declare and remove yourself from roles where there is an actual or perceived conflict of interest.
7. Consider referring clients to another professional if you do not have competency to deal with their situation.
8. Consult with a practice advisor or your regulatory body if you are in doubt about how to proceed.
- 9 Take time to review all the factors involved and document not only the information provided to you but also the reasoning behind any decisions that you are making.
10. Have an attitude that allows openness to new ideas. When someone else is going through an ethical dilemma, you can pay attention in order to learn from it.

Ethics are usually developed over time by experts in a field of practice who have met together in order to lay out guidelines that others can use for guidance and protection. It is not a simple matter and should not be taken lightly.

Oh, and by the way, you, as a professional, are responsible for knowing how to do ethical practice. It is not good enough to say, "I didn't know."