

Ethical and Effective Decision Making



GOOD DECISIONS are BOTH ETHICAL and EFFECTIVE:

- Ethical decisions generate and sustain trust, demonstrate respect, responsibility, fairness and caring which creates GOOD CITIZENSHIP
- Effective decisions advance our purpose - ask yourself “Am I satisfied with the result?”

1 THINK AHEAD

- IDENTIFY the PROBLEM
- If possible, stop the momentum of events long enough to permit CALM ANALYSIS which can prevent quick and unformed decisions

2 CLARIFY the ISSUES

- What are the critical ISSUES?
- What RIGHTS vs. RESPONSIBILITIES are involved?
- How will this decision affect involved parties’ in the short and long-term?
- What is in the BEST INTEREST of those involved?
- Is there a danger to the health, safety, and well-being of anyone?

3 DETERMINE the FACTS

- Gather information - INVESTIGATE
- Know ALL of the FACTS: assess what you know and what you need to know
- VERIFY ASSUMPTIONS
- Make good judgments as to who and what to believe = who is RELIABLE and CREDIBLE?

4 DETERMINE the IMPACT

- Consider all perspectives
- Each person affected by a decision has a stake in the decision
- Make all REASONABLE EFFORTS to foresee possible consequences and take reasonable steps to avoid harm to others
- Respect AUTONOMY
- Who will your decision help? Who will your decision hurt?

5 DEVELOP OPTIONS

- Make a list of your options – broaden your perspective and brainstorm new options
- Will any of your options violate your personal ethics? Societal values? Community values?
- What would your ethical ROLE MODEL do?
- What if your decision was made public to the criticism of those who you respect?

6 MONITOR and MODIFY your DECISIONS

- EVALUATE - How will you evaluate your decision?
- How might others evaluate your decision?

Resources: Josephson, Michael (2002). *Making Ethical Decisions*. Los Angeles, CA: Josephson Institute of Ethics and Corey, G, Corey, M, & Callanan, P (2006). *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. Brooks Cole

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