

# OFFICE PROCEDURES

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## Chapter 3: Working Ethically



# Ethics

What are “ethics”?

- The principles of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or a social group
- A system of principles governing morality and acceptable conduct

# The Ethical Organization

An ethical organization is...

- Socially and environmentally responsible
  - Aware of the potential dangers created by their business
- Internationally aware
  - Respectful of local culture
- Committed to diversity
  - Intolerant of all forms of discrimination: race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation
  - Maintains a policy against sexual harassment
  - Provides for the physically challenged

# The Ethical Organization...

- Involved in the community
  - Mentoring programs for the disadvantaged
  - Involved with charitable organizations
  - Sponsoring community sports programs
- Respectful of the needs/rights of employees
  - Treat all employees fairly
  - Provide ongoing training and personal development activities



# The Ethical Organization...



- Adheres to workplace standards
  - Health and safety
    - Equipment and apparel; dangerous substances; sanitation; materials storage
  - Minimum wage; hours of work; overtime
  - Observing public holidays
  - Maternity/parental/compassionate care leave
  - Equal pay for equal work
- Provides an ergonomically sound environment
  - Lighting, acoustics, colour
  - Comfortable chairs, adequate work space

# The Ethical Employee

An ethical employee...

- Respects the organizational structure
  - Doesn't go over the supervisor's head
- Makes ethical decisions
  - Is what I'm doing legal?
  - Will I be proud of what I've done?
  - Do my actions fit with who I think I am?
- Accepts constructive criticism
  - Avoids an emotional response to criticism



# The Ethical Employee...

- Respects diversity
  - Is aware of workplace (office) politics
    - Respects others' privacy
      - Is honest
        - Is dependable
          - Is cooperative
            - Respects clients/customers

# The Ethical Employee...



- Consider this...
- A company provides pens and pencils for the use of its employees. One day, Sheila gets home from work and realizes she still has a couple of pens that she usually keeps in her desk at the office. She decides to put them in the utility drawer in her kitchen. The kids are always looking for pens, so next time they can take those. Besides, she has a drawer FULL of pens at work.

Ethical or not?



# An interesting fact...

- In the United States, theft of office supplies such as paper, pens, pencils, CDs, etc., costs businesses **\$50 billion** each and every year!



# Ethical Change

- Factors impeding ethical change:
  - Amoral
  - Leadership is unethical
  - Values can't be changed
  - Labels accurately describe people
- Factors supporting ethical change