

Engineering Ethics

by

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Engineering Ethics

Chapter 4

The Rights and Responsibilities of Engineers



Engineering Ethics

Chapter Description

- Aims
 - Define what is rights and responsibilities
- Expected Outcomes
 - Differentiate the professional engineer and code of ethics.
- Other related Information



Subtopics

4.1 Professional Responsibilities

4.2 Professional Rights



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4.1 Professional Responsibilities

- **Engineers exercise their rights and responsibilities. Develop framework for understanding**
- **When necessary, blow whistle to protect the public i.e. potential design flaws.**
- **Professional rights**
 - **Confidentiality and Proprietary Information**
 - **Conflict of Interest**
 - **Competitive bidding**



4.1 Professional Responsibilities

- **Confidentiality and Proprietary Information**
 - Keep certain information secret and confidential.
 - Proprietary. Engineers required to sign the nondisclosure agreement.
 - When necessary, blow whistle to protect the public i.e. potential design flaws.
- **Conflict of Interest**
 - Keep away from his obligations



4.1 Professional Responsibilities

- **Competitive bidding**
 - **Code of ethics – included a prohibition on competitive bidding.**
 - **Prevent engineers to compete. Based on submitting price proposals.**



4.2 Professional Rights

- **Engineers have rights and responsibilities.**
- **Most fundamental right, professional conscience.**
- **Exercise judgement.**
- **Right to refuse - unethical behavior.**



4.3 Whistle blowing

- **Employer informs the public on unethical (employers or supervisors).**
- **Engineers - to blow whistle on act - harm health and safety.**



4.3 Whistle blowing

- **Internal and external whistle blowing.**
- **Internal –over immediate supervisor - higher level of management.**
- **External - goes to newspapers /law enforcing authorities.**



4.3 Whistle blowing

- **When to blow whistle;**
- ***Need*** – clear & important harm can be avoided by blowing whistle. ***Proximity*** – clear position to report. ***Capability*** – Chance of success of stopping. ***Last resort*** – No one else more capable or proximate.



References

- **Charles B. Fleddermann. 4th Edition. Engineering Ethics. Prentice Hall 2012.**
- **P. Aarne Vesilind, Alastar S. Gunn. Hold Paramount. The Engineer's Responsibility to Society. Third Edition. Cengage Learning 2016, 2012.**



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