Occupational Certificate: Grain Depot Manager

Curriculum Code 132408-000-00--00

KNOWLEDGE MODULE 7:

Employee of Choice

NQF 4, 6 Credits

agbiz GRAIN
agricultural business chamber
the way to prosperity

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Occupational Curriculum: Grain Depot Manager

The Grain Depot Manager achieves operational efficiencies by monitoring, controlling and responding to operational variables, the utilisation of resources and the mechanical integrity of a bulk grain handling and storage unit.

Occupational tasks:

- Conduct grain and oilseed sampling and grading processes (NQF 4)
- Manage and control the achievement of operational targets (NQF 5)
- Lead and manage staff to ensure smooth business operations (NQF 5)
- Manage and control the utilization of operational resources (NQF 5)
- Achieve grain handling and storage efficiency and quality standards by controlling unit operations (NQF 5)

PURPOSE OF THE QUALIFICATION

The core competencies of grain operations have been defined as the basic understanding and practical application of the management of grain quality and grain handling equipment as well as the management of operational technology, facility operations and human resources.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Grade 12

Methodology

Knowledge Modules facilitated in classroom with a knowledge assessment.

Practical Activities in simulated environment with observation sheets

Prescribed workplace activities in a real work environment with logbook

MODULE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY AT WORK

(KM07-KT01)

Learning Outcomes

- Explain the concept of accountability and why it's important in the workplace.

- Identify and explain the components for building personal and mutual accountability (building trust in relationships, seek feedback)

- Explain how to overcome obstacles to accountability (unclear or competing priorities, silo mentality)

Understanding Accountability

Picture a workplace where mistrust is the norm, employees are concerned with protecting their reputations, and teams seek to defend their "turf" and often fail to keep their promises.

Now, picture a workplace where trust is unquestioned, commitments are clear, personal responsibility is high, people take ownership of problems, and mistakes are treated as opportunities to improve rather than reasons to blame. This is a culture of accountability—the cornerstone of a positive work environment.

Accountability can be defined in two ways—personal and mutual.

Personal accountability: Taking responsibility for the consequences and outcomes of your choices and actions. This is accomplished primarily by building trust, seeking feedback, and learning from mistakes. This is behaviour-related accountability.

Mutual accountability: Counting on one another to keep commitments and agreements. This is accomplished primarily through accountability agreements and accountability conversations both within teams (intra-team) and between teams (inter-team). This is task-related accountability.

Goal of accountability: To take actions that are consistent with your desired results.

Establish personal accountability

Build trust

Personal accountability is a prerequisite to mutual accountability, and trust is a prerequisite to personal accountability. Trust depends on intention, integrity, competence, and follow-through.

Intention and Integrity

- **Intention**: Having positive motivation.

What is the true outcome you are seeking?

- **Integrity**: Acting according to your values—in other words, there is no gap between your (positive!) intention and your actions.

Do you do what you say and say what you do? Are your words and actions consistent?

Integrity means having the courage to do the right thing even when it is difficult, or regardless of the consequences.

Competence and Follow-Through

- **Competence**: Are you capable of doing what you say you will? Realistically assess what you can do, both in terms of time and ability, and don't make commitments you can't keep.

To increase your competence, learn what your strengths are and lean on them. And continue learning to expand your capabilities.

Follow-through: Whether things go well or go wrong, do you follow through, communicate, and take care of business?

Results that meet expectations: When things go as expected, that builds your credibility and makes you more trustworthy.

Results that don't meet expectations: When things don't go as expected, you can still build credibility and trustworthiness depending on how you handle the situation (and as long as this isn't a regular occurrence). To build trust, own up to the problem and solve it.

Individual Activity: Do You Build and Demonstrate Trust?

Instructions: Read each statement and rate yourself on each of the traits that build or demonstrate trust. Use the following scale: 1=Never, 2=Seldom, 3=Occasionally, 4=Consistently

Statement	Rating
1. I say what I mean and mean what I say.	1 2 3 4
2. I value individual differences and treat people the way they want to be treated.	1 2 3 4
3. I share information freely.	1 2 3 4
4. I speak about others as if they were present.	1 2 3 4
5. I listen to understand a situation fully before giving advice.	1 2 3 4
6. I don't cover up, justify, or blame when I make a mistake.	1 2 3 4
7. I don't simply apologize; I make amends when I make a mistake.	1 2 3 4

8. I keep every commitment I make.	1 2 3 4
9. I show trust to earn trust.	1 2 3 4

Total_____

Add the numbers assigned to each statement and see how your trust skills measure up:

9–17: You have an opportunity to develop upon your trust skills in many areas.

18–27: Choose one or two of the statements you rated yourself lower on, and work on increasing the frequency of those.

28–36: You build and demonstrate trust consistently.

Seek Feedback

Personal accountability is taking responsibility for the consequences of your actions. One important way to do that is to proactively seek feedback so you can change and improve.

Ask for It

It's almost always easier hearing feedback when you ask for it rather than being surprised by it.

- Be specific about what you want. It will be helpful to the other person to ask for feedback about a specific situation or pattern of behavior.

- Be open to what you get. Assume the other person is trying to be helpful.

- Listen carefully, without becoming defensive. Accept what the other person says as "true" from their perspective. Do not argue.

- Ask for examples if you need clarification.

- Thank them, whether or not you agree with their feedback.

Decide What to Do About It

After you receive feedback, you need to decide how you will respond to it.

Reflect on the feedback and how you feel about it.

If you feel defensive, try to figure out why. Usually, you feel defensive because there is some truth to the feedback. Try to assess what is accurate and what is strictly a personal opinion.

Experience your emotions and then let them go as quickly as possible.

If you recognize its validity, decide on the best way to implement it. Some feedback may be valid but difficult to act on. This occurs when the feedback is related to something out of

your control, such as the overall culture of the organization. It's not impossible, just very challenging.

When you make specific changes, let the person know how you've used their feedback or how their feedback was helpful. That is one way to demonstrate personal accountability.

Learn from Mistakes

When you ask for feedback, you are likely to expose yourself to criticism about actions you've taken—or not taken. Use these as opportunities to reflect and improve.

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What warning signs did I ignore or miss?
- What could I have done differently?
- What will I do differently in the future?
- If I were to give someone advice in a similar situation, what would I tell them?
- What have I learned?

Individual Activity: What Have You Learned?

Instructions: Think about a time when you made a mistake and consider the questions above to help you learn from it.

- Describe the situation:
- What warning signs did I ignore or miss?
- What could I have done differently?
- What will I do differently in the future?
- If I were to give someone advice in a similar situation, what would I tell them?
- What have I learned?

Overcome Attitude Obstacles

In order for employees to fully embrace personal accountability, they must be able to overcome attitude obstacles.

- **Learned Helplessness**

Reminder: Learned helplessness is the perceived absence of control over a situation or underestimating your own ability to influence a situation. To overcome:

- **Reframe.** Change your perspective by explaining the event in a more positive way; for example, as a short-term event rather than a permanent situation, or as limited to one specific circumstance rather than widespread, or as something that could have happened to anyone and not just you.
  - Example: Instead of *"My boss is out to get me."* Say *"One time in a staff meeting, my boss didn't support me."*
- **Identify what you can control.** It's more than you think! You can always control your own choices and responses. For example, if you work with an unpredictable boss who is sometimes nice and other times mean, you can choose to respond to him or her the same way every time rather than getting yanked around emotionally. Using a neutral response in all circumstances may even lead your boss to moderate his or her behaviour.
- **Develop positive affirmations.** They reinforce realistic thinking and develop confidence.
  - Example: *"I speak clearly and calmly when sharing my thoughts in a meeting."*

Individual Activity: Practice Reframing and Creating Affirmations

Instructions: First, think of a situation where you felt you had little or no control. Reframe it by describing it in a more realistic way.

Next, create at least one affirmation you can use to support your personal accountability.

- **Victim Mentality**

Reminder: Victim mentality is a belief that you are a victim of the negative intentions and actions of others, even in the absence of evidence. To overcome:

- **Acknowledge what you get out of engaging in a victim mentality.** Realizing there is often a short-term benefit can help you move toward a more productive long-term outlook. Here are some of the short-term benefits:
  - You get attention. Some people thrive on attention, even when it's negative.
  - You don't have to take risks or accept important responsibility.
  - You get to feel "right." When you feel wronged, it makes you feel "right."
- **Help someone else.** Get used to not thinking about yourself so much!
- **Show gratitude.** Realize all you have going for you. Find one thing to be grateful for each day.
- **Ask yourself, "What is the hidden opportunity in this situation?"**

- **Quit asking "why" and instead ask "how"?** For example, instead of asking, "Why is this happening to me?" ask "How can I resolve this situation?"

Establish a culture of mutual accountability

Individual employees can be committed to their own personal accountability and yet that doesn't guarantee that accountability will be practiced throughout an organization. To ensure that employees are committed to completing tasks collaboratively, create a culture of mutual accountability by following these five steps.

1. Establish a clear vision of the desired outcome for each group task.

2. Execute effectively by implementing accountability agreements.

3. Surface and resolve problems and conflicts, including rooting out dysfunctional habits and behaviours.

4. Practice proactive recovery when a lapse occurs.

5. Measure and recognize success.

Establish a Clear Vision of the Desired Outcome

In order for employees to work together successfully, they must be in agreement about what they are working toward. This requires advance planning and preparation.

Describe the Desired Outcome

Focus more on the results you want to achieve than the process.

Sometimes the process is critical; for example, establishing consistent treatment of customers in order to improve customer service. However, in many cases the process details can vary as long as everyone is working toward the same goal (results).

Identify how success will be measured. This is often called a performance standard. Performance standards that are based on measurable data are often the most practical and easily understood by all. To develop an effective performance standard, ask these questions:

Is quality important? Does the stakeholder (someone with a vested interest in the outcome) or customer care how well the work is done? If so, what level of quality is acceptable or desirable?

Is quantity important? Does the stakeholder or customer care how many are produced? If so, what is the target?

Is it important that the task be accomplished by a certain time or date? If so, what is the deadline?

Is it important that the task be done within certain cost limits? If so, what is the budget?

Execute Effectively by Implementing Accountability Agreements

Accountability agreements are simply putting into writing the common expectations that have been established within a team or group. These agreements can be best captured in a table/chart format which identifies:

- **The What**: describe the overall project outcome, individual task, or specific behaviour the agreement is in reference to.

- **The Who**: identify the person who is ultimately responsible for seeing "the what" through to completion/success.

- **The When**: identify the deadline for completion or when an update on progress should be provided or (if a behaviour) put into practice.

- **The Necessary Resources/Support**: identify all the things you need to complete "the what" or achieve success; this may include people, materials, money, etc.

- **The Results of Non-Compliance**: list the consequence(s) of not adhering to the established expectations.

Example Accountability Agreement

What	Who	When	Resources/ Support	Non-compliance
Task: Update vendor information.	Tammy	11/15	Jenny, Tad, accounting department	Receive a "strike" (three strikes= note in file)
Behaviour: Be on time for team meetings.	Jim	Every meeting	Electronic reminder	Take meeting notes

Surface and Resolve Problems and Conflicts

One of the most important aspects for establishing a culture of accountability is proactively surfacing and resolving problems and conflicts. This is accomplished in a variety of ways, including promoting desirable behaviours, discouraging undesirable behaviours, overcoming organization obstacles, and following a standard process for conflict resolution.

Promote Desirable Behaviours

Promoting desirable behaviours creates an atmosphere that makes it okay to discuss problems and conflicts. These are some of the behaviours that support a culture of accountability:

- Proactive and open communication

- A willingness to admit mistakes

- A focus on problem solving rather than blaming

- An environment that makes it more important to do good than to look good

Discourage Undesirable Behaviours

Discouraging undesirable behaviours makes conversations around problems and conflicts more productive. These are some of the behaviours that undermine a culture of accountability:

- Fear of punishment

- Unhealthy competition

- Being secretive

Overcome Organization Obstacles

Overcoming organization obstacles removes unnecessary conflicts. To overcome:

- **Unclear or competing priorities:**
  - Eliminate any competing requests that are unreasonable or unrealistic.
  - Decide which priority has the potential to create more serious negative consequences if ignored.
  - Decide which priority has the potential to provide the greatest gain if completed.
  - Communicate clearly what you are and aren't doing once you've determined your priorities. Providing context helps people understand your decision.

- **Silo mentality:**
  - Share, don't hoard information.
  - Get rid of any sense of superiority. Recognize the expertise of other individuals, teams, and units.
  - Consciously connect with other teams, departments, or units informally. Meet for lunch, congratulate a person or group when they've had a success, etc.
  - Create cross-functional groups and work together.

Conflict avoidance:

Follow a Standard Conflict Resolution Process

Following a standard conflict resolution process enables everyone to "be on the same page" in terms of how to address conflict effectively. When everyone in an organization follows a similar conflict resolution process, they're able to address issues and reach effective resolutions more easily and efficiently, minimizing lost productivity and negative feelings.

- Acknowledge the conflict.

- Discuss its impact on individuals and the organization.

- Clarify individual positions.

- Find common interests.

- Negotiate an agreement based on common interests.

- Create an accountability agreement to cement buy-in and commitment.

Accountability at your organization

Listen to the casual conversations employees in your organization have about work. What is the primary focus? Complaining and blaming? Or identifying priorities and problem solving? Bottom line: An organization practicing accountability focuses more on the activities that achieve results than spending time pointing fingers and criticizing others.

Lack of Accountability – Signs and Symptoms

- Missing deadlines

- Making excuses

- Complaining

- Blaming others for mistakes and problems

- Lack of communication

- Mistrust among team members, colleagues, and management

- Rework/additional work

Individual Activity: Is Your Organization Practicing Accountability?

Instructions: Read each statement and rate your organization using the following scale:
1=Never, 2=Seldom, 3=Occasionally, 4=Consistently

Statement	Rating
1. Employees in my organization have a clear sense of what results are expected of them.	1 2 3 4
2. Employees do not feel pressure or uncertainty from competing priorities.	1 2 3 4
3. Employees in their respective teams or units make actively work to share information and collaborate with one another.	1 2 3 4
4. Conflicts are addressed in a forthright manner and resolved productively.	1 2 3 4
5. Clear standards of behavior are established and openly communicated.	1 2 3 4
6. Employees are held to these standards on a consistent basis.	1 2 3 4

Total_____

Add the numbers assigned to each statement and see how your organization measures up:

6–12: Your organization lacks basic accountability practices.

13–18: Your organization could boost its accountability with some additional effort.

19–24: Accountability is ingrained in your organization's processes and habits.

Obstacles to Accountability

Obviously, if accountability were easy or prevalent, we wouldn't need training. Here are the most common obstacles to achieving accountability.

- **Attitude Obstacles:** By attitude obstacles, we mean a frame of mind that hinders accountability.

- **Learned helplessness**: Perceived absence of control over a situation or underestimating your own ability to influence a situation. When people have experienced failure or poor performance repeatedly, some will eventually believe there is nothing they can do to improve the situation.

- **Victim mentality**: A belief that you're the victim of negative intentions and the actions of others, even in the absence of evidence. People with this attitude will

blame others or be unwilling to take responsibility for a situation they've created or contributed to.

Examples:

"A poor sailor blames the wind."

"A poor coach blames the players."

"A poor manager blames _____."

"A poor employee blames _____."

- **Organization Obstacles**: By organization obstacles, we mean the company culture you work in.

- **Unclear or competing priorities**: If you don't know what is most important to achieve, it is difficult to know what to be accountable for.

- **Silo mentality**: An ingrained culture that condones or even fosters competition between departments or units; this kind of culture does not value collaboration.

- **Conflict avoidance**: A work environment that fears addressing conflict. Superficial unity and harmony are valued more than true consensus.

Module 2: PROMOTE AN ETHICAL WORKPLACE (KM07-KT02)
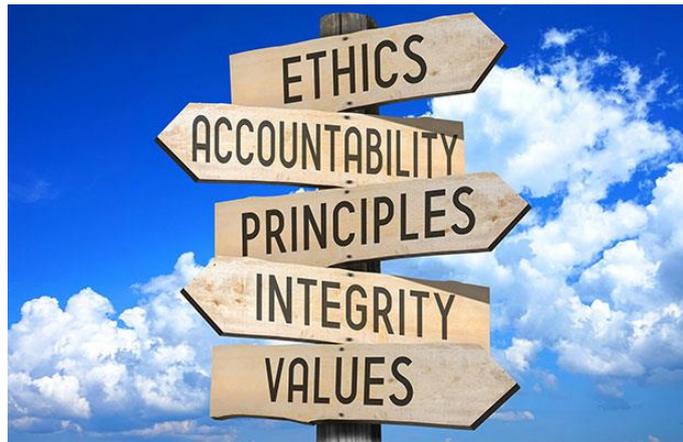
Learning outcomes

- Understand the concept of business ethics and the importance of making ethical decisions

- Identify ways in which a workplace can encourage ethical behaviour (code of conduct, values, policies and procedures, training)

- Identify the benefits of good business ethical practice

- Identify unethical behaviour and evaluate the consequences thereof (nepotism, bribes, conflict of interest, compliance)

Ethical decision making

Fundamentally, ethics is about choices that people make about ordinary (as well as extraordinary) decisions in day-to-day life. The choice to act one way vs. another has an impact on the outcomes and the method adopted to get to those outcomes.

Choices are often impacted by personal and professional values. Many leaders use their personal lives as a moral compass for their professional conduct. Values that we learn when young often guide us in our adult, professional lives. While values are non-negotiable, practices may need to be adapted to the situation at hand, or from time to time. Aligning actions with values will ensure that they are being incorporated into the operations of the organization from the highest to the lowest level, ensuring overall success.

It is important to note that there may be a difference between ethical behaviour and legal or illegal actions. Ethical conduct is not about upholding the law. It is about upholding higher standards of conduct than simply adhering to the rules or the law. It may not always be easy to adhere to these higher standards, especially in difficult situations. It takes courage, moral integrity, and a keen sense of commitment to ethical standards to make the right decisions.

- Ethics are about what is right and what is wrong
- Law is about what is lawful and what is unlawful

Ethics are principles by which we live good lives as individuals and as a group. Ethics encompass work, play, family, education, community, politics, war and worship. Our ethics answer vital questions:

- What purposes should we pursue?
- What rules should we uphold?
- What choices should we make?
- What actions should we take?
- What should our characters be?
- What sort of culture should we shape?

Ethics begin with the goals we seek to fulfil. We derive our goals from our values. In a workplace, our values can be divided into the organizational, professional and personal. The more complex our goals, the more complex our values. A good portion of workplace ethics concerns articulating and communicating our values, then refining them to evaluate actions, policies, people and events.

When worthy goals conflict and we cannot choose between two goals, our ethics guide decision-making. For example, we might feel torn between applying rules impartially and showing mercy to a person or group. In discussing such a "right versus right" choice, we may be tempted to justify our personal choice as ethical and judge other choices as unethical. An "I'm ethical, and you're not" approach to a dilemma is not only self-righteous; it also has a chilling effect on debate and blocks ethical learning. We are better served by framing answers as "more adequate" and "less adequate," instead of as "ethical" and "unethical."

A more adequate ethical choice will:

- Consider what is at stake or at risk for more of the parties affected by the decision.
- Prioritize moral appeals over appeals to laws, roles, contracts or existing social practices. Although such things can be part of our choices, appeals to moral criteria fall more in line with ethics.
- Appeal to ideals that are shared by others, regardless of age, culture or personal preference, not narrow sectarian principles or idiosyncratic beliefs.
- Be unbiased, refusing to favour some at the expense of others.

Cultivate an ethical culture in the workplace

An ethical culture should start from the top and cascade down. Organizational leadership needs to be a model of ethical decision making in order to reinforce the importance of ethical behaviour throughout the organization. They need to lead by example.
An established code of ethics, education and training, and a defined process for reviewing violations are all tools that help support an ethical culture in an organization.

The fundamentals of a strong ethical behaviour lie in strong values. Organizations need to:

1. Clearly establish organizational values. This can be achieved through a mission or vision statement that spells the values cherished by the organization.
2. Integrate them into operations and provide support systems for upholding the values.
3. Promote them through effective communication with the members, outside stakeholders, media, general public, etc.
4. Connect them with policies and decision-making processes.

Here are 5 ways in which companies can create an ethical workplace culture.

1. Clear expectations

An organizational culture should include guidelines and rules about how employees should interact with each other, interact with customers, as well as what is and is not acceptable behaviour in the workplace. These are referred to as codes of conduct. One of the first steps toward creating an ethical workplace culture is to have clearly defined expectations, and to ensure these expectations are written and communicated to all employees. Once established, companies can provide ongoing training to highlight the importance they place on ethical behaviour, and to maintain employee awareness of it. Clear expectations also provide guidance, enabling managers to take action if they feel an employee is acting unethically. These written guidelines can also form the basis of questions used in the recruitment process to determine if an employee is likely to be a good fit.

2. From the Top Down

Once expectations have been clearly established and communicated, one of the best methods for ensuring employees are motivated to follow these guidelines is for managers and executives to model the behaviour they expect to see in their staff. This includes ensuring rules are enforced and finding opportunities to discuss ethical dilemmas in daily business. Research has shown that unethical leaders can increase the likelihood that their employees will also be unethical, and this can break trust and motivation for staff to act ethically. An organization in which leaders demonstrate ethical behaviours sets standards and clear expectations for how their employees should act.

3. Positive reinforcement

Organizational psychology has concentrated a wealth of its research in determining what motivates employees. Positive reinforcement is a behavioural technique which is proven to increase desired behaviours in employees. When managers actively reward their staff for displaying ethical and desired behaviours, it is more likely that their team will repeat these. Here, positive reinforcement is being used to shape the behaviours of the team.

4. Feedback Mechanisms

Part of ethical behaviour is 'doing the right thing.' This includes being aware of situations where colleagues may not be acting ethically and are not following the written codes of conduct. Organizations should ensure they have a clear feedback mechanism in which employees can report unethical behaviour in the workplace. These mechanisms should allow staff to make reports anonymously and without recourse to themselves. There should be a clear zero-tolerance policy with clear punishments.

5. Training

In addition to communicating to staff acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours, staff should also be given the tools and strategies to develop the skills to use ethical behaviour. This includes skills on how to solve ethical dilemmas. There are a variety of online and in-person ethical workshops and training designed specifically for the workplace. These workshops and programs help to highlight the importance that the company places on ethics in addition to giving staff the tools to understand what is and is not ethical behaviour.

Ethical and unethical behaviour and practices in the workplace

The process of promoting an ethical culture needs to start with understanding what causes unethical behaviour. Better policies and procedures can then be designed to prevent unethical decisions and mitigate their adverse impacts on the organization and/or the community.

Unethical behaviour can result from the following, singularly or in combination:

- Pressure to perform (unrealistic business/organization goals, deadlines, etc.)
- Pressure from peers
- Lack of understanding of consequences for one's actions
- Uncharted territory
- Personal loyalties
- Lack of long-term perspective or failure to see it at the time
- Personal costs for doing the right thing may be too high
- Poor judgment
- Lack of clear understanding of expected organizational/professional code of conduct
- Improper and/or inadequate training

While many of the above reasons may be beyond the span of control of leadership, every effort should be made by leaders and top executives to address the last two – they need to clearly establish guidelines for professional conduct in an organization (whether formally laid out or otherwise understood) and provide adequate training.

Organizations set themselves up for ethical disputes by creating environments where people feel compelled to make unfavourable decisions they wouldn't usually make. Pressure by management to meet unrealistic business objectives is one of the most common ways in which this occurs. When leaders set expectations that are virtually unachievable, employees will take equally extreme measures to try and meet them. This is especially true in competitive industries where every task is seen as an opportunity to impress, produce value and get ahead. When employees feel they cannot meet targets any other way, they resort to unethical practices; largely out of fear of losing a promotion, money, or even their job. For instance, they will cut corners to reach their sales goals or make false claims to secure a business deal. Employees become so narrowly focused on doing what is beneficial to them that they even manipulate others for their own personal gain, without considering the consequences.

Unethical behaviour in the workplace is also created when there is a lack of accountability for questionable actions by those in high-level positions. Companies may be surprised to discover that their own leadership may be inadvertently encouraging misconduct and influencing the choices of those they lead. Employees tend to emulate the actions of leaders they respect and admire, especially those who have achieved success in the company. Consequently, they can begin exhibiting unethical behaviour without even realizing it. For

example, a manager may lie to a customer about a product offering or exaggerate numbers in a proposal. If an employee witnesses this, they may assume they are free to do the same. The manager has thus created an environment where presenting false information is seen as acceptable. When leaders fail to evaluate their own actions and unintentionally send messages to employees, they're setting the business up for an ethical disaster.

Different unethical behaviour

- Misusing company time

  Whether it is covering for someone who shows up late or altering a time sheet, misusing company time tops the list.

- Abusive behaviour

Too many workplaces are filled with managers and supervisors who use their position and power to mistreat or disrespect others. Unfortunately, unless the situation they're in involves race, gender or ethnic origin, there is often no legal protection against abusive behaviour in the workplace.

- Employee theft

According to a recent study by Jack L. Hayes International, one out of every 40 employees in 2012 was caught stealing from their employer. Even more startling is that these employees steal on average 5.5 times more than shoplifters. Employee fraud is also on the uptick, whether its check tampering, not recording sales in order to skim, or manipulating expense reimbursements.

- Lying to employees

The fastest way to lose the trust of the employees is to lie to them, yet employers do it all the time. One of out every five employees report that their manager or supervisor has lied to them within the past year.

It has become customary for organizations to institute a Code of Ethics, a collection of principles and practices that a business believes in and aims to live by. They should work in conjunction with your company's corporate values, but outline more specific policies about how employees should handle themselves in certain situations. Ideally, behaving ethically at work should come easy, but unfortunately, acceptable practices are not always clearly defined. Having a Code of Ethics will create a sense of fairness and a clear understanding of the rules and repercussions so both employees and leaders are aligned.

In order to overcome unethical behavior in the workplace, leaders must also create an environment in which employees feel safe and comfortable. Most people lack the confidence to speak up or raise ethical concerns at work, in fear that they will be dismissed or even reprimanded for defying a manager. The more open and genuinely approachable leaders are, the more willing employees are to speak up when circumstances require it. Furthermore, the way leaders react to ethical concerns and the actions they take in response, ultimately set the tone for how others will approach ethical issues in the future.

Measures to control unethical behaviour

- Create a Code of Conduct

A written code of conduct provides employees and managers with an overview of the type of conduct and behaviours the company expects. It outlines what behaviours are unacceptable and what measures are taken if an employee violates the code of conduct. Example

Employees look to managers for direction on how they should conduct themselves. As a manager, make ethics-based decisions and monitor the individuals the put into leadership roles at the company for the same values.

- Reinforce Consequences

Managers must hold their employees accountable when they act unethically. Start by informing new employees of the rules during their orientation sessions. If an employee acts unethically, refer to the code of conduct and take the necessary measures to warn or terminate.

- Show Employees Appreciation

Loyal employees feel that a company values the hard work they put into accomplishing tasks on a daily basis. A loyal employee is less likely to act unethically. Show appreciation to the employees for work well done on a regular basis to encourage loyalty.

- Create Checks and Balances

Rather than putting related responsibilities in the hands of one employee, create a system of checks and balances to minimize the opportunities for unethical behaviour. For example, a sales associate rings up customer purchases, while an accountant balances the books to ensure that all payables are received and documented.

- Hire for Values

When business owners hire employees, many seek to bring on individuals who have the education and experience that prove they are skilled workers, capable of handling the tasks at hand. Employers who want to prevent unethical behaviour also look at candidates' values to ensure they mesh with the company's culture.

- Using incentives/reward systems

Negative rewards for individuals who generate undesirable behaviours/outcomes (e.g., lower commissions for returns based on misrepresentation). Positive rewards for desirable behaviour/outcomes produced by individuals. Tie positive/negative rewards to organizational outcomes (e.g., tax incentives for fewer workplace injuries).

Ethical behaviour and corporate social responsibility can bring significant benefits to a business. For example, they may:

- Attract customers to the firm's products, thereby boosting sales and profits.
- Make employees want to stay with the business, reduce labour turnover and therefore
- increase productivity.
- Attract more employees wanting to work for the business, reduce recruitment costs

- and enable the company to get the most talented employees.
- Attract investors and keep the company's share price high, thereby protecting the
- business from takeover.

Unethical behaviour or a lack of corporate social responsibility, by comparison, may damage a firm's reputation and make it less appealing to stakeholders. Profits could fall as a result.

These 10 Characteristics are the code of conduct for optimal daily business practices.

Companies That Care ...

1. Sustain a work environment founded on dignity and respect for all employees
2. Make employees feel their jobs are important
3. Cultivate the full potential of all employees
4. Encourage individual pursuit of work/life balance
5. Enable the well-being of individuals and their families through compensation, benefits, policies and practices
6. Develop great leaders, at all levels, who excel at managing people as well as results
7. Appreciate and recognize the contributions of people who work there
8. Establish and communicate standards for ethical behaviour and integrity
9. Get involved in community endeavours and/or public policy
10. Consider the human toll when making business decisions

	Please complete Knowledge Activity: Multiple Choice Test
	Please complete Practical Activity: None
	Please complete Workplace Activity: None