

## **Personal Code of Ethics**

The population and behavior of humans are not fixed. The number of people in the world is increasing, and population dynamics are changing. At the same time, human behavior is influenced by many different factors. Technological advancements have caused the disappearance of jobs and the creation of other jobs. On the other hand, history repeats itself, wars persist, recessions and inflations occur, and immigration forces the exchange of habits and cultures. Moreover, diseases, pandemics, and financial scandals have led to the loss of assets. These factors pressure human behavior, however, an ethical person must do what is right regardless of the situation. According to Johnson, Ethics studies the individual character and the moral rules that control the individual behavior. Ethics explores topics like right and wrong, fairness and unfairness, good and bad, duty and obligation, justice and injustice, moral responsibility, and the values that should guide our actions (Johnson, 2020). Therefore, this paper presents my code of ethics which is a blend of the six principles of ethical leadership: respect for others, service to others, justice for others, honesty towards others, and building community with others. This blend was built and accumulated during my journey, where I played different roles in the past, and today, I am still playing similar roles in addition to new roles. Now, I am Lebanese, a husband, a father, a teacher, a student, a mentor, a friend, a neighbor, and a Canadian citizen. I was a banker and an education leader, and I have visited, lived, and worked in several countries.

## **Discovering Vocation**

Education was not first chosen as my vocation; I spent ten years after high school in hospitality, trading, and banking, and I filled entry-level and leadership roles. Before the transition to education, my most recent role was Head of the Business and Analysis Unit at First

National Bank. The nearby history is full of financial scandals incidents. A series of financial scandals impacted my decision. After the Liberman Bank run in 2008 it was realized that I should do something because I could not be part of a corrupt system that hurts people through dishonest practices. In addition to that incident, the euro's fluctuations and the Lebanese banks being forced to lend loans to the Lebanese government in foreign currencies like USD, and this was a reason for the financial crisis that took place in 2019. Therefore, the banking sector's focus was on increasing deposits, by attracting new deposits and increasing the interest rate on deposits, and therefore lending by providing more loans to the Lebanese government instead of providing corporate and retail loans, which first increased the interest rates and caused the recession, in addition to baring huge risk because of the Lebanese government's inability to issue USD, especially that the government tax revenue is collected in Lebanese Lira, and during the recession the Lira depreciates. Finally, I decided to quit banking to escape the ethical dilemma that I faced, which was supporting the bank's mission that conflicted with my values.

Therefore, the Business Culture and Dishonesty in the Banking Industry paper says, "We take a novel approach that is inspired by the economic theory of identity, which proposes that individuals have multiple social identities based on, for example, gender, ethnicity or profession. Identities are associated with specific social norms prescribing permissible behaviors. Which identity and associated norms are behaviorally relevant depends on the relative weight an individual attributes to an identity. In a given situation, behavior is shifted towards those norms that are associated with the more salient identity. Thus, if the banking culture favors dishonest behaviors, it should be possible to trigger dishonesty in bank employees by rendering their professional identity salient (Cohn et al., 2014). This conclusion appeared after six years of my decision and it seems that I made a proper decision.

According to Johnson (2020), the following questions should be investigated to discover my calling. What have I done and done well? What kinds of skills did I make use of? What kind of knowledge did I acquire? What kinds of objects did I work with? In what capacity was I relating to others? Was I working in a position with a lot of freedom and responsibility, or was I working in a highly structured situation where my activity was thoroughly and carefully structured? (Johnson, 2020).

During my fifteen years as an educator and educational leader, I have taught and led the education process at different educational institutions in several countries in the Middle East and Canada. My leadership skills were utilized to lead my classroom as a teacher or my school as a leader effectively and efficiently. I used my teaching and communication skills to guide and mentor students, helping them improve their academic achievement. I am a team player, and I collaborate with teachers and parents to improve the learning process. My strong educational and experience background in business, banking, and finance equipped me with the required knowledge to teach business studies courses, accounting, and economics. My extensive teaching experience and my teaching college program equipped me with the required pedagogy and curriculum development knowledge. My educational leadership experience and management background, in addition to workshops and staying current, equipped me with educational leadership knowledge and conflict resolution knowledge. Since I served at several American international institutions, I was involved in the accreditation processes, where I acquired that knowledge. As a teacher, I had the chance to help many students improve their academic performance in the classroom, and during office hours, I wrote many recommendation letters for students to help them continue their educational journey, mentored students in business competitions, and shared my classroom procedures, lesson plans, and resources with many

teachers. As a high school teacher, I have the autonomy to plan my daily lessons, curriculum, and type and quantity of assessments. I am responsible for covering the required standards and lessons. As a college instructor, I do not have similar autonomy, and I have to follow a strict schedule of lesson plans and assessments. As, an educational leader at two institutions, I was responsible for day-to-day operations, teachers' evaluations and development, curriculum development, accreditation, and reporting to the head office.

### **Identifying Personal Values**

My values have been constructed by a blend of cultural, religious, institutional impact, and personal reflections. My mother taught me since I was a child that I should treat people as I like to be treated. Honesty is admired in others, whether they are my superiors or subordinates, as transparency and sincerity are valued, I am loyal to all the countries and communities where I lived, and all the institutions that I served, I respect and try to maintain an excellent relationship with the people that I know, worked with, or even taught; for example, I respond to emails immediately, I wrote many recommendation letters to students to help them to secure university enrolment or job. On the contrary, dishonesty and selfish behavior are bad traits, as they conflict with the principles of integrity and empathy.

As a person who believes in God, I will be asked on judgment day how my time was spent and how my money was earned and spent. Therefore, time and money are spent in ways that reflect a focus on personal growth, meaningful connections, and maintaining a healthy family and community. Joy is found in activities that involve learning, family engagement, and community participation.

Satisfaction has been experienced through moments of success, completion of tasks, helping others, and the satisfaction of people around me, family, colleagues, students, and

superiors. I feel love, respect, and admiration from others. Especially the love of people is an indicator of the love of God; if God loves someone, God will make the people love that person. Happiness is experienced when I wake up every day in the morning, where I can complete all my tasks independently when playing with my children and dismissing my classes, and my students are happy when having a nice chat with a friend or neighbor when feeding a hungry person, or solving a problem for someone. Injustice and dishonesty trigger anger, as they violate core principles of fairness and truth. Sadness is felt when expectations are greater than achievements.

### **Developing Character**

Virtues have shaped the development of my character. Traits such as good temper, justice, honesty, compassion, faith, hope, love, and empathy are derived from ethical traditions and Abrahamic religions. Moreover, I maintain ethical consistency regardless of the situation, I strive to act with good temper, justice, honesty, and integrity toward everyone, not just selected individuals. According to the Quran, God says: “Allah commands justice, and goodness, and generosity towards relatives. And He forbids immorality, and injustice, and oppression. He advises you, so that you may take heed” (Qur'an, 16:90, trans. Talal Itani). This verse is an instruction for believers to adopt and commit to ethical values such as justice and good temper, and to be generous, donate, and feed the poor, especially those around us, which will build loving, merciful communities, cities, and countries.

Moreover, life's challenging experiences, or the passages I went through added to my character growth. Moments of failure, hard times, and transition have encouraged resilience and personal responsibility. I have developed a stronger sense of moral character by standing up again with optimism and learning how to solve the problem properly. A life-challenging experience equipped me with the courage to quit any job where the organization that I am

serving does not follow ethical conduct because, as an ambitious person, I am in continuous development to be a leader, and if I continue working for an unethical institution influenced by its leaders, I will end up after several promotions as an unethical leader. According to Upperman, without leaders who demonstrate integrity when caring for the students and for the society in which they work and play, any character development strategy is doomed to fail in its attempt to develop moral and ethical leaders of character (Upperman, 2007). This caused my first shift from the hospitality sector, where leaders lay off employees during low seasons, and as supervisor, it was a hard decision to fire employees. Then I shifted from banking because bank leaders do not care for depositors; they just protect their capital and have no mercy towards lenders or depositors.

### **Creating A Moral Identity**

According to Johnson (2020), one approach to creating a moral identity is that organizations enhance moral motivation by improving environments where collaborative relationships take place, providing opportunities for moral discussion and reflection, focusing on values and mission, and encouraging community involvement (Johnson, 2020). I created my moral identity by engaging in these practices. During my extensive experience in the education field, I built collaborative relationships by serving at several schools, attending workshops, and pursuing my education, which has helped me align my actions with ethical commitments. The consistent focus on organizational values and missions reinforces my moral beliefs, and involvement in community projects and day-to-day operations allows me to apply my ethics and create my moral identity.

## **Drawing Upon Spiritual Resources**

As a God believer who practices one of the Abrahamic religions, spirituality is an important part of my personal and professional life, impacting my values and decisions. However, in my professional environment, I often choose to keep my faith private to protect myself and those I work with from potential bias. I understand that spirituality plays a significant role in moral and ethical development, enhancing qualities such as commitment to mission, ethical sensitivity, and collaboration. According to Johnson, “spirituality enhances altruism, job satisfaction, morale, and trust” (Johnson, 2020, p. 90). My faith inspires me to pursue a life of integrity and ethical leadership, but I recognize the importance of maintaining a professional environment that respects the spiritual diversity of others. By doing this, I aim to make an inclusive environment where all stakeholders feel important and free to follow and practice their personal beliefs while working together to reach the shared goals.

This conscious decision to separate my spiritual beliefs from my work allows me to focus on fostering a sense of community and collaboration in the workplace, which aligns with the ethical leadership values that I adopt. Although I get my strength from my spirituality, I remain committed to ensuring that my actions are suitable for everybody without imposing my beliefs on others. This approach respects the spiritual diversity of all individuals while still allowing me to stay true to my core values.

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