

Ethical Decision Making

Kathleen Edmond

02/13/14

Agenda

- Review of IIBA® Ethical Values
- Small group debate and discussion
- Social media: Does using it present particular issues?
- A decision making process

BABOK®

- **8.2.1 Ethics**

- .1 Purpose

- A business analyst must be able to behave ethically in order to earn the trust and respect of stakeholders, and be able to recognize when a proposed solution or requirement may present ethical difficulties.

BABOK®

- **8.2.1 Ethics**
- .2 Definition
- Ethics requires an understanding of moral and immoral behavior, the standards that should govern one's behavior, and the willingness to act to ensure that one's behavior is moral or meets those standards. Business analysts need to consider the impact that a proposed solution will have on all stakeholder groups and work to ensure that those groups are treated fairly. Fair treatment does not require that the outcome be beneficial to a particular stakeholder group, but it does require that the affected stakeholders understand the reasons for the decision, that they are not deceived about the outcome, and that decisions which are made are made in the best interest of the organization. The business analyst should be able to identify when an ethical dilemma occurs and understand how such dilemmas may be resolved.

BABOK®

- **8.2.1 Ethics**

- .3 Effectiveness Measures

- Measures of ethical behavior include:

- ▶ Decisions are made with due consideration to the interests of all stakeholders.
- ▶ Reasons for a decision are clearly articulated and understood.
- ▶ Prompt and full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.
- ▶ Honesty regarding one's abilities, the performance of one's work, and accepting responsibility for failures or errors.

Topics

- What is an ethical dilemma / conundrum?
- What are the risks of making a decision that is within the law or policy, but ethically questionable?
- Is there guidance beyond that in the BABOK® to help clarify your decision making process?
- Discuss examples of situations that occur in the BA role.
- Review an eight step decision making process.

How to Decide . . .

- When rules exist but do not fit the situation.
- When the rules do not yet exist.
- If you must choose between two mutually exclusive right answers, or two untenable outcomes.

Discussion Question

- How much information should a business analyst share about a company for which they have worked?

Discussion Question

- What action should someone take when they observe manipulation of data, or information to conform to contractual requirements?

Discussion Question

- When writing, where is the line between imitating others' well-written documents and plagiarism?

Using Social Media

- As an investigation / data gathering tool
- As a marketing tool
- For your personal social use
- For professional / career purposes

Discussion Question

- How might the use of social media tools violate IIBA® measures of ethical behaviors?

Decision Making Process

- **Step 1:** *Identify the problem.*
 - *Go beyond the obvious problem statement, if you feel this is a matter that is deeper than the surface issue.*
- **Step 2:** *Identify the potential issues involved.*
 - *It is useful to debate this with someone who sees the world differently than you.*

Decision Making Process

- **Step 3:** *Review relevant ethical guidelines.*
 - *Professional*
 - *Personal*
 - *Organizational*
- **Step 4:** *Know relevant laws and regulations.*
 - *Stay current on this issues that affect your profession*

Decision Making Process

- **Step 5:** *Reach out for consultation.*
 - *Use professional networks or personal research.*
 - *Be mindful of data privacy concerns.*
- **Step 6:** *Consider possible and probable courses of action.*

Decision Making Process

- **Step 7:** *List the consequences of the probable courses of action.*
 - *Both favorable and unfavorable consequences.*
- **Step 8:** *Decide on the best course of action based on the facts available.*
 - *If the action / consequence is particularly risky, document your decision making process in your files.*

Q&A / Closing Thoughts

- We all encounter ethical questions every day. Most times the course of action is clear and the issue easily handled. But for those other times, having and using a developed decision making process will protect you and the organization.

Kathleen Edmond



kathleen.edmond@comcast.net

612-875-0137