

## Encouraging Staff to *Talk About Ethics*

One way to foster an ethical environment and culture is to make it clear that *ethics matters*. A simple way to express this idea is to do and say things that demonstrate how much you care about ethics. The *Talk About Ethics* tool is designed to make this easier, by suggesting some simple phrases that can be incorporated into daily work. It can be used by all employees to communicate the message that ethics matters in the organization.

*Talk About Ethics* can be found on the page following this section, or at:

[http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/docs/integratedethics/EL\\_Talk\\_About\\_Ethics\\_20120412.pdf](http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/docs/integratedethics/EL_Talk_About_Ethics_20120412.pdf)

This tool can be used in several ways during educational fairs or group staff events, such as National Compliance and Ethics Week. Examples are below.

**Option 1: Email *Talk About Ethics* to all staff in your facility. Challenge them to complete the activity and discuss it with their supervisor and co-workers at their next staff meeting.**

**Option 2: Email *Talk About Ethics* to all staff in your facility. Challenge them to complete the activity and return the completed form to the IEPO. Those who submit the form can be entered into a drawing for a small incentive (e.g., an invitation to the next IE Council Meeting).**

If you offer a small incentive, be sure it meets incentive guidelines.

Sample email text for Option 1:

Colleagues,

In celebration of National Compliance and Ethics week, the IntegratedEthics™ team at [facility] invites you to foster an ethical environment and culture in your service area by making it clear that ethics is something that matters. One easy way to do this is to incorporate talking about ethics into your daily work. The attached *Talk About Ethics* activity can help you do so.

**Staff Challenge:** Complete the attached *Talk About Ethics* worksheet and bring it to your next staff meeting. Discuss with your supervisor and co-workers the ways you talked about ethics in your daily work.

We hope that this material inspires you to talk about ethics and encourage others to do the same.

Sample email text for Option 2:

Colleagues,

In celebration of National Compliance and Ethics week, the IntegratedEthics™ team at [facility] invites you to foster an ethical environment and culture in your service area by making it clear that ethics is something that matters. One easy way to do this is to incorporate talking about ethics into your daily work. The attached *Talk About Ethics* activity can help you do so.

**Staff Challenge:** Complete the attached *Talk About Ethics* worksheet and turn it in to [point of contact/email/room number]. Everyone who returns the completed worksheet will be entered into a drawing for [incentive].

We hope that this material inspires you to talk about ethics and encourage others to do the same.

**Option 3: Create a lobby display.**

Write the phrases from *Talk About Ethics* on a poster board and display the board in a central area, accompanied by the following:

In celebration of National Compliance and Ethics week, the IntegratedEthics™ team at [facility] invites you to foster an ethical environment and culture in your service area by making it clear that ethics is something that matters. One easy way to do this is to talk about ethics into your daily work, and here are some suggestions to get started.

Ancillary exercises:

- Print out copies of *Talk About Ethics* and provide them to staff who visit the display.
- Invite staff who take a copy of the *Talk About Ethics* handout to participate in Option 2, above.

#### **Option 4: Organize a facility scavenger hunt.**

On card stock, print five individual statements of your choice from the *Talk About Ethics* worksheet, and post them in well-traveled areas of the facility. Each day of Compliance and Ethics Week, send an email to all facility staff informing them of the scavenger hunt and giving a clue to the location of the *Talk About Ethics* statement of the day. Inform them that individuals who correctly identify the exact location of the statement of the day will be entered into a drawing for a small incentive (e.g., invitation to the next IE Council meeting). If you offer a small incentive, be sure it meets incentive guidelines.

Sample email text for Option 4, to be sent each day of the week with a new *Talk About Ethics* statement:

Colleagues,

In celebration of National Compliance and Ethics week, the IntegratedEthics™ team at [facility] invites you to foster an ethical environment and culture in your service area by making it clear that ethics is something that matters. One easy way to do this is to incorporate talking about ethics into your daily work. To make that easier, each day this week we will provide some statements you can use to get the message across that ETHICS MATTERS!

#### **Talk About Ethics Scavenger Hunt:**

Hidden all around the facility are 4-by-6- inch cards that contain statements you can incorporate into your daily work to demonstrate you care about ethics. Staff members who identify the location of the *Talk About Ethics* statement of the day will be entered into a drawing for [small incentive]. Email the location to [IE staff managing the activity.]

#### **[Monday's] *Talk About Ethics* statement of the day:**

**["If it's the right thing to do, we'll just have to figure out a way to do it."]**

#### **Clue to location:**

**[Example: It's within sight of the Information Desk in the main lobby.]**

Have fun! And talk about ethics!

# IntegratedEthics

## Talk About Ethics

One of the ways to foster an ethical environment and culture is to make it clear that ethics is something that matters. A simple way to express this is to make it a point to do and say things that demonstrate you care about ethics.

Using the table below, challenge yourself to incorporate several of the phrases into your daily work. Jot down the date you used each phrase followed by a short description of the context, reactions, and the outcome of using the phrase. After completing the table, share the results with your colleagues by discussing it at lunch, or bringing it up at a meeting. You can start the discussion with questions like, "What phrases do you use to talk about ethics?" and "What has worked well for you?"

Phrase	Date(s)	Description
"I see ethics as a priority."		
"If it's the right thing to do, we'll just have to figure out a way to do it."		
"Here's a story that illustrates how important ethics can be."		
"We have an obligation to do the best we can for our patients."		
"Everyone deserves to be treated with respect."		
"How can we balance these competing values?"		
"If you have any ethical concerns about this I encourage you to speak up."		