



IntegratedEthics: Ethical Leadership Improvement Project Checklist

This rapid assessment offers questions for IE program officers/VISN senior leads or ethical leadership coordinators to consider when planning and implementing their EL improvement projects. Its purpose is to help ensure that the project adequately addresses the identified ethics quality gap (“Improvement Opportunity”). Its use is optional, but it can help ensure that:

- Resources will be devoted to ethical leadership activities that will prove meaningful to the facility or VISN.
- Project Improvement Opportunity, Goal, and Strategy are aligned.
- Improvement will demonstrate measurable project impact and value.
- The project team has developed plans for sustaining and/or spreading project activities.

Instructions:

Please read the questions below, and consider whether they describe the current features and goals of your project. If yes, check the corresponding box. If no, revise or expand your project to ensure that it addresses these areas.

Project Selection and Planning:

- Does the project fall under the National Center for Ethics in Health Care’s definition of an “ethical leadership project,” that is, an activity to create a more ethical environment and culture, usually by engaging leaders to achieve this end?
- Does the project have adequate leadership engagement to ensure that it will have an impact on the organization’s ethical environment and culture (i.e., leaders are involved in prioritizing among potential projects, selecting, chartering, designing, introducing the project and involvement by being a member of the team or supporting the chartered team as needed to ensure success)?
- Was your improvement opportunity identified by examining one or more quantitative (e.g., IE Staff Survey [IESS]) or qualitative (e.g., focus group) data sources?
- Have you clearly articulated what is the current state of the improvement opportunity within your facility or VISN?
- Does your improvement goal clearly articulate the desired outcome or target state — the “what” or result desired, as opposed to the “how” or strategy for reaching the goal?
- Will the goal, if met, wholly or partially solve the problem articulated in the improvement opportunity?
- Have you identified the team responsible for addressing this improvement opportunity?
- Have you considered including leadership, stakeholders that have knowledge of processes or systems involved in this improvement opportunity, and other stakeholders that will be affected by the improvement?
- Is there a target area for testing or implementing selected strategies?
- Is this project an incremental project, and does the goal for this project align with the broad improvement goal?

Project Implementation:

- Is your strategy for addressing the problem comprehensive in that it includes various activities, such as policy development, education, leadership participation, process standardization, and monitoring?
- Does your strategy address specific causes of the ethics culture quality gap?
- Have you clearly laid out your procedures for implementing the strategy?
- Does your plan clearly articulate who will be responsible for implementation and monitoring?

Project Evaluation:

- Do you have a plan for measuring improvement?
- Do your methods involve collecting data from sources other than the IESS or attendance counts at educational sessions (e.g., satisfaction surveys, focus groups, pre- and post-tests)?
- Will you have any results (including incremental results) to report during this fiscal year?

Project Sustainability:

- Do you have an action plan (including well-defined steps) for sustaining and/or spreading project activities over the long term, if successful?
- Do you know what future resources (people, time, funding) you will need to perform this work?
- Going forward, what is your facility/VISN leaders' level of commitment to this project? How will they be involved?
- Do you have a clear plan to monitor and report progress?