TRIAGE TOOL FOR ETHICS-RELATED LEADERSHIP DECISIONS

Ethics-related leadership decision needs to be made

Consider how the decision relates to ethics

- Decision Relates to an Ethical Concern (Ethical Concern = uncertainty or conflict about values, i.e., the “right thing to do” is unclear)
  - Make a preliminary decision based on the information you have.

- Decision Relates to a Systems-level Ethics Quality Gap (Ethics Quality Gap = disparity between current practices and ideal practices from an ethical perspective)
  - Refer to IE Preventive Ethics Team or other quality improvement mechanism or, if not appropriate for a QI approach, to the IE Council or another leadership committee or workgroup that includes relevant ethics subject-matter expertise.

- Decision Relates to Government Ethics (Government Ethics = legal questions about standards of ethical conduct for employees of the executive branch)
  - Refer to Designated Agency Ethics Official or Regional Counsel.

Use the Ethical Leadership Quality Check to decide on an appropriate decision-making process.

1. Do I have all the important facts relevant to this decision?
2. Have I involved everyone who should be part of this decision?
3. Can I provide a strong ethical justification for this decision?
   - Does this decision reflect organizational, professional, and social values?
   - Do the likely benefits of the decision outweigh any potential harms?
   - Will this decision keep the problem from recurring or establish a good precedent?
   - How would this decision look to someone outside the organization?

Decide on an appropriately systematic decision process.

The more ethically complex the decision, the more systematic the decision-making process needs to be.

- If the decision is relatively straightforward, make the decision yourself after thoughtful deliberation.
- If the decision requires additional ethical analysis, request an ethics consultation.
- If the decision is controversial or high stakes, also consider:
  - involving the IE Council or another leadership committee
  - chartering a special workgroup, and/or
  - using a formal decision-making framework.

Refer to C Integrity Officer, O Information S General, or

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