**EIGHT STEPS TO SOUND ETHICAL DECISION MAKING IN BUSINESS**

**STEP 1: Gather the facts**.

* How did the situation occur?
* Are there historical facts that I should know?
* Are there facts concerning the current situation that I should know?

**STEP 2: Define the ethical issues.**

* Don’t jump to a solution. Think through the ethical issues. Recognize that multiple ethical issues may exist.

**STEP 3: Identify the affected parties (the stakeholders).**

* You may have to think beyond the facts of the case to identify all stakeholders.

**STEP 4: Identify the consequences.**

* After identifying the stakeholders, consider the potential consequences for each party that have a relatively high probability of occurring.
* What are the long-term and the short-term consequences?
* What are the symbolic consequences?
* What are the consequences of secrecy?

**STEP 5: Identify the obligations.**

* Identify the obligations involved and the reasons for each one.

**STEP 6: Consider your character and integrity.**

* Think about yourself as a person of integrity. Ask yourself what a person of integrity would do in this situation.
* New York Times Test

**STEP 7: Think creatively about potential actions.**

* Be sure that you haven’t unnecessarily forced yourself into a corner. Are you assuming that you only have two choices, either A or B? Look for creative alternatives. Perhaps there’s another answer: C.

**STEP 8: Check your gut.**

* We are all hardwired to be empathetic and to desire fairness. If your gut is sending up red flags, give the situation more thought.