



MEMBERS NEWSLETTER
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notes from mandy

The stork has come, and we are proud to mention two new additions to the EthicsSA family.

Our warmest congratulations to Rebecca, who has given birth to a beautiful daughter; Ditebogo, and to Kris, who has become the proud father of his son, Liam.

I am proud to mention that before the end of the year, EthicsSA would have hosted 25 Ethics Officer Certification Programmes since 2004. 2012 will see the hosting of 3 programmes, as well as an Ethics Conference, and our popular Learning Forum.

The newsletter is your forum, and we would like to invite our members to please send us their articles, news and success stories.

Your feedback and comments are also greatly appreciated, and can be sent to me via email at mandy@ethicssa.org.

Till next month

Mandy

inspirational thoughts

A man without ethics is a wild beast loosed upon this world. - *Albert Camus*

Ethics is the activity of man directed to secure the inner perfection of his own personality. - **Albert Scheitzer**

Relativity applies to physics, not ethics - **Albert Einstein**

We need timeless principles to steer by in running our organization and building our personal career. We need high standards...the ethics of excellence - **Price Pritchett**

Even the most rational approach to ethics is defenseless if there isn't the will to do what is right - **Alexander Solzhenitsyn**

FIGHTING CORRUPTION – article written by Prof Deon Rossouw

In its recently released Diagnostic Overview, the National Planning Commission (NPC) identified corruption as one of the nine major factors that prevents South Africa from alleviating poverty and inequality and from achieving the objectives of the South African Constitution.

The section of the Diagnostic Overview that deals with South Africa's corruption challenge, defines it as “the misuse of an official position for private gain”. Corruption is identified as a priority in the Diagnostic Overview, because it “undermines state legitimacy and service delivery”. It can also be added that corruption distorts market competition, increases the cost of doing business, and decreases the ease of conducting business.

Recognising corruption as a major ailment that impedes the development of South Africa is crucial if we wish to turn this growing tide. The Special Investigating Unit estimates that a loss of between 20-25% of state procurement of around R180 billion per year can be attributed to corruption.

However, more than recognition of the challenge is needed. Solutions need to be found. Since corruption is increasingly embedded in organisational structures and cultures, there is no quick-and-easy fix for this problem. It requires involvement of multiple actors as well as personal and institutional change.

It starts at the top

Without political will from the top at national, provincial and local government level, calls for the fight against corruption remain empty slogans that only breed cynicism. Anti-corruption institutions can themselves lose legitimacy when political will is absent.

Leaders need to be beyond reproach when it comes to corruption and conflicts of interest. They should set a personal example of abhorring corruption. It is exactly a track record for not tolerating corruption that gives credibility to messages and efforts from leaders to stamp out corruption.

Leadership commitment should also manifest through clear communication to the rank and file within their sphere of influence that corruption will not be tolerated. And when corruption occurs, those who have been involved should be held to account. There should be clear and dire consequences for those who are found guilty of corruption.

A promising development is the introduction of a black list for officials dismissed for corruption on local government level. The recently promulgated Municipal Systems Amendment Act bars officials dismissed on charges of corruption from working in a municipality for a period of 10 years. This kind of intolerance for corruption should not only be implemented for the smaller fish on local government level, but should be escalated to the provincial and national government levels.

Professional public service ethos

The very same Municipal Systems Amendment Act also addresses another major problem area that calls for an urgent solution: political interference in the civil service, and more specifically so-called cadre deployment. In terms of the said new Act, municipal and senior managers are prohibited from serving in top positions in party structures on the regional, provincial and national level.

Political appointments in top civil service positions ultimately fuel corruption, as it sacrifices a public interest orientation for a narrow party political interest orientation. Once more this arrangement needs to be escalated to higher levels of government.

One of the strongest antidotes to corruption is a professional public service corps imbued with a public service ethos. There needs to be sufficient daylight between the public service and the government of the day, at all employment levels. Obviously there is need for interaction and consultation between the government and the public service, but a career in the public service needs to stand distinctly separate from a political career. Political regimes and political office bearers should come and go without disrupting the civil service.

A public service ethos needs to prevail that fosters a sense of commitment to the well-being of the public. Upward mobility in the civil service should be based on performance and a demonstration of public service commitment and not on political loyalty. A sense of pride and professionalism amongst civil servants has to replace the currently all too common focus on self-interest, political opportunism and financial greed. The goat-feeds-where-it-is-tied-up syndrome needs to be expelled from the public service in order to create a culture that is conducive to public service and averse to corruption.

Corruption prevention capacity

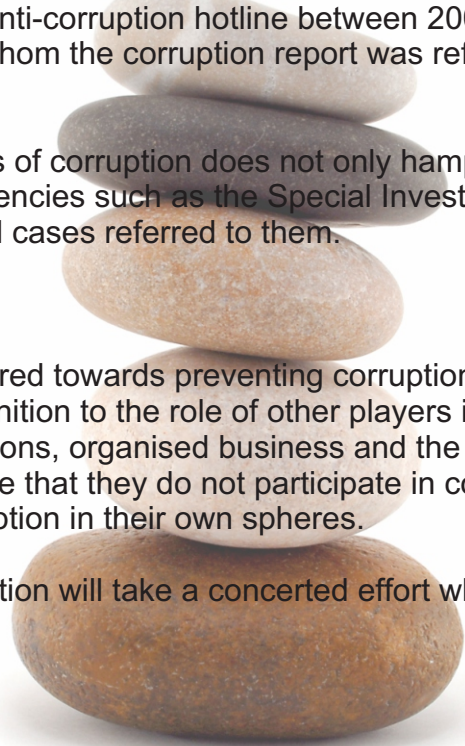
Specialised expertise and capacity is also needed to prevent, detect and act against corruption in the public service. A recent audit on the anti-corruption capacity of 86 government departments on national and provincial level conducted by the Ethics Institute of South Africa on behalf of the DPSA found that top management vigilance and involvement in initiating, implementing and reviewing corruption prevention is a crucial success factor in the fight against corruption. Equally crucial is the capacity and expertise to investigate and resolve detected or reported incidents of corruption. A recent report by the Public Service Commission demonstrated the glaring lack of capacity in this regard. It was found that in 63% of cases reported to the anti-corruption hotline between 2004 and 2010, no feedback was received from the department to whom the corruption report was referred for investigation.

This lack of capacity to properly investigate reported cases of corruption does not only hamper government departments, but also specialised national agencies such as the Special Investigations Unit that does not have sufficient capacity to investigate all cases referred to them.

Corruption is not only a public sector problem

Corruption prevention initiatives and policies are often geared towards preventing corruption in the government and the civil service, without giving due recognition to the role of other players in society to prevent corruption. In this regard civil society, labour unions, organised business and the media also have a vital role to play. First of all they need to ensure that they do not participate in corrupt practices themselves, and they have to lead against corruption in their own spheres.

Ensuring that state legitimacy is not undermined by corruption will take a concerted effort where all spheres of society will need to play their part.



Professionalisation of the ethics officer occupation

Since EthicSA introduced its first Ethics Officer Certification Programme (EOCP) in 2004, 330 individuals in the public and private sectors have been trained, and 114 certified.

The question that has been debated on and off over the past few years is whether the occupation or position of Ethics Officer should be considered a profession in need of some form of professionalisation.

EthicSA received a mandate from its October 2010 Ethics Officer Learning Forum (EOLF) to investigate the matter further. At the August 2011 EOLF, an external expert explained the different professionalisation options.

In an online survey subsequent to the 2011 EOLF, all 15 respondents felt that EthicsSA should continue to investigate professionalisation.

Respondents were asked to indicate their professionalisation preferences, choosing from six options classified from informal to formal in three categories: informal networks and think tanks; associations; and professional bodies.

The most votes (5 or 33%) favoured the professional association option. In this category falls, for example, the Chartered Secretaries Southern Africa (ICSA). It involves quite an extensive process with the appropriate Seta involving registration criteria (criteria of entry for individuals), setting of standards, qualifications, and quality assurance.

Significantly, however, 8 or 53% favoured a less formalised approach, ranging from maintaining the status quo (discussion or networking group) (3 or 20%) to a generalist membership association (3 or 20%).

A generalist membership association entails registration of members, the payment of a membership fee, and receipt of best practice information. Diverse people may become

members, but they will have something in common, for example being a Certified Ethics Officer, having certain NQF-approved qualifications, occupying a position of Ethics Officer in an organisation, or working in the ethics management environment.

EthicSA intends putting together a multi-stakeholder group that will investigate the process of professionalisation further. Five

Eco-tip

We all buy presents regularly for different occasions, but do we ever think about the ecological footprint of these gifts?

Now we can because there are a number of 'sustainable gifts' on the market, which are especially made in an environmentally sustainable way.

Herewith follows a list of such sustainable gifts:

- Offer/ask for gifts that don't involve buying anything. Eg., offer to teach something you know how to do, make a donation to a charity, give seeds/seedlings from your garden, offer a picnic and spend time together.
- Shop for gifts at flea markets, green markets, antique stores, auctions.
- Make an environmentally friendly gift basket filled with 'sustainable gifts': LED light bulbs, organic cotton socks, solar battery charger, solar radio, non-toxic cleaning products, organic seeds, homemade pies.
- Give a gift that keeps on growing like a tree or bush.
- Buy gifts made from reused and natural materials. See <http://www.ecoartware.com/crafts/archive.php> for ideas.
- Buy gifts that are made under the 'fair trade label'. Items sold with this label are usually made by hand by disadvantaged people and with sustainable materials. Also, the workers get a guaranteed fair wage. There are a number of shops that distribute fair trade products. Find more information on www.fairtrade.co.za.



The State of Ethics in South Africa

Second annual Conference of EthicsSA

Ethics is of strategic importance for building a safe, just and prosperous society. Unethical practices and corruption can undermine the social stability and economic growth of a country. In pursuit of its vision of “building an ethically responsible society” the Ethics Institute of South Africa will make an assessment of the state of ethics in South Africa at its Second Annual Conference that will be held in the Sandton Convention Centre on 25 May 2012.

The conference follows on the heels of the First Annual Conference of the Ethics Institute of South Africa that was held in 2011. At this conference the theme of Accountability was explored and the conclusion was reached that Accountability is anchored in a wider sense of concern for the society in which one operates. It is this conclusion that gave rise to the theme of the Second Annual Conference: The State of Ethics in South Africa.



At the 2012 EthicsSA Conference the state of ethics in South Africa will be gauged from multiple angles: There will be assessments of the state of ethics in the business sector, in government and in schools. Multi-disciplinary panels will look at what is needed to build a just society and economy in South Africa. Top-level speakers from organised business, labour and government will participate in lively debate and chart a way forward for improving the state of ethics in South Africa.

More details and booking information will be made available soon. Remember to diarise the date for this worthy event.

An error of judgement!

A guide to sport ethics with specific reference to cricket

by Philip Theunissen

MARKING THE CREASE

Moral character is among the most important of the many outcomes that sport is perceived to foster. This particular goal has come under considerable scrutiny in recent years as unethical conduct by sportsmen, coaches, and administrators have made worldwide headlines. In some circles, sport is even deemed to be in a state of moral crisis (Maloy, 2003).

There are many examples of sport and sports people providing momentum and breakthrough on topics like racial vilification, reconciliation and compassion for the plight of fellow man. Sadly, there are also examples of sport and sports people demonstrating unethical conduct in full public view like cheating, corruption, abuse, discrimination, racism, and violence, to name but a few.

The integrity of sport is under increased threat and this might lead people to lose interest in sport. Certainly not all participants are unethical, but it is happening often enough to become a cause of concern. The general opinion is that the huge amounts of money involved in sport today have made many participants strive for performance at all cost. It appears that the ethical part of sport is now limited to shaking someone's hand at the end of a game. If sport wants to justify its claim as character builder, it needs to restore the core principle of society, namely 'to do the right thing'. Although not the only solution, a good start will be for participants in sport to strengthen their own ethical decision-making.

SWEEPING THE DEBRIS

Although named the 'Gentleman's Game', cricket's reputation is frequently tarnished by smaller incidents involving ethical issues. There were however a number of more prominent cases over the past decades that seriously threatened the integrity of the game.

Bodyline

Bodyline or fast leg theory was the brainchild of the English captain, Douglas Jardine. This was a cricketing tactic used in the 1932/33 Ashes tour of Australia, specifically to combat the extraordinary batting skill of Australia's Don Bradman. The tactic was simple: a bodyline delivery was one where the ball was pitched short so as to rise towards the body of the opposing batsman on the line of leg stump, in the hope of creating leg side deflections that could be caught by one of several fielders in the quadrant of the field behind square leg. This tactic was considered by many to be intimidatory and physically threatening. The English players were heavily criticised by both the Australian and English press. This series eventually needed intervention from the diplomatic departments of both countries. Bill Woodfull, the Australian skipper showed the world just what the definition of a 'gentleman' meant. Woodfull led the Australians through this incredibly tough period and even under huge pressure from the public and the media, Woodfull flatly refused to employ retaliatory tactics. He never publicly complained even though he and his men were repeatedly hit and had to see the medics often. Woodfull's famous saying was: "There are two teams out there, one is playing cricket. The other is making no attempt to do so."

Underarm Bowling

The underarm bowling incident of 1981 took place on 1 February 1981, when Australia was playing New Zealand in a One Day International cricket match, the third of five such matches in the final of the Benson & Hedges World Series Cup, at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. In order to prevent New Zealand from scoring the six they needed to tie, the Australian captain, Greg Chappell, instructed his bowler (and younger brother), Trevor Chappell, to deliver the last ball underarm, along the ground. This action was technically legal, but seen as being totally against the spirit of fair play. After the incident, the then Prime Minister of New Zealand, Robert Muldoon, described it as the most disgusting incident he can recall in the history of cricket. Even the Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, called the act contrary to the traditions of the game. As a direct result of the incident, underarm bowling was banned in limited overs cricket by the International Cricket Council as not within the spirit of the game.

To read the full article, copy into your browser:

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