

THE Bookkeepers SUMMIT 2011



#BkprsSMT



**THE INSTITUTE
OF CERTIFIED
BOOKKEEPERS**

The Professional Bookkeeper

Stuart Morris FICB

What is a Professional?

Two Elements:

- Professional
- Ethical

Professional

- Qualified by Examination
- Insured
- Continuing Professional Development
- Supervised – Professional Conduct Regulations
Disciplinary Procedure

- “Professionals are expected by employers, clients and by the public to adopt a higher standard of conduct and behaviour in their professional life. It is that which underpins our value and the confidence the public has in us as professionals.”

- “However, ethics and professional conduct rules do more than that. The choices faced by a professional on a day to day basis are rarely black and white. Those choices are often made at a time when one is under pressure from a client or the clock. The professional rules help us judge our conduct by an objective benchmark at those difficult times.”

ICB Professional Conduct Regulations

Professional Conduct

- Underpinned by our Values
- What are our own beliefs
- Base our ethical behaviour on our values

- **VALUES** – Our fundamental beliefs
e.g. Respecting others is good
- **MORALS** – Do's and Don'ts
e.g. Do not discriminate
- **ETHICS** – Our Code of Behaviour
e.g. We will not discriminate

What are Values?

- Loyalty
- Kindness
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Trust
- Fairness
- Compassion
- Respect
- Generosity

The Law and Ethics

- The Legal Position – what a business **must** do
- The Ethical Position – how and why it does it

Law Vs Ethics

- Law is mandatory – you must abide by it
- Ethics is more a matter of judgement/belief
 - you have a choice
 - determined by your values

Typical Dilemmas

- Truth Vs Loyalty
- Short Term Vs Long Term
- Individual Vs Community

Rushworth Kidder "How good people make tough choices"

When Does A Business Problem Involve Ethics?

- If it makes you think about what is a correct or incorrect response
- If you are forced to consider where your responsibility and duties lie

Ethical Decisions

Simple Tests

- Is it transparent? – Do I mind others knowing what I decided?
- What is the impact? – Who does my decision affect or hurt?
- Is it fair? – Would the decision be considered fair by those affected?
- Who benefits? – Am I doing this for my own benefit or because it is the right thing to do?

Dangerous Phrases

- “We’ve always done it that way”.
- “In principle I agree, but..”
- “Too much paperwork.”
- “It’s not our policy.”
- “This needs more study.”
- “They won’t do anything about it anyway.”
- “They don’t care.”
- “We have enough complications already.”
- “There are no clear answers.”
- “That’s just a matter of opinion.”

Aids to Decision Making

- Laws and Regulations
- ICB Professional Conduct Regulations
- Your Own Ethical Beliefs

The Professional Bookkeeper

- Advisor in a position of trust .
- Continuing Professional Development.
- Licensed to Practice.
- Individual Responsibility.
- Membership of a Professional Body.
- Governed by a Professional Code.
- Disciplinary Code and Enforcement.
- Knowledge Skills and Judgement tested by examination and experience.

Summary

- Have Principles and Stick to them.
- Don't be bullied into something you know is wrong.

“That cannot be safe which is
not honourable”

Tacitus

AD56 – AD117

THE
Bookkeepers
SUMMIT 2011



**THE INSTITUTE
OF CERTIFIED
BOOKKEEPERS**