THE COVER MODEL FOR ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Prepare for the decision (Due Diligence)

Fact Gathering

- What facts do you know?
- What facts do you need to know?

Issue Articulation

- What are the ethical implications of the decision?
- What ethical problems might people have with your decision?

Alternative Identification

- Brainstorm creative ideas.
- Think outside the box.

Stakeholder Assessment

- Who has an interest in your decision?
- Who might be helped or hurt by your decision?
- Which stakeholders have higher priority?

Analyze your Alternatives

For each alternative, do the following analysis:

Code:

- Is this alternative legal?
- Does it violate any regulations?
- Does it violate any Code of Conduct or my company or industry?

Outcome:

- What are the likely financial outcomes of this alternative?
- Could someone be hurt?
- Who is hurt or helped in some way by this alternative?
- What publicity might come from selecting this alternative?

Values:

- How does this alternative align with the company's values?
- Is this alternative consistent with the company mission, vision, and values statements and the strategic plan?
- How does company culture relate to this alternative?

Editorial:

- What is the most negative thing a newspaper, social media outlet, or critic can say about the company if this alternative is selected?
- Can the company respond to that criticism in a manner consistent with our mission, vision, and values?

Rule:

- If other companies faced a similar decision and chose this alternative, would this alternative lead to a better world?
- If this alternative became the norm, would the world be a better place?

Decide

Use your analysis of each alternative to make a decision.

Assess and Reflect

Once your decision is made, you will need to work with a team to implement the decision. Once implemented, it is key to assess the outcomes.