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FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

# Ethics: Some Finer Points

## Author(s)

Stuart Welsh

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## Description

Stuart Welsh discusses how ethical decisions have been made over the years and how to handle atypical scenarios.

## Body

We can define ethics as the process used to make value-laden decisions beyond the law in professional matters. So ethics is a process -- it's not something we have, it is something we do. When faced with an ethical issue in our work, we typically first make sure we understand the issue. Then we often turn for guidance to the code of ethics for our engineering specialty, make a decision, and implement it.

However, every now and then, we encounter something atypical. For example, we may find ourselves at the top of a slippery slope, or unable to get help from our code of ethics, or making assumptions about which engineers are bound by a code. The presentation describes some of these finer points in the ethics process and offers suggestions for dealing with them.

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