

Most decisions that student organization leaders make involve some kind of choice. Many times it may not be a clear cut right or wrong issue, but involve a "judgment call" focusing on the leader's and members' values and beliefs. For example, when asking people for money to support your group through fundraising, a judgment call by the leader or members of the group is needed in deciding what the money should be spent on. Below are some questions that might help you deal with those "judgment call" decisions:

### **What is the "dilemma"?**

- What is issue and difficult decision to be made? Describe it in detail.
- What are the facts?

### **What values do I wish to advance here?**

- It is ethical?
- It is balanced and fair to all sides?
- How will it make me feel about myself?
- Which of the above values is most important to me?
- What are the alternative courses of action/options?
- What are the consequences, risks, and implications of each option?

### **What is my decision?**

- Choose the best alternative.
- Consult with trusted advisor.

### **Some other considerations that might help you sort things out:**

- Ultimately I have to take responsibility for what I do and do not do.
- Can I live with my decision?
- Is my action ultimately doing more good than harm?
- How is this decision affecting the "stakeholders" (members, advisors, campus partners, community members) in this situation?
- Am I using excuses to justify my behavior?
- Would I be proud to have my decision placed in the headline news?
- Am I practicing the Golden Rule-"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you?"

**GOOD LUCK! SOMETIMES THE HARDEST DECISIONS TO MAKE HELP YOU LEARN THE MOST!**

Ethics is deciding what is right or more right in a given situation. Here are some examples of behaviors and practices exemplifying ethical leadership in your student organization:

Expecting high performance of oneself and others	Respect for excellence	Putting oneself in another's shoes (empathy)
Treating others with respect and care	Elevating the values and aspirations of others rather than appealing to their wants and needs	Standing up for one's beliefs
Reinforcing responsible behavior	Reinforcing communication expressing opposing views	Questioning and possessing a willingness to change

**Reference**

University of Iowa Center for Student Involvement and Leadership. (n.d.). Ethics. *Leader Bits*. Retrieved from <http://imu.uiowa.edu/leaderbits/>

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**WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO TODAY?**

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