Improving Ethical Engineering Practice

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Abstract

Over the years concerns over unethical conduct within the Ghanaian society in general and the engineering profession, in particular, have led to the resurgence of the debate on the need, and how to promote or improve on the core ethical values in the Engineering professional practice. Although, there are professional systems and structures in place aimed at preventing or mitigating the effects of unethical behaviours such as bribery, corruption, substandard work, misuse of national resources and confidential information in public service organizations, these societal ills persist. There is therefore an urgent need to examine the underlying factors and root causes of such development-limiting tendencies and help professional engineers to uphold standards and ethical values in their execution of duties. The production of knowledge in engineering is located both in science as well as in social life. Further, Engineers do not only use scientific knowledge in their practice but also combine labour and capital in their application of this knowledge. Being employed in the public and private sector and working toward commercial ends, engineers are both the "objects and representatives of corporate power". As such, engineers are faced with ambiguities and issues concerning the use and abuse of power, which other professions are not. Therefore, the call to promote or improve on the core ethical values in engineering practice is the need of the hour.

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