: What are agile ethical principles?

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Agile is founded upon two ethics statements, the [Manifesto for Agile Software Development](), and the [12 Principles]() behind the Agile Manifesto. The five **Scrum values** of commitment, courage, focus, openness, and respect must be understood and "lived". These principles and values create a code of behavior for a person that must be adopted and followed. Examining the definitions for these values helps internalize the values. By pursuing these values, the three pillars of transparency, inspection, and adaptation gain meaning and can help build trust for everyone.

I. Keep your commitments to team members, clients and stakeholders -- Before you make a commitment, think carefully. A commitment obligates you to do something. If you make a promise, keep the promise or explain why you can't.

II. Courage -- strength to take chances, to persevere in the face of obstacles, and withstand criticism and difficulties.

III. Focus -- stay focused on the activity that you are trying to complete. Don't get sidetracked.

IV. Openness -- be honest, don't keep secrets, be willing to try new things.

V. Respect -- consider the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of others. Listen. Encourage. Congratulate. Be Helpful. and Say Thank You.

Five general ethical principles should also guide managers. professionals, and staff in agile decision making, agile processes, and agile behavior. These principles are:

Principle A: Beneficence and non-maleficence (pronounced mə-ˈle-fə-sə-n(t)s). Beneficence involves balancing the benefits of an action against the risks and costs involved and non-maleficence means avoiding causing harm. Do no harm or evil.

Principle B: Loyalty and responsibility, especially act at all times in the best interests of the client, organization, colleagues, and society.

Principle C: Integrity. Being honest, principled, honorable and upright; willing to fight for one's beliefs.

Principle D: Justice and fairness. Apply a standard of rightness and fairness to judge and decide without reference to one's feelings or personal interests.

Principle E: Respect people's rights and maintain their dignity, especially the right of individuals to self-determination.

Sliger (2009) argues "While we are obligated as professionals to provide a valued product to our customers, it should not be at the expense of those doing the work (or those supporting the people doing the work). Our second obligation is to treat the team humanely. If we do not create and maintain an environment that allows the team to do challenging and fulfilling work at a sustainable pace, then we are failing to treat these knowledge workers with respect. This also affects our first duty in that an overworked, demoralized team may not be able to give its best effort at creating a valued and quality product."

The Project Management Institute's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct describes the expectations practitioners have for themselves and others. The Code is specific about the basic obligation of honesty and fairness. It requires that practitioners demonstrate a commitment to honesty, ethical conduct, and compliance with laws and regulations. It carries the obligation to comply with organizational and professional policies and laws. Since practitioners come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applies globally. When dealing with any stakeholder, practitioners should be committed to honest and fair practices and respectful dealings. The values that the global project management community defined as most important were: responsibility, respect, fairness, and honesty. The Project Management Institute's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is posted on PMI's website.

Extreme complexity is more common and software has become more pervasive and interconnected, for these reasons change activities and projects increase the potential for causing unintended consequences and harm. Ethical agile practices can reduce and even mitigate unintended consequences. The benefits of Agile do not result solely from the adoption of a set of practices; rather if agile and agility are to deliver value, then a positive system of principles must also be adopted and followed, cf., Sliger (2009). To become agile, we must strive to engage in business conduct that is ethical and responsible. Also, we must act deliberately, and do what is right. **We must be consistent and ethical**.

References

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