



What's in a Code of Conduct?

Frankie Wood-Black, Ph.D., REM, MBA

Northern Oklahoma College, 1220 E. Grand, PO Box 310, Tonkawa, OK 74653

Abstract

Many professions have a Code of Conduct, and so too the American Chemical Society. Have you looked at it recently? Did you even know it was there? Are you aware that as a member you have agreed to follow this Code? What goes into a Code of Conduct? How does it effect you? These are all questions to be addressed by this poster.

Code of Ethics vs. Code of Conduct

A Code of Ethics:

outlines a company or organization's
VALUES

A Code of Conduct:

outlines a company or organization's
ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Elements of a Code of Conduct Should:

- Articulate and provide clear expectations of the organization.
- Provide a guide for members, a reference to the expectations of the culture of the organization.
- Fit the needs and characteristics of the organization.
- Reflect and reinforce the aspirational qualities of the organization.
- Provide a means of unifying the qualities and values of the organization.
- Set an aspirational tone.
- Be based upon compelling principles.
- Coordinate with policies and guidance documents of the organization.
- Provide guidance for decision making.

The Chemical Professional's Code of Conduct

Under the ACS's Federal Charter, one of the objectives of the Society is

"the improvement of the qualifications and usefulness of chemists through high standards of professional ethics, education and attainments."

In 1965, the ACS Council approved "The Chemist's Creed." And, the first Chemist's Code of Conduct was approved by the ACS Council on March 16, 1994 which replaced "The Chemist's Creed." The current Code of Conduct as approved by the Council on March 28, 2012 and adopted by the Board of Directors on June 1, 2012 is:

Chemical Professionals Acknowledge Their Responsibilities

To the Public

Chemical professionals have a responsibility to serve the public interest and safety and to further advance the knowledge of science. They should actively be concerned with the health and safety of co-workers, consumers and the community. Public comments on scientific matters should be made with care and accuracy, without unsubstantiated, exaggerated, or premature statements.

To the Science of Chemistry

Chemical professionals should seek to advance chemical science, understand the limitations of their knowledge, and respect the truth. They should ensure that their scientific contributions, and those of their collaborators, are thorough, accurate, and unbiased in design, implementation, and presentation.

To the Profession

Chemical professionals should strive to remain current with developments in their field, share ideas and information, keep accurate and complete laboratory records, maintain integrity in all conduct and publications, and give due credit to the contributions of others. Conflicts of interest and scientific misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism, are incompatible with this Code.

To Their Employer

Chemical professionals should promote and protect the legitimate interests of their employers, perform work honestly, competently, comply with safety policies and procedures, fulfill obligations, and safeguard proprietary and confidential business information.

To Their Employees

Chemical professionals, as employers, should respect the professionalism of their subordinates and have concern for their well-being, without bias. Employers should provide them with a safe, congenial working environment, fair compensation, opportunities for advancement, and properly acknowledge their scientific contributions.

To Students

Chemical professionals should regard the tutelage of students as a trust conferred by society for the promotion of the students' learning, professional development, and safety. Each student should be treated fairly, respectfully, and without exploitation.

To Colleagues

Chemical professionals should treat *colleagues* with respect, encourage them, learn with them, share ideas honestly, and give credit for their contributions. Chemical professionals should carefully avoid any bias based on race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, presence of disabilities, educational background, or other personal attributes. They should show consistent respect to colleagues, regardless of the level of their formal education and whether they are from industry, government or academia, or other scientific and engineering disciplines.

To Their Clients

Chemical professionals should serve clients faithfully and incorruptibly, respect confidentiality, advise honestly, and charge fairly.

To the Environment

Chemical professionals should strive to do their work in ways that are safe for both the environment and for the health of all who may be affected. They have a responsibility to understand the health, safety and environmental impacts of their work, to recognize the constraints of limited resources, and to develop sustainable products and processes that protect the health, safety, and prosperity of future generations.

Current Questions

Does the current code of the ACS.....

- Adequately address the values and strategic plan as outlined?
 - Does it adequately address
 - Safety?
 - Compliance?
 - Standards of Practice?
- Is it missing key elements?

Are the members of the profession.....

- Aware of the code?
- Following the code?
- Subject to repercussions should the code be violated?

Should the ACS be taking additional actions, such as...

- Modifying the Values
- Modifying the Code
- Implementation of Certain practices
 - If so, what changes do you suggest?

References

- The Code of Conduct is as published from the ACS Website https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/pressroom/press-releases/ethics-the-chemical-professionals-code-of-conduct.html?_ga=1.130959887.1624443099.1460566206
- "Creating an effective Code of Conduct" by Jason Lunday, Corporate Compliance Insights, <http://corporatecompliancesights.com/creating-an-effective-code-of-conduct-and-codex-program/>
- "What are key components of a Code of Ethics in Business" by Jeri Sullivan, studio, Houston Chronicle, <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/key-components-code-ethics-business-244.html>
- White Paper: "The Seven Elements of an Effective Compliance and Ethics Program" www.Compliance360.com