INTEGRITY MOMENTS – a practical way to talk about integrity

What are Integrity Moments?

Integrity Moments support teams in corporate offices and schools to demonstrate the Department's value of integrity and talk about what it looks like in our everyday work.

Integrity Moments are short conversations, often held at the start of meetings and professional learning sessions, about ethically complex situations, including those we face in our jobs or those playing out in the media.

Through discussion, teams unpack issues, test ideas and articulate what good professional practice looks like.

More than encouraging ethical practices, they contribute to building open and collaborative teams and creating a safe space for staff to support, challenge and coach each other.

How do I conduct an Integrity Moment?

Simply invite or nominate a staff member to reflect on an integrity issue or ethical dilemma that has arisen in their day-to-day work, or they have experienced in a past role.

Media articles that raise integrity issues can also be discussed and applied to our context, i.e. What would we do? How do we deal with similar pressures? How do we avoid this happening to us?

Encourage team members to explore the situation through an 'integrity lens', identify the challenges and barriers and openly share their thoughts and ideas on how to best respond.

Integrity Moments can be 10 to 30 minute discussions. Test Integrity Moments with a manager or peer beforehand to ensure the content is not identifiable, avoids confidential information and is the right fit for the group.

What makes a good Integrity Moment?

A good Integrity Moment should:

- be ethically complex
- focus on real life experiences or a topical issue of the day
- make people pause and consider the range of issues and considerations in play.

Integrity Moment examples

1: Bystanders

Reflecting DET's Values in our own behaviour is often easier than supporting others to demonstrate the Values. Speaking up, rather than being a bystander, is easier said than done. Reflect on a time you saw behaviour that did not align to the Values, and you didn't do anything.

What stopped you from acting?

What would you do if it happened again?

2: Conflict of interest

One of your team members is currently on unpaid family leave. You have been informed by another staff member that they are currently working with schools in a consultant capacity, using their DET email to offer quotes and approach schools. You raise this with your line manager, who did not take any action.

What do you do? Where can you seek support and advice?

3: Gifts, benefits and hospitality

A labour hire company provides all your staff with branded cupcakes once a year. A couple of staff members comment this is the highlight of Term 3 because they never receive any perks in their jobs.

What do you say or do?

4: Recruitment

A six-month position has become available in your team and you open an expressions of interest process. You hear team members gossiping about who will get it and whether it is worth submitting an application. You are concerned about how this might impact the process and the team culture.

How do you manage the situation, including addressing the concerns of the team?

5: Media example: 2019 Banking Royal Commission

The Mandarin wrote that 'defensive, some say arrogant, behaviour' in his appearance before the commission cost NAB Chairman and former Treasury Secretary Ken Henry his job. After stepping down, Mr Henry told ABC 7.30: "I really should have performed quite differently. I should have been much more open."

What factors contribute to defensiveness at work?

What can we do to encourage openness and accountability, including in our dealings with leaders?

More examples are available on the Integrity Resources page on the Department intranet, the DET's Values page on HR Web or by contacting your regional Integrity Liaison Officer via integrity.assurance@edumail.vic.gov.au