

the *Cursive* approach to ethical dilemmas

The CURSIVE approach to ethical dilemmas sets out a flowing and coherent means of navigating difficult ethical problems, allowing financial planners to work through the steps of the process in a connected and logical way.

cur·sive

adjective

1. Flowing; not disconnected

2. *Typfaces that resemble handwriting*

(Collins English Dictionary, 14th ed)

CLARITY

Gather the facts

UNDERSTAND

Understand your obligations

RECOGNISE

What is the root of the dilemma?

SOLUTIONISE

List the options available

INTERROGATE

What are the benefits or drawbacks of each option?

EVALUATE

Compare the benefits or drawbacks of each option?

EXECUTE

Implement the best option

The Ethical Decision-Making Process in detail

Clarity

- Gather the **FACTS**
- Collect relevant information about the situation
- Consider who, what, where, when and why
- Evaluate the credibility and validity of facts provided by others

Understand

- What are your **OBLIGATIONS** and to whom?
- What are the relevant codes and standards that apply here?
- Apply these guidelines to the situation

Recognise

- Why is there a **DILEMMA**?
- Are there mutually exclusive “goods”?
- Is there no good outcome to choose from?
- Are there conflicts of interest?

Solutionise

- What are the **OPTIONS** available?
- Take time to think calmly and thoroughly
- Research precedents and outcomes
- Seek advice from colleagues, supervisors and experts

Interrogate

- For each option consider the following
 - i. Obligation imperative
 - ii. Benefits
 - iii. Drawbacks
- Usually two options, occasionally a third one

eValuate

- **ESTABLISH THE WEIGHT** and compare all options
 - i. **Outcome:** will the decision have a positive impact?
 - ii. **Transparency:** How would the decision appear in public?
 - iii. **Rationality:** Can you explain the decision logically?
 - iv. **Switching places:** Would you accept this decision if you were affected?
 - v. **Values:** Is it consistent with the organisations mission?
 - vi. **Authority:** Consider input from ethics officers or legal counsel
- Apply the concepts of respect, responsibility, fairness and honesty
- Project consequences

Execute

- Select the best available option & **IMPLEMENT** it
- Enforce any relevant codes or standards
- If none are acceptable, revisit brainstorming
- Assess the outcome and identify lessons
- Consider improvements for future situations
- Document the process for reference