

this is the premise on which undercover policing is based.

The sewer analogy aptly suggests where the line could be drawn. I suggest that one option is that it is possible to catch rats as they come out of the sewer. This means that to catch a rat it is not necessary to risk getting dirty.

Significant Factors

Other factors overlay the ethical issues arising in the cases outlined above. Firstly, there is the effect on organisational and societal culture. Blanchard and Peale (1988, pp 30-31) report an article by Jack Griffin called "It's OK son, everybody does it."

Johnny is assured, when his father bribes a traffic cop over a speeding offence, when his uncle advises on how to cheat the tax man, when his aunt shows him how to fool the insurance company and when his coach shows him how to break the rules at football, that "it's OK, son, everybody does it."

When Johnny, at university, buys the exam answers for \$50, gets caught and is sent home in disgrace, his parents are shocked. "How could you? You never learned anything like that at home!"

Secondly, there is the matter of personal integrity. How did you respond to the scenario regarding employing

the salesman outlined above? The case surely raises very real issues about personal integrity, or can a decision be made solely on the basis of keeping a competitive edge?

Thirdly, there is the effect of individual judgement. The nature of some undercover operations can raise doubts about the judgement and leadership ability of the officers in charge. Joshua Owen (1991), Director of the Institute of Administration at the University of New South Wales, summed up the leadership issue neatly:

Good ethics is good business. If we want ethical business, we need ethical CEOs...and ethical senior executives at the top.

Conclusion

So, is there a right way to do a wrong thing?"

The aim of exploring the topic of 'ethical issues in management' has been to find a method for making ethical decisions for personal and organisational situations as they arise.

Three traditional approaches have been considered, with shortcomings being shown to exist in each. This being the case, I recommend that the best method for evaluating how situations can be best dealt with is the 'Ethics Check Questions' suggested by Blanchard and Peale (1988, p27). The application of this method, to my

mind, will result in a definitive answer:

"There is no right way to do a wrong thing" (Blanchard and Peale, 1988, p19).

It is an answer that should form the cornerstone of the leadership style of our senior executives.

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17th Senior Police Executive Officers' Course

THE Senior Police Executive Officer's Course at the Australian Police College, Manly, is a six week course intended for officers at the rank of Superintendent to Assistant Commissioner and senior public servants at an equivalent level.

The theme of the 17th course, which ran from 22 February to 2 April, was *Policing – the changing paradigm*, and was designed to develop a contemporary model for policing. It also aimed to provide senior executives with the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the political process and enhance their effectiveness in policy formulation and implementation.



Participants in the 17th Senior Police Executive Officers' Course at the Australian Police Staff College.

Back row: Supt J White (SA), Mr D Smeaton (AFP), Snr Asst Supt K Moonen (NSW Dept of Corrective Services), Supt M A Jones (WA), Cmdr B Fields (NT), Supt T Bearson (NZ), Supt R Shaw (NSW), Supt L Prins (TAS). **Middle row:** Snr Asst Supt G Souter (NSW Dept of Corrective Services), Insp R Conder (Qld), Supt K Thoms (NSW), Det Ch Insp D Foley (Vic), Cmdr G Bawden (MFB Melb), A/g Det Supt T McGrath (Vic), Ch Insp P Jones (NSW), Ch Supt D Jefferies (Qld).

Front row: Mr M Roelandts (NSW), Mr L Mumms (NT), Mr R Barnsley (Director of Programs), Prof T F Rohl (Director), Cmdr J Murray (SA - Visiting Police Fellow), Regional Cmdr R Atkinson (NSW Fire Brigade), Ch Supt G Stevens (QLD).