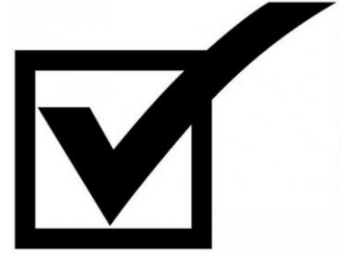


**BUSINESS
PROFESSIONALS**
of **AMERICA**
Giving Purpose to Potential



Ethics and Professionalism

(540)

STATE 2025
PRELIMINARY

TOTAL POINTS _____ (100 points)

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Failure to adhere to any of the following rules will result in disqualification:

1. Contestants must hand in this test booklet and all printouts if any.
2. No equipment, supplies, or materials other than those specified for this event are allowed in the testing area. No previous BPA tests and/or sample tests (handwritten, photocopied, or keyed) are allowed in the testing area.
3. Electronic devices will be monitored according to ACT standards.

DESCRIPTION:

Explore the application of ethical frameworks to various aspects used in business today.

STATE PRELIMINARY SCENARIO:

Jessica is a computer applications specialist at Digital Solutions. Digital Solutions has recently secured a significant contract with a new client, Ever Green Tech, to develop cutting-edge sustainability software. Jessica was selected as the lead on this project, which will result in a large financial bonus if she delivers the software on time and within budget.

During the project kickoff meeting, Jessica realizes that one of the key decision-makers at Ever Green Tech is her cousin, Mark. Jessica knows that disclosing this relationship could lead to potential conflicts of interest and her being removed from the project. However, she believes that keeping it a secret might expedite the decision-making process and help her meet tight project deadlines. It is highly unlikely that anyone will know that she and Mark are related anyway.

Should Jessica disclose her relationship with Mark to her superiors and risk being removed from the project, or should she keep it confidential and leverage her relationship to ensure project success and a big bonus?

A contestant will be DISQUALIFIED for violations of the Copyright and Fair Use Guidelines.

Contestants who do not submit an entry that follows this topic will be disqualified.

Answers will vary, but may include the following from the *Ethics and Professionalism Resources Manual*:

- Paying respect to co-workers, oneself and clients, being honest during any type of transaction, and taking responsibility for one's own actions is both ethical and professional.
- The professionalism of an individual reflects on more than just him/herself. Not only can it build an individual's self-esteem by gaining respect from others, it also reflects well on the company.
- Personal Ethics: A person's ethics in their personal life will undoubtedly affect how they conduct business.

- **Fairness:** Fairness is an important component of ethical business. How fairly you treat others in negotiations or contractually will ultimately affect who is willing to deal with you in the future.
- **Integrity:** Integrity is generally the term that is most associated with business ethics and is the foundation on which good commerce is built. Integrity simply means holding to your principles even when it would be easier or more profitable to compromise them.
- **Trustworthiness:** Good business practice requires trust. Neither you nor your business can succeed with a reputation for untrustworthiness.
- **Internal + External:** Good business ethics requires that ethical behavior be practiced both internally as well as outside of the business. In simple terms, you must “practice what you preach.”
- **Leadership:** Ethical behavior more often than not trickles down from the top. If the leaders of an organization practice good business ethics, chances are better that employees will follow the example.
- **Values:** A person’s moral code is integrated into his/her business ethics. A person uses his/her own personal values in the context of his/her business dealings.

Possible Judges Questions

- How should Jessica handle the temptation of a financial bonus in light of company ethics?
- Could there be legal implications for not disclosing the relationship? Explain.
- How might Jessica’s peers perceive her if they discover the undisclosed relationship with Mark?