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Task One – Ethical practice paper

Explain what is meant by 'ethical principles' and 'professional values', and how these might inform the way people approach their work. (AC 1.1)

Ethical Principles are seen as a framework for how we should behave. Whilst we should acknowledge that people professionals should act ethically, there seems to be no official agreement on what the meaning of ethical behaviour is. Ethical principles have been described as certain principles that can provide a framework for how we should behave. (Lawton, 1998). Waite, (2021) explains how there are three perspectives to consider. These can be named as Utilitarianism, Teleology and Deontology. However, our morals have also been said to play a key part in ethics. For example, what we understand as both good and bad values will enable us to make both good and bad decisions. This is supported further by Buchanan and Huczynski (2020), who state, "the code of moral principles governs our decisions with respect to what is right and wrong". Professional values are values that we should expect all people professionals and organisations to follow and apply, doing so can result in better decision making in every aspect of our daily lives. An employer should have a Code of Conduct in place that can help underpin specific ethical and professional values or pieces of legislation such as The Equality Act 2010. To support this, The CIPD set out three professional values, which can allow you to ask yourselves the tough questions to help improve and thrive in your ethical and professional values, (CIPD, 2022). It is widely believed that organisations succeed on their ability to act ethically and show professional values as this can develop important relationships with their employees and customers, which is supported by Green (2022). Being a people professional and applying these values could influence the way people approach their work in many ways. One example being that once they see employees being treated fairly with an organisation, they would want to work for the organisation based on the fact they are using ethical and professional values. This could also influence their own behaviour by surrounding themselves with external influences that have strong ethical principles. Waite (2021).

Identify a piece of legislation and a Code of Practice that support ethical and professional practice, with examples of how a people professional would conform to these. (AC 1.2)

The Equality Act 2010 is an example of a piece of legislation that support ethical practice. Since the introduction of this act, which brings together more than 100 pieces of legislation, discriminating against a person with a disability, for example, has become a lot more difficult. An article by Bunbury (2020) examines the legal duty

that universities must make reasonable adjustments, when necessary, even highlighting the impact of doing so. Expanding on this, it would be important for people professionals to conform to this as off the back of the Equality Act 2010, it is vital to maintain an inclusive learning environment. The CIPD Code of Practice states that members should “champion employment and business practices that promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion and support human rights and dignity”, CIPD. As people professionals, CIPD members should conform to this by keeping up with the current legislations, human rights laws and seeking legal advice should they need it. An example would be, if a man and woman went for the same job interview, under the Equality Act 2010 and CIPD Code of Conduct, you should not discriminate against any gender but conduct a fair interview process. By doing this, maybe through a scoring system, you will be able to select the correct candidate for the role fairly. Getting this wrong could be extremely detrimental to organisations’ brand and reputation, or even facing fines if found breaching any legislation.

Describe how a people professional would demonstrate respectful and inclusive working in relation to: (AC 2.1)

- contributing views and opinions
- clarifying problems or issues
- working effectively as part of a team

As people professionals it is vital that we learn to speak up and voice our views and opinions when we need to. Even though we may not see it ourselves, people apart of the same organisation may hold us to a higher regard due to our professional status, which is supported further by Waite, (2021). A people professional should listen and understand other people’s point of view as it is crucial in demonstrating inclusive working so everybody feels heard, valued and are able to deliver much more effective outcomes. The CIPD research shows that although employee voice is important, it is not always used equally. Therefore, CIPD list recommendations that employers should follow in order to help demonstrate inclusive working, CIPD (2022). People professionals could do this further by organising staff surveys, which could help manage a force for change in the workplace and show employees how their opinions matter by providing follow ups.

Cassidy (2020) explained how problems such as conflict are inevitable, not only in the workplace but also in day-to-day human interaction. After speaking with

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Rachel Suff, she explained that one of the centre stages of conflict is line managers themselves. Research shows that this is simply because they are not trained in people management and suggestions were given in that it is shown how important it is for management to establish a relationship with their employees rather than meeting in a one-on-one setting. CIPD (2022) demonstrates how mediation is important when it comes to the conflict between two members of an organisation. As people professionals it is important to mediate in the correct manner as feeling heard can be crucial in helping to change people's mindsets. This is supported by ACAS and CIPD's joint publication of resolving workplace issues (2013).

People professionals should understand that it takes time and effort to build an effective team. Having shared goals and demonstrating inclusive behaviour is important in demonstrating effective teamwork. Tuckman, (referenced in Waite, 2021), shows through his model how teams can move through different stages, known as "Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing". This is supported further by Waite, (2021) who explains how positive working relationships can be developed and considers some of the skills and behaviours people professionals should demonstrate to try and build an effective team. Communication, listening, creating a safe space that allows others to share their views and opinions, recognising the contribution of others and behaving assertively are all key values we should exhibit when trying to build an inclusive team dynamic.

Summarise different ways a people professional would stay up to date with people practice and world of work issues and developments, highlighting 2 ways in particular, that you have personally found effective. (AC 2.2)

A people professional could stay up to date by reading articles on workplace issues. Either one's that are published by the CIPD themselves or through any other organisations that are instrumental in providing up to date information such as ACAS. According to CIPD (2022) almost 5.9 million people visited their webpage between 2021 and 2022, this highlights the influence the website has in terms of people professionals collecting the correct up to date information. Other ways that they could stay up to date with people practice could be through social situations, such as asking their colleagues or associates for up-to-date information on work issues and developments. One way that I have found personally effective is attending a CIPD foundation course in People Practice through the University of Wales Trinity St David. A study by Reuell (2019) showed that student's felt they learned more when taking part in classroom-based learning. Another preferred way that I have found effective is keeping up to date with the CIPD website for articles, factsheets and any research carried out that involves people practice and work

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issues. As the CIPD is a professional association for Human Resource, I find they present their research in a variety of different ways with different opinions. Again, this could expand the mind to think more in depth of the issues at heart and propel your understanding of the topics they are researching or discussing. Another way that I have found effective is listening to podcasts. According to research done to CPD (2023), podcasts can accommodate a wide variety of learning styles and are easy to fit into students' daily routines. This proves that keeping up to date can be flexible.

Task Two – Professional Development Record

- Describe (at least 3) activities you have undertaken to develop your knowledge, skills, and experience over the last year. Activities may be, for example, formal development activities such as planned learning events or programmes, informal activities such as researching online or reading a book, work-based activities such as participating in a particular work project or simply putting yourself in a work role or position that you knew would stretch and develop you. The activities may have been in response to an identified performance issue or problem or may reflect a new area of interest for you. Your record should explain the reasons for your choice of activity as well as what the activity involved. (This is the **WHY** and the **WHAT** of your CPD Record.)
- Reflect on the outcomes of each activity and their impact on your practice. For example: did you gain a greater understanding of, or more knowledge about, something and if so, how has that actually impacted your behaviour? How are you, or is your performance, different because of the learning undertaken? Was the activity worth doing in terms of its impact on your behaviour or performance? Did the activity make you aware of, or maybe generate, other development needs? What conclusions did you draw from this for further activities? (This is the **SO WHAT!** of your CPD Record.)

Activity 1 – ACAS Learning

In January, I took the time to try and develop my learning on employment laws and rights, which I chose to do this using ACAS learning modules on their website. In a research evaluation carried out by BMG Research (2020), they

found that 73% of HR personnel used ACAS learning to help with a problem within their organisation. The certain modules that I completed covered areas such as contracts, working time and holidays and recruitment amongst others, which gave me a chance to earn a certificate on my understanding after completing and online exam on each module. I decided to choose ACAS learning because I found the modules easily accessible due to them being online which also meant my learning could be flexible around my working hours. This was useful to me as I could learn at my own pace and felt as if I was being rewarded by completing the online exams which encouraged me to do more modules on ACAS learning. I found myself gaining a greater knowledge on the topics I explored such as recruitment, which is extremely beneficial in my job role. Furthermore, I found this has impacted my behaviour in a positive way and helped to make me aware of things that I perhaps would not have been aware of when it comes to recruitment, such as, right to work documents and the extreme importance behind obtaining these in a correct manner. This then enabled me to expand my knowledge on these documents.

Activity 2 – Job Role

In November, I applied for a secondment post in L&D which I was successful in.

This is because I wanted help in expanding my knowledge further in the people profession, which being in a workplace environment under a new role is one of the most efficient ways to learn new skills. This is supported further by Larmer Brown Ltd (2023), they explain that this is because the employee can face challenges head on, expand their skills by learning from others around them and learn from their mistakes. I believe that this has had the biggest impact on me because being around people professionals in a work environment has inspired me to lead by example and apply the skills that I have learned from them into my own role. An example would be dealing with employee conflict, whilst these can be common it is not unusual for employers to become flustered when conflict arises. However, being around people professionals at work has enabled me to change my behaviour, adapt more to these situations at work and apply these skills to my practice. Certain activities that I have been doing in my job role, include attending recruitment days. These have expanded my skills by being able to promote our business on a face-to-face level, explaining what our business has to offer and why you should work for us. This has also allowed me to gain a greater understanding on how you should be carrying yourself as a people professional in the workplace and has showed me how employees rely on your advice as a people professional, even though you may not be confident in the advice you

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are giving. This is supported further by Waite (2021), who explains how people professionals are seen as “the expert”, which is something I have seen happen on a weekly basis on my current job role.

Activity 3 – Careers Event

As part of my job role, I was required to attend a careers event in February. This meant I had to promote our business to university students in travel and tourism and explain why our business would be a great employer to work for. I also had to network with other businesses/universities on how we can adapt and change our own company with schemes that they offer their own students and employees. As this was the first time that I have promoted the business at a careers event, I was definitely pushed out of my comfort zone. Waite, (2021) explains how in the ‘stretch zone’, we tend to challenge ourselves the most and learn the most because of this. I found that networking with different business to be quite competitive, which I believe made me determined to push myself out of my comfort zone and speak to the students of all ages in the industry. I explained how we could benefit their skills, whilst developing my own in the process. I believe this impacted me by helping to develop my credibility as a professional and helped me to showcase what I achieved in the business so far and how others can do the same. This is something that I would not have normally been able to reflect on without attending the careers event as I applied my reflection on what I have accomplished to inspire others. By reflecting on my progression and learning within the business, I was also able to highlight some improvements that I could make in my knowledge and experience. Waite, (2021) explains how reflection is an essential life-skill and is key to learning.

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