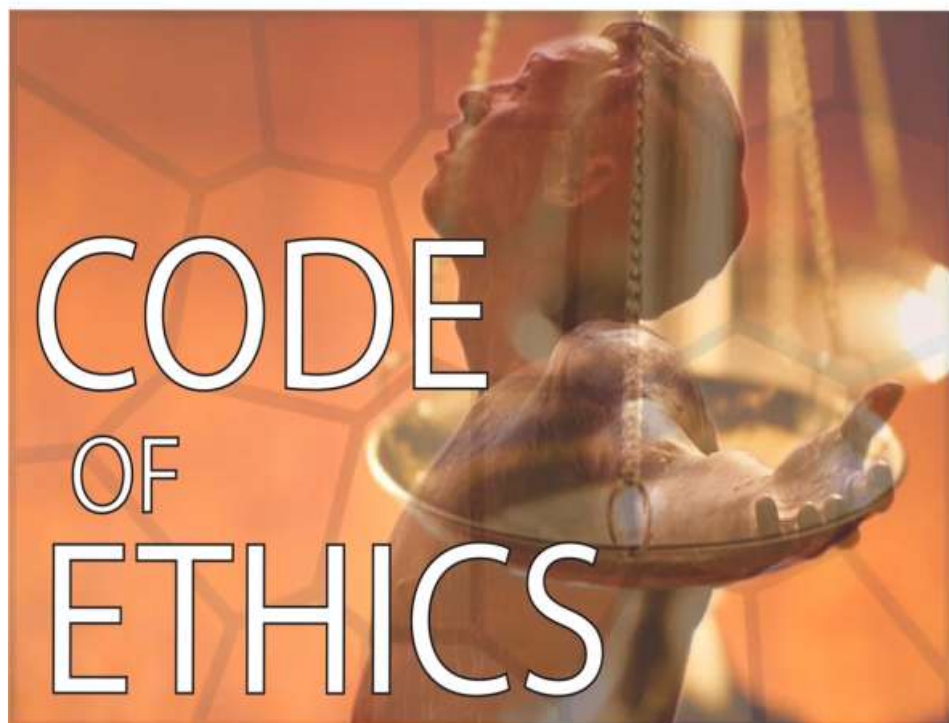


UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
Institute for Small-Scale Industries



and BUSINESS CONDUCT





# Receipt and Acknowledgment of UP ISSI Code of Ethics and Business Conduct

I, the undersigned, acknowledge receipt of the UP ISSI Code of Ethics and Business Conduct.

I have understood and commit to abide by this UP ISSI Code of Ethics and Business Conduct expected by the Institute.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, I will consult my immediate supervisor, the Human Resources and Organization Development Officer, or the Director for clarification.

Please read this UP ISSI Code of Ethics and Business Conduct carefully before you sign this document.

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Employee's Printed Name & Signature

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Position

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Date

# INTRODUCTION

The UP ISSI Code of Ethics and Business Conduct is established to guide employees in their work behavior and performance. This is necessary to ensure orderly conduct of business and to afford protection to both the Institute and its Staff.

Employees are expected to develop internal responsibility and respect towards their work, Institute property, their supervisor and co-employees.

Whenever an employee violates a rule, a regulation, a prescribed standard of operation or performs unsatisfactorily, a disciplinary action may be undertaken by the Institute.

The disciplinary action may vary depending on the history, circumstances and gravity of the offense. The employee is accorded due process in case of violation prior to the imposition of any disciplinary action. It means providing ample opportunity to explain employee side, and giving written notice of the disciplinary action to be imposed and causes for such action.

*“The adoption of a Code of Conduct which represents the rules of behavior is a step toward improving the ethical culture in today’s business world.”*

*Carlo Panetta*

# Code of Ethics and Business Conduct

Pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 6713, known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, and its Implementing Rules, ISSI hereby adopts this Code of Ethics and Business Conduct.

## 1.0 STATEMENT OF POLICY

All ISSI officials and staff are accountable to the people for their overt acts, neglects or omissions while in government service. It is the policy of ISSI to promote a high standard of ethics among its officials and staff who shall at all times be accountable to the people and shall discharge their duties with utmost responsibility, integrity & objectivity, competence and due care; solidarity and teamwork, transparency and uphold public interest over personal interest.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVE

This Code of Ethics and Business Conduct shall govern the conduct and behavior of all ISSI officials and staff. It will serve as their guide in carrying out, with the highest degree, professional and ethical standards of behavior. It is promulgated with the end view of promoting good governance.

## 3.0 COVERAGE

This Code shall cover all ISSI officials and staff whether they hold office or employment in a permanent or regular, temporary, casual or hold-over capacity, whether or not they receive compensation, regardless of amount.

*“Nothing of importance is ever achieved without discipline.  
The discipline you have in your life must  
be determined by your own desires and your own needs.”*

**Bertrand Russell**

## 4.0 NORMS OF CONDUCT

ISSI officials and staff shall observe the following as standards of personal conduct in the discharge and execution of their official duties:

### 4.1. Professionalism

4.1.1. ISSI officials and staff shall perform and discharge their duties with the highest degree of excellence, professionalism, intelligence and skill, attitudes and experience.

4.1.2. ISSI officials and staff shall enter public service with utmost devotion and dedication to duty.

4.1.3. ISSI officials and staff shall endeavor to discourage wrong perceptions of their roles as dispensers or peddlers of undue patronage.

### 4.2 Integrity & Objectivity

4.2.1 ISSI officials and staff shall perform their responsibilities with the highest sense of integrity and imbued with spiritual values.

*“Nothing is more harmful to the service, than the neglect of discipline; for that discipline, more than numbers, give one army superiority over another.”*

***George Washington***

- 4.2.2 ISSI officials and staff shall at all times maintain objectivity, be free of conflict of interest;
- 4.2.3 ISSI officials and staff shall refrain from engaging in any activity that would prejudice their abilities to carry out their duties ethically; and
- 4.2.4 ISSI officials and staff shall avoid making any representation that would likely cause a reasonable person to misunderstand or be deceived.
- 4.2.5 ISSI officials and staff shall at all times maintain objectivity, be free of conflict of interest;
- 4.2.6 ISSI officials and staff shall refrain from engaging in any activity that would prejudice their abilities to carry out their duties ethically; and
- 4.2.7 ISSI officials and staff shall avoid making any representation that would likely cause a reasonable person to misunderstand or be deceived.

“Many of life’s circumstances are created by three choices: the disciplines you choose to keep, the people your choose to be with and the laws you choose to obey.”

**Charles Milhuff**

### 4.3 Solidarity & Teamwork

- 4.3.1 ISSI officials and staff shall promote teamwork and solidarity;
- 4.3.2 ISSI officials and staff shall treat each other with respect, courtesy and without malice, notwithstanding disagreements on issues and policies;
- 4.3.3 ISSI officials and staff shall at all times, deal with their fellow personnel in a manner that respects their ability, experience and dignity.

### 4.4 Transparency

- 4.4.1 ISSI officials and staff shall be transparent in all their official transactions;
- 4.4.2 ISSI officials and staff shall only withhold information prescribed by law, such as but not limited to, those harmful to the public interest, and those covered by executive privilege.

*“Half of life is luck, the other half is discipline—and that’s the important half, for without discipline you wouldn’t know what to do with luck.”*

## 4.5 Confidentiality

4.5.1 ISSI officials and staff shall respect the confidential nature of information obtained from clients in the provision of professional services. This information should not be disclosed to a third party without specific authority or criteria required by law.

## 4.6 Competence and due care

4.6.1 ISSI officials and staff shall perform professional services with due care, competence, and diligence. The ISSI officials and staff has a continuing duty to maintain professional knowledge and skills.

## 4.7 Justness and Sincerity

4.7.1. ISSI officials and staff shall remain true to the people at all times;

4.7.2. ISSI officials and staff must act with justness and sincerity and shall not discriminate against anyone, especially the poor and the underprivileged;

*"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek."*

*Mario Andretti*

- 4.7.3. ISSI officials and staff shall respect the rights of others at all times
- 4.7.4. ISSI officials and staff shall refrain from doing acts contrary to law, good morals, good customs, public policy, public order, public safety and public interest.
- 4.7.5 ISSI officials and staff shall not dispense or extend undue favors on account of their office to their relatives whether by consanguinity or affinity except with respect to appointments of such relatives to positions considered strictly confidential or as members of their personal staff whose terms are co-terminus with theirs.

#### 4.8. Responsiveness to the Public

- 4.8.1. ISSI staff shall extend prompt, courteous and adequate service to the public.
- 4.8.2. Unless otherwise provided by law or when required by the public interest, ISSI staff shall provide information on their policies and procedures in clear and understandable language; ensure openness of information, public consultations and hearings whenever appropriate; encourage suggestions; simplify and systematize policy, rules and procedures; avoid red tape; and develop an understanding and appreciation of the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country, especially in the depressed rural and urban areas.

## 4.9 Ethical behavior

4.9.1 ISSI officials and staff must conduct themselves at all times in an ethical manner to maintain the good reputation of the Institute.

## 5.0 GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT OF ISSI STAFF

### 5.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

5.1.1. ISSI officials and staff shall avoid conflicts of interest at all times.

5.1.2 ISSI officials and staff have a duty to ISSI to be entirely free from the influence of any conflicting interests when they represent the Institute in any dealings, or make any recommendations which may influence and action of the Institute.

5.1.3 The ISSI respects the right of staff to privacy in their personal activities and financial affairs.

5.1.4 Generally speaking, however, the ISSI does not allow conflict of interest to prevail in such situations when an obligation or a situation resulting from an **employee's personal activities or financial** affairs may adversely influence his judgment in the performance of his duty to the Institute.

*'Talent without discipline is like an octopus on roller skates. There's plenty of movement, but you never know if it's going to be forward, backwards, or sideways.'*

*H. Jackson Brown, Jr.*

- 5.1.5 There may well be cases in which an apparent conflict of interest is more theoretical than real, but it is just as important to resolve such doubtful cases promptly. An employee in doubt of his position in a particular case should make a timely disclosure of the facts in his case in consultation with his responsible supervisor.
- 5.2. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND FAVORS— A conflict of interest may arise when an employee, or one of his close relatives, accepts any gifts or favor from any person or organization which is a competitor of the Institute or which has current or prospective business with the Institute as a supplier, customer or contractor, if the acceptance, or the prospect of future gifts or favors, may tend to limit the employee-recipient from acting solely in the best of interests of the Institute in dealings with such **person organization. For this purpose, a “gift” or “favor” includes any gratuitous service, loan, discount, money or article of value, but does not include loans from financial institutions on customary terms, articles ordinarily used for sales promotions, ordinary “business lunches”, or reasonable entertainment consistent with local social and business customs.**
- 5.3 MISUSE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION— A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, or one of his close relatives, uses for his personal gain or for the benefit of others, any confidential information obtained as a result of his employment with the Institute.

- 5.4 DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS — Periodically, employee may be asked to submit a formal statement to the Institute asking for disclosure of any information relating to the possibility of a conflict of interest. Information relating to financial interests and outside work must be reported in writing to the Institute on such statement or in any other appropriate ways.
- 5.5 FINANCIAL INTEREST— A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, directly or indirectly, or one of his close relatives (father, mother, spouse, children, brother or sister), owns a beneficial interest in an organization which is a competitor of the Institute, or which has a current or prospective business with the Institute as a supplier, customer or contractor and when such employee may be able to influence such business with the Institute.
- 5.6 MISAPPROPRIATION OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES— A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, without the knowledge and consent of the Institute, appropriates to himself or to another person or organization the benefit of any business venture, opportunity or potential about which such employee learns or develops in the course of his employment and which is related to any current or prospective business of the Institute.

*"Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be,  
since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be."*

*Thomas á Kempis*

- 5.6 MISAPPROPRIATION OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES— A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, without the knowledge and consent of the Institute, appropriates to himself or to another person or organization the benefit of any business venture, opportunity or potential about which such employee learns or develops in the course of his employment and which is related to any current or prospective business of the Institute.
- 5.7 OUTSIDE WORK— A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, directly or indirectly, or one of his close relatives, serves as director, officer, employee, consultant or agent of an organization which is a competitor of the Institute or which has current or prospective business with the Institute as a supplier, customer or contractor.
- 5.8 DISPOSITION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST – The statements and other information about the existence of any situation which may involve a conflict of interest must be promptly reported directly to the Director. Final disposition of each situation shall be discussed with officials concerned and appropriate records kept of the proceedings of their investigations. In the event of disagreement as to the disposition of the situation, the case shall be submitted to the Executive Committee and ultimately to the Director for final disposition.

*Keep away from people who belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."*

*Mark Twain*

- 5.9 MISUSE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION—A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, or one of his close relatives, uses for his personal gain or for the benefit of others, any confidential information obtained as a result of his employment with the Institute.
- 5.10 DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS— Periodically, employees may be asked to submit a formal statement to the Institute asking for disclosure of any information relating to the possibility of a conflict of interest. Information relating to financial interests and outside work must be reported in writing to the Institute on such statements or in any other appropriate ways.

*“Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself. Never pity yourself. Be a hard master to yourself and be lenient to everybody else.”*

*Henry Ward Beecher*

## 6.0 RULE OF DISCIPLINE ( (Rule XIV)

**SECTION 22. "Administrative offenses with its corresponding penalties** are classified into grave, less grave, and light, depending on the gravity of its nature and effects of said acts on the government service.

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
• Dishonesty	Dismissal		
• Gross neglect of duty	Dismissal		
• Grave misconduct	Dismissal		
• Being notoriously undesirable	Dismissal		
• Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude	Dismissal		
• Falsification of official document	Dismissal		
• Physical or mental incapacity or disability due to vicious habits	Dismissal		
• Engaging directly or indirectly in partisan political activities by one holding non-political office	Dismissal		
<p><i>Amended by CSC Memo Circular No. 19, s. 1999</i>  <i>See ALSO CSC Reso. No. 991936 (Uniform Rules on Adm. Cases in the Civil Service)</i></p>			

*"Success is a matter of understanding and religiously practicing specific, simple habits that always lead to success."*

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receiving for personal use of a fee, gift or other valuable thing in the course of official duties or in connection therewith when such fee, gift or other valuable thing is given by any person in the hope or expectation of receiving a favor or better treatment than that accorded to other persons or committing acts punishable under the anti-graft laws.</li> </ul>	Dismissal		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contracting loans of money or other property from persons with whom the office of the employee has business relations.</li> </ul>	Dismissal		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disloyalty to the Republic of the Philippines and to the Filipino People.</li> </ul>	Dismissal		

*"If we don't discipline ourselves, the world will do it for us."*

*William Feather*

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soliciting or accepting directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan or anything of monetary value which is the course of his official duties or in connection with any operations being regulated by, or any transaction which may be affected by the function of his office. The propriety or impropriety of the foregoing shall be determined by its value, kinship or relationship between giver and receiver and the motivation. A thing of monetary value is one which is evidently or manifestly excessive by its very nature.</li> </ul>	Dismissal		

*"Humility leads to strength and not to weakness. It is the highest form of self-respect to admit mistakes and to make amends for them."*

— **John J. McCloy**

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
• Nepotism as defined in Sec. 59 of Book V, Executive Order # 292	Dismissal		
• Oppression	Suspension of six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
• Disgraceful & immoral conduct	Suspension of six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
• Inefficiency & incompetence in the performance of official duties	Suspension of six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
• Frequent unauthorized absences, loafing or frequent unauthorized absences from duty during regular office hours.	Suspension of six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	

An officer or employee in the civil service shall be considered habitually absent if he incurs unauthorized absences exceeding the allowable 2.5 days monthly leave credit under the leave law for at least three (3) months in a semester or at least three (3) consecutive months during the year.

In case of claim of ill-health, heads of department of agencies are encouraged to verify the validity of such claim and, if not satisfied with the reason given should disapprove the application for sick leave. On the other hand, in cases where an employee absent himself from work before approval of the application, said application should be disapproved.

In the discretion of the Head of any department, agency, or office, any government physician may be authorized to do a spot check on employee who are to be on sick leave.

*"We are what we repeatedly do, excellence then is not an act, but a habit."* -

**Aristotle**  
19

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refusal to perform official duty</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross Insubordination</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct grossly prejudicial to the best interest of the service</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directly or indirectly having financial and material interest in any transaction requiring the approval of his office. Financial and material interest is defined as pecuniary or proprietary interest by</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owning, controlling, managing or accepting employment as officer, employee, consultant, counsel, broker, agent, trustee, or nominee in any private enterprise regulated, supervised or licensed by his office unless expressly allowed by law.</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	

GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging in the private practice of his profession unless authorized by the Constitution, law or regulation, provided that such practice will not conflict with his official function.</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclosing or misusing confidential or classified information officially known to him by reason of his office and not made available to the public, to further his private interest or give undue advantage to anyone or to prejudice the public interest.</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtaining or using any statement filed under the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees for any purpose contrary to morals or public policy or any commercial purpose other than by news and communications media for dissemination to the general public.</li> </ul>	Suspension for six (6) months and one (1) day to one (1) year	Dismissal	

*“Develop the winning edge; small differences in your performance can lead to large differences in your results.”*

**Brian Tracy**

LESS GRAVE OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple neglect of Duty</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple Misconduct</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross Discourtesy in the Course of Official Duties</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross Violation of Existing Civil Service Law and Rules of Serious Nature</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insubordination</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitual Drunkenness</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfair Discrimination in Rendering Public Service Due to Party Affiliation or Preference.</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6 ) months	Dismissal	

LESS GRAVE OFFENSES

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommending any person to any position in a private enterprise which has regular or pending official transaction with his office, unless such recommendation or referral is mandated by (1) Law, or (2) international agreements, commitment and obligation or as part of the function of his office.</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to file Sworn Statements of Assets, Liabilities, and Networth and Disclosure of Business Interest and Financial Connections including those of their spouses and unmarried children under eighteen (18) years of age living in their households.</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6) months	Dismissal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to resign from his position in the private business enterprise within thirty (30) days from assumption of public office when conflict of interest arises and/or failure to divest himself of his shareholdings or interest in private business enterprise within sixty (60) days from assumption of public office when conflict of interest arises for those who are already in the service, the official or employee must either resign or divest himself of said interest with the periods herein-above provided, reckoned from the date when the conflict of interest had arisen.</li> </ul>	Suspension for one (1) month and one (1) day to six (6) months	Dismissal	23

*“It’s not the work that’s hard, it’s the discipline.”*

LIGHT OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discourtesy in the Course of Official Duties</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improper or unauthorized solicitation of contributions from subordinate employees and by teachers or school</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violation of reasonable office rules and regulations which shall include Habitual Tardiness</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
(c.1-1) This includes violation of M.C. 14, s. 1991 (DRESS CODE)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gambling Prohibited by Law</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusal to Render Overtime Service</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30)	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disgraceful, Immoral or Dishonest Conduct Prior to Entering the Service</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrowing Money by Superior Officers from Subordinates</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal

LIGHT OFFENSES			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lending Money at Usurious Rates of Interest</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willful Failure to Pay Just Debts</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<p><b>The term "just debts" shall apply to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. claims adjudicated by a court of law , or</li> <li>2. claims the existence and justness of which are admitted by the debtor</li> </ol>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willful failure to pay taxes due to the government</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30)	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursuit of private business, vocation or profession without the permission required by the civil service rules and regulations</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying for personal interest or gain in legislative halls and offices without authority</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the sale of tickets in behalf of private enterprises that are not intended for charitable or public welfare purposes and even the latter cases if there is no prior authority</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal

*“Nothing is more harmful to the service, than the neglect of discipline; for that discipline, more than numbers, gives one army superiority over another.” - George Washington*

LIGHT OFFENSES

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to act promptly on letters and requests within fifteen (15) days from receipt, except as otherwise provided in the rules implementing the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to process documents and complete action on documents and papers within a reasonable time from preparation thereof, except as otherwise provided in the rules implementing the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Officials and Employees</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to attend to anyone who wants to avail himself of the services of the office, or act promptly and expeditiously on public transactions</li> </ul>	Reprimand	Suspension for one (1) to thirty (30) days	Dismissal

*"I have learned silence from the talkative, tolerance from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strangely, I am ungrateful to these teachers"*

*Kahlil Gibran*



## OFFICE ETTIQUETTE AND DECORUM

Office Etiquette or Office Manners is about conducting yourself respectfully and courteously in the office or workplace

First impressions are important! *You are the ambassador/s of the Institute.*

The Institute desires to create an office environment that is dignified, pleasant, and conducive to serious professional work. Such an environment calls for the adoption and observance of certain standards of propriety, refinement, and formality that, along with competence and moral integrity, mark a true professional.

Employees are encouraged to foster a work atmosphere conducive to productivity. They should perform whatever tasks they have in hand with order, intensity, and constancy and upon the completion of one task, should take up the next.

*Personality* – **It is always to the employee's advantage to be neatly groomed and tidy in appearance.** Good health should also be maintained.

Dress Appropriately - Remember that the Institute is not a party place and the staff should dress in a way that commands respect both from colleagues and clients. The dress code has a strong influence in establishing the trust that our client places in our abilities in giving them **their money's worth.**

- A. Program Managers, Program Coordinators, Administrative Support Staff, Resource Persons are encouraged to wear proper attire during the conduct of the training, seminar/workshops, and conferences.
- B. Wearing of shorts, T-Shirts and slippers shall not be allowed during the conduct of the training.

**One's personality is also reflected in the orderliness of one's desk and working space.** The Institute as a whole should always be presentable not only to guests but to employees who daily come in it.

*Professionalism*, both in conduct and in work accomplishment always works for a positive office environment.

1. Staff should keep in mind that they are in a professional school and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting their status as professionals.
2. Courtesy to lecturers, members of the Institute, colleagues and others is expected.
3. Staff shall always act with fairness, tolerance and moderation and shall respect the opinions and feelings of others.

*Whereabouts* - employees should inform their superiors of their whereabouts or itineraries daily to insure continuity of communications.

*Use of Computers* – **ISSI's personal computers are to be used exclusively for business purpose unless authorized otherwise.** Permission will be given for the use of personal computer during non-business so long as employees record all time for which they will be charged and supply their own diskette.

*Use of Telephone* - in order to keep telephone lines open for business calls, employees are discouraged to make personal calls. Personal unavoidable calls when taken or made should be for the shortest possible time only. **The use of the telephone by outsiders in employees' respective areas is likewise discouraged, unless it is in connection with the Institute's business.**

All telephone calls should be answered promptly and all inquiries handled courteously. Greet the caller pleasantly, courteously and be always at their service.

Determine what the caller wants. If you cannot supply the needed info, transfer the call to the proper person, or jot down the number **and the message. Close with a happy ending. "Thank you for calling"** is always in good taste.

*Use of Office Equipment* - non-employees should be refused politely if they request use of office equipment except in the use of the telephone. They shall allow the use of office equipment only in cases where the use is to generate documents in relation with their business with us.

*Punctuality* - Being punctual is very important especially if you have an appointment. It shows that you respect the time of your colleagues and in turn it will compel them to respect your time too. The popular saying that **would fit in this situation is that 'Time and tide wait for no one'.** Lead by an example and everything else will fall into place.

*Stay Away from Gossip* - **Office gossip can make or break someone's career.** Also, it can cause a lot of unnecessary stress which should be avoided at all costs. You would not want someone to gossip about you and neither will the next person. In some cases, if the source of some malicious gossip can be traced back to you, then your job can be in jeopardy.

*Refrain from Being Loud* - You must not be loud in the professional work environment, be it while you are on the phone or while talking to a colleague. If you have received a call on your mobile phone then it will be a good idea to walk down to the corridor to take the call. This is especially recommended if it is a personal call. Taking care of this will prove that you respect the work that your colleagues are doing by not disturbing them with your loudness.

*Avoid Strong Smells* - This may sound strange but a lot of people who work in very small office spaces will be able to appreciate this piece of advice. Avoid using strong perfumes. You can end up suffocating the entire place with your perfume which is closed and the air conditioners usually do not work efficiently. Secondly, some people would also advice you to avoid bring strong smelling lunch like fish to office especially if you are planning to have it at your desk.

*Ask Before Borrowing* - If you are in good terms with your colleague then it may appear alright if you borrowed a stapler or a marker from their desk without asking. Well, the fact of the matter is that it is not alright. It is imperative that you ask and then borrow. This attitude of yours will ensure that people also treat your things with the same respect and your things are not missing (read borrowed) when you get back to your seat after a meeting.

These are just some basic etiquette that you can follow in a professional work environment. However, it is more important to ensure that to behave decently and courteously. I truly believe that if you treat people in the way that you would like them to treat you, then it is more than half the battle won and people usually end up respecting to equally.





## CUSTOMER SERVICE/RELATIONS

Customer service is an integral part of our job and should not be seen as an extension of it. Our clients or customers are our most vital asset. Without them, we would not and could not exist in business. When you satisfy our customers, they not only help us grow by continuing to do business with you, but recommend you to friends and associates.

## The Ten Commandments of Customer Service

1. Know who is boss. We are in business to service customer needs, and we can only do that if we know what are our customers want. When we truly listen to our customers, they let us know what they want and how we can provide good service. Never forget that the customer pays our salary, honorarium and bonus and makes our job possible.
2. Be a good listener. Take the time to identify customer needs by asking questions and concentrating on what the customer is really saying. Listen to their words, tone of voice, body language, and most importantly, how they feel. Beware of making assumptions - thinking you intuitively know what the customer wants. Do you know what three things are most important to your customer?
3. Identify and anticipate needs. Customers don't buy products or services. They buy good feelings and solutions to problems. Most customer needs are emotional rather than logical. The more you know your customers, the better you become at anticipating their needs. Communicate regularly so that you are aware of problems or upcoming needs.

4. Make customers feel important and appreciated. Treat them as individuals. Always use their name and find ways to compliment them, but be sincere. People value sincerity. It creates good feeling and trust. Think about ways to generate good feelings about doing business with you. Customers are very sensitive and know whether or not you really care about them. Thank them every time you get a chance.

During meetings or negotiations be sure that your body language conveys sincerity. Your words and actions should be congruent.

5. Help customers understand your systems. Your organization may have the world's best systems for getting things done, but if customers don't understand them, they can get confused, impatient and angry. Take time to explain how your systems work and how they simplify transactions. Be careful that your systems don't reduce the human element of your organization.
6. Appreciate the power of "Yes". Always look for ways to help your customers. When they have a request (as long as it is reasonable) tell them that you can do it. Figure out how afterwards. Look for ways to make doing business with you easy. Always do what you say you are going to do.
7. Know how to apologize. When something goes wrong, apologize. It's easy and customers like it. The customer may not always be right, but the customer must always win. Deal with problems immediately and let customers know what you have done. Make it simple for customers to complain. Value their complaints. As much as we dislike it, it gives us an opportunity to improve. Even if customers are having a bad day, go out of your way to make them feel comfortable.

8. Give more than expected. Since the future of all companies lies in keeping customers happy, think of ways to elevate yourself above the competition. Consider the following:
  - What can you give customers that they cannot get elsewhere?
  - What can you do to follow-up and thank people even when they don't buy?
  - What can you give customers that is totally unexpected?
  
9. Get regular feedback. Encourage and welcome suggestions about how you could improve. There are several ways in which you can find out what customers think and feel about your services.
  - Listen carefully to what they say.
  - Check back regularly to see how things are going.
  - Provide a method that invites constructive criticism, comments and suggestions.
  
10. Treat employees well. Employees are your internal customers and need a regular dose of appreciation. Thank them and find ways to let them know how important they are. Treat your employees with respect and chances are they will have a higher regard for customers. Appreciation stems from the top. Treating customers and employees well is equally important.

#### REFERENCES:

- Friedman, Susan A., The Ten Commandments of Great **Customer Service**, **It's About.com Newsletter**.
- Republic Act No. 6713, known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.
- Executive Order No. 292





UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
Institute for Small-Scale Industries  
E. Virata Hall, E. Jacinto Street, UP Campus, Diliman, Quezon City 1101  
9287076 to 79 local 158; 9206923 (fax)