Ethics and Morals

Ethics and **morals** relate to "right" and "wrong" conduct. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different: **Ethics** refer to rules provided by an external source, e.g., codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions. **Morals** refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong.

In other words, ethics are external standards that are provided by institutions, groups, or a culture to which an individual belongs. For example, lawyers, policemen, and doctors all have to follow an ethical code laid down by their profession, regardless of their own feelings or preferences. Ethics can also be considered a social system or a framework for acceptable behavior. On the other hand, morals - while also influenced by culture or society- are personal principles created and upheld by individuals themselves.

Ethics versus Morals Comparison Chart

Drop and drag the text into the table below

A person strictly following Ethical Principles may not have any Morals at all. Likewise, one could violate Ethical Principles within a given system of rules in order to maintain Moral integrity.

Ethics are dependent on others for definition. They tend to be consistent within a certain context, but can vary between contexts.

Because we believe in something being right or wrong.

Greek word "ethos", meaning "character"

Morality transcends cultural norms.

Social system - External

Principles or habits with respect to right or wrong conduct. While morals also prescribe dos and don'ts, morality is ultimately a personal compass of right and wrong.

Usually consistent, although can change if an individual's beliefs change.

Latin word "mos", meaning "custom"

Because society says it is the right thing to do.

The rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions or a particular group or culture.

Ethics are governed by professional and legal guidelines within a particular time and place.

Individual - Internal

	Ethics	Morals
What are they?		
Where do they come from?		
Why we do it?		
Flexibility		
The "Gray"		
Origin		
Acceptability		

Corporate Social Responsibility[1]

The term **ethics** refers to moral beliefs about what is right or wrong. The related adjective is **ethical**. Some frequent word combinations with ethical include:

	behaviour	doing things that are morally right
	lapse	temporary failure to act in the correct way
	dilemma	a choice between two actions that might both be morally wrong
ethical	standard	a rule for moral behaviour in a particular area
	stance	a stated opinion about the right thing to do in a particular situation
	issue	an area where moral behaviour is important

Accountability and transparency

Individuals should be **accountable** – completely open about what they do and able to explain their actions. All dealings should be **transparent**, not hidden or secret, and explainable in a way that can be understood by outsiders. Companies may say that their managers and employees should **act with integrity** and, more formally, **probity**, and that they do not tolerate any form of **professional misconduct**. People expect the behavior of organizations to be completely open and honest, or, as we say, **above board**.

Corporate social responsibility

Companies have long had **codes of ethics** and **codes of conduct** saying how their managers and employees should behave. Now they are looking at these issues in more systematic ways. They are designating executives to oversee the whole area of **corporate social responsibility (CSR)**, which relates to the following areas, among others:

1. Employment and community: they want to pay attention to things that affect the well-being of everyone, not just their employees, in the areas where the company has its plants, offices and other activities.
2. **Environmental protection**: they want to conduct business in ways that **protect the environment**, for example to ensure that the company does not cause **pollution** of the air, rivers, etc., and does not endanger plant and animal life or contribute to **climate change**.
3. Winning new business: they want, for example, to get business without engaging in **corruption**, for example without offering or receiving/accepting **bribes**.

Companies want to be seen as good corporate **citizens**, with activities that are beneficial not only for their **stakeholders**, but for the community and society **as a whole**. **Task 1:** Match the two parts of these sentences:

1. We are committed to the highest	a. stance, we are always looking to reduce the amount of paper we use.
2. Is ethical	b. lapses came to light, including city managers hiring their relatives.
3. There were questionable ethical	c. behavior in business affairs different from everyday behavior in the family or community?
4. They tightened the city's ethics policy after a string of ethical	d. dilemma of whether to disclose to a buyer that the house might soon be demolished **to make way for** a new road.
5. As a bank with a strong ethical	e. standards and to promoting our medications only for approved uses, the company spokesperson said.
6. He's dealing with the ethical	f. issues, including whether he helped a company that hired his brother as a lobbyist.