

Baldrige Glossary **HD**: Ethical Behavior

Ethical Behavior

The term “*ethical behavior*” refers to how an organization ensures that all its decisions, [actions](#), and [stakeholder](#) interactions conform to the organization’s moral and professional principles. These principles should support all applicable laws and regulations and are the foundation for the organization’s culture and [values](#). They distinguish “right” from “wrong.”

[Senior leaders](#) should act as role models for these principles of [behavior](#). The principles apply to all people involved in the organization, from temporary [employees](#) to members of the board of directors, and need to be communicated and reinforced on a regular basis. Although there is no universal model for [ethical behavior](#), [senior leaders](#) should ensure that the organization’s [mission](#) and [vision](#) are [aligned](#) with its [ethical](#) principles. [Ethical behavior](#) should be practiced with all [stakeholders](#), including the [workforce](#), shareholders, [customers](#), [partners](#), suppliers, and the organization’s local community.

While some organizations may view their [ethical](#) principles as boundary conditions restricting [behavior](#), well-designed and clearly articulated [ethical](#) principles should [empower](#) people to make [effective](#) decisions with great confidence.

Note: [Blue](#) words above are hyperlinks to other [GLOSSARY HD](#) terms and their definitions.

I am pleased to offer the [GLOSSARY HD](#) as a no charge service to Baldrige Criteria users worldwide - [Paul Steel](#)

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