

The domain of personal finance & the environment

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Individuals, as good governance assets, try and take good care of all three domains: those associated with personal care and development; those associated with family and other social relationships; and finally, those associated with personal finance, the environment, and broader community affairs.

In all these domains, individuals can be guided and helped by clear ethical guidelines that can make them grounded on the “good” and proper side of the ethical divide.

On the third domain, which covers personal finance, the physical environment, and the wider community where individuals live, the ethical guidelines may cover the following areas:

- Respect for the personal dignity of other individuals. Everyone has to be treated as persons, with freedom and entitlement to basic, inalienable rights. No harassment of any kind. Indeed, all other individuals need to be helped to develop all the potentials and talents for doing good that they have been endowed with.
- Commitment to the common good. This is where generous selflessness comes in along with an individual person’s creative energies to contribute to the general welfare and the good of all others in the enterprise and in the wider community. Any unselfish and uncaring act is to be avoided since that act can bring down the level of general welfare; conversely, any small deed, which is proper and “good,” can raise the temperature and quality of life in the enterprise and the community.
- Subsidiarity. This is creating a wide enough space for small groups and teams within the enterprise and the community to make decisions on their own and to undertake initiatives of good governance and responsible citizenship. Those decisions and initiatives are encouraged, and may be favored with assistance (or “subsidies”) from higher and bigger bodies.
- Solidarity. This has become a familiar term, but it bears repeating over and over: Individuals have to be encouraged to reach out to others in small teams and working groups that commit to promote the good that is common to all, and to create opportunities that are open to all.

The ethical guidelines concerning these four areas may take as a frame of reference globally-issued guidelines that can be adapted to local circumstances, taking into account the specific conditions within an enterprise and local community. These guidelines also have to be made to evolve over time: Based on actual cases, some of the guidelines may be “tweaked” and made more concrete so as to be more helpful to individuals working in any given enterprise, and who may have been confronted with specific situations that everyone else can learn from.

As with all guidelines, individuals bring them to actual day-to-day decisions and actions as they confront personal issues associated with personal finance, care of the physical environment around them, and civic action in observance of the “bayanihan” spirit towards the local community. From these many daily decisions and actions, proper habits are formed, and a good governance character eventually emerges.

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