

# Power & Ethics

COMM 406

Chapters 9 & 14

# PRSA Code of Ethics

# Advocacy

- We serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent. We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.

# Honesty

- We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public.

# Expertise

- We acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience. We advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education. We build mutual understanding, credibility, and relationships among a wide array of institutions and audiences.

# Independence

- We provide objective counsel to those we represent. We are accountable for our actions.

# Loyalty

- We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest.

# Fairness

- We deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public. We respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.



# Ethical Scenarios

Instructions: Describe the ethical principles that should guide your actions in each scenario using the PRSA Code of Ethics. There are 13 scenarios total. You should number your responses.



# Scenario 1

- A member representing a ski manufacturer gives a pair of expensive racing skis to a sports magazine columnist, to influence the columnist to write favorable articles about the product.

## Scenario 2

- A member employed by a “client organization” shares helpful information with a counseling firm that is competing with others for the organization’s business.

# Scenario 3

- A member spreads malicious and unfounded rumors about a competitor in order to alienate the competitor's clients and employees in a ploy to recruit people and business.

# Scenario 4

- Lying by omission: A practitioner for a corporation knowingly fails to release financial information, giving a misleading impression of the corporation's performance.

# Scenario 5

- Front groups: A member implements “grass roots” campaigns or letter-writing campaigns to legislators on behalf of undisclosed interest groups.

# Scenario 6

- A member entertains a government official beyond legal limits and/or in violation of government reporting requirements.

# Scenario 7

- A member discovers inaccurate information disseminated via a website or media kit and does not correct the information.



# Scenario 8

- A member deceives the public by employing people to pose as volunteers to speak at public hearings and participate in “grass roots” campaigns.

# Scenario 9

- The member represents a “competitor company” or a “conflicting interest” without informing a prospective client.

# Scenario 10

- A member intentionally leaks proprietary information to the detriment of some other party.

# Scenario 11

- A member initially assigns some questionable client work to a non-member practitioner to avoid the ethical obligation of PRSA membership.

# Scenario 12

- The member fails to disclose that he or she has a strong financial interest in a client's chief competitor.

# Scenario 13

- A member changes jobs, takes confidential information, and uses that information in the new position to the detriment of the former employer.