

CODE OF ETHICS

A FU⁺UREPLUS GUIDE

WHAT IS A CODE OF ETHICS?

A **Code of Ethics** - also known as an 'ethical code' or 'code of business' - is a statement that sets out the **ethical principles** that guide your business operations. It may include your vision, mission and values, but should go beyond these principles to provide more detail for stakeholders on your commitments to **maintaining the highest standards of business conduct and practices**.

Common issues that sit within the Code of Ethics include honest and ethical conduct; health and safety commitments; treatment of employees, customers and suppliers; sustainability; environmental commitments, and social responsibility.

YOUR CODE



Writing a **Code of Ethics** is a great opportunity for your CEO and/or leadership team to focus minds on the standards they would like the company to uphold.

While a **Code of Ethics** is often not required of companies by law, many organisations choose to adopt one in order to help identify and characterise the type of business they are to their stakeholders.

Your Code should be guided by the principles you uphold as a business - they will be different and unique for every organisation.

Make sure your Code is **clearly laid out** and **easy to communicate**. It can be structured as short paragraphs or statements, with up-to-date links to any separate policies mentioned within it.

Many companies sit their Code of Ethics alongside their **Employee Code of Conduct** or as part of their **Employee Handbook**, but it can also be a standalone document and is often published on a company's website or in its annual reporting.

We specifically ask whether your Code is made public in order to reinforce that doing so will demonstrate your commitment to transparency, accountability, and ethical business practices.

WHAT SHOULD THE CODE COVER?

- + OPENING STATEMENT**

We suggest this includes your company's vision, mission and values, as well as a message from your CEO or Founders, endorsing and reinforcing the principles of honest and ethical business conduct.
- + LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

Detail your commitment to compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements in every territory in which you operate.
- + RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION**

Outline your commitment to responsible innovation, product safety and quality.
- + ENVIRONMENTAL CARE**

Detail your commitment to respect and protect the environment, and to minimise the impact your operations have on both nature and the climate, including any emissions reductions commitments.
- + HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITMENTS**

Detail your commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace for your employees.
- + TRANSPARENT ACCOUNTING**

Outline your commitment to maintaining proper management of financial accounts and providing honest and transparent financial statements.

WHAT SHOULD THE CODE COVER?

TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES



Detail your commitment to human rights, diversity, inclusion and equity, including fair pay and your commitment to ensuring employees are able to carry out their duties free from harassment.

TREATMENT OF CUSTOMERS



Outline your commitment to not misleading your customers; to providing outstanding customer service, and to building long-term partnerships.

TREATMENT OF SUPPLIERS



Detail your commitment to honesty and openness in your dealings with your suppliers; to providing fair and reasonable payment terms, and to working with them to ensure ethical and environmental standards are maintained throughout your supply chain.

ANTI-CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY



Reinforce your commitment to anti-corruption and bribery principles.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1

It is important that your Code of Ethics serves as a reference point for employees. Including it in your **Employee Handbook** will help to ensure it is seen and accessed by everybody.

2

Lay out how violations of the Code will be handled. The code should also review the proper channels for **reporting misconduct** and include a link to your **Whistle-blowing Policy**.

3

Consider how your Code relates to both your Employee and Supplier Codes of Conduct. These should be **three separate documents**, but should mirror many of the expectations.

NEED MORE HELP?

As an additional service we can supply a structured template for a Code of Ethics. We also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support, for example writing a bespoke Code of Ethics from scratch.

Please let us know if you would like more information – we would be happy to provide a quote for either service:
team@future-plus.co.uk

