Code of Ethics

2015

(5th version)

Drawn up by: Humane Technology Work Group

<u>Code of Ethics for designers and manufacturers</u>
<u>of humane technical products</u>

1. Introduction

Technology exerted and increasingly exerts a profound influence on the life of man and his environment. Man fully benefitted from this in the past and the present by means of technical ingenuity. But the flip side of the coin is that man has become largely dependent on ever-advancing technical and technological developments. In many cases, technology resulted in inhuman situations caused by human actions.

The Humane Technology Work Group provides this code of ethics to try and contribute to achieving "humane technology". This is characterised by harmony between a meaningful development of man and the world in the intention, execution and application of required technological products.

2. Goal

This code of ethics is aimed at managers, designers and manufacturers who are involved in the project management, the design and the production of "humane" technological products. The code will appeal to the awareness and moral responsibility of these persons in the process of creating humane products.

3. Principles

3.1 The "Characteristics of Humane Technology" as defined by the Humane Technology Work Group.

3.2 We have opted for a code (a check-list) in the form of questions, as this is considered the best solution for free moral judgement, fitting the current era.

3.3 The code must not be contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and national laws.

3.4 The code is intended for general use and is not focused on one particular industry.

3.5 The principle is that the necessary skills and qualifications for the work are present.

3.6 It is assumed that the statutory working conditions are being met.

4. Code of ethics

This code is formulated as questions for the following field:
- Corporate responsibility;
- Responsibility for the present and future well-being of people and society;
- Responsibility for the current and future environment;
- Responsible handling of a moral dilemma.

4.1. Corporate responsibility;

4.1.1. Have there been consultations, both internal within the company and external with the user/consumer, regarding the desirability or necessity (in the broadest sense: cultural, social, economic, moral) of the technical product, notwithstanding the possibility of its realisation?

4.1.2. Does the use of capital primarily pursue the creation of a humane technological product, or is the motive primarily the pursuit of financial gain?

4.1.3. Is the product only being manufactured with self-enrichment as underlying motive?

4.1.4. Is the product only being manufactured with abuse of power as underlying motive?

4.1.5.   Is the product only being manufactured for the reputation of the company and personnel involved?

4.1.6.   Is the staff involved in the company's objective to create a humane technological product and is it made clear to them what it means to introduce it to people and society?

4.1.7.   Does the staff involved in the realisation of the technological product has good working conditions (according to ILO recommendations*)? and is the staff being appropriately awarded?

4.1.8.   Does the organisation of the company offer employees the freedom to independently make their personal contribution to the company?

4.1.9.   Are the safety hazards during the production, use and disposal of the product being considered?

4.1.10. Is the company willing to be co-accountable for unforeseen consequences in the production and use of the product throughout its life cycle or a substantial part of it? Does the company have specific measures in place in this regard?

4.1.11. Is the product available for those who need it and at an affordable price? Is fair and complete information about the product being provided to the user/consumer?

4.1.12. Is the proper functioning of the product for a reasonable period guaranteed to the user/consumer?

4.1.13. Can the user/consumer give feedback about their experiences with the product?

4.1.14. Are the inventions of others respected as intellectual contributions to the creation of the product?

4.1.15. Are there measures in place to prevent dishonesty or fraud in the profession?

4.1.16. Does the design of the product allow the user to focus on the primary function(s) of the product or is the user being encouraged or forced to focus on also included secondary functions/features that are not essential to the main function(s)?

4.1.17. Are there measures and/or procedures within the organisation to allow reporting of abuses in the process of the creation of the product?

*See appendix 1

4.2   Responsibility for the present and future well-being of people and society

4.2.1   Has the impact of the product on the user and his physical, psychological and mental state been considered? Can it, for example, cause dependence or symptoms of addiction?

4.2.2   Does the use and/or application of the product violate applicable common cultural values?

4.2.3   Is the integrity of the user harmed by the use and/or application of the product?

4.2.4   How does the product contribute to the user's personal development?

4.2.5   Is the user's privacy, e.g. his personal data, being observed in the design, production or use of the product?

4.2.6   Are there rules and/or procedures in place within the organisation to prevent the disclosure of personal data to third parties without the permission of the person(s) involved?

4.3   Responsibility for the current and future environment; reduction of the "footprint".

4.3.1   Are the raw materials and materials intended for the technical product purchased from suppliers with an undisputed reputation for environmentally friendly extraction and trading of these commodities?

4.3.2   Are sustainable technical solutions being sought for the development and manufacturing0of the technical product, such as saving on and reusing resources and tools and energy?

4.3.3   Are adverse effects on living organisms at all levels of the environment being considered?

4.3.4   Are the effects of the release of unobservable, harmful phenomena, such as radio frequency radiation, radioactive radiation, and energetic electric and magnetic fields being considered?

4.3.5   Does the company only address current safety norms observing only the effect on the physical constitution of living beings with respect to these phenomena? Or does the company also address standards observing psychosomatic effects?

4.3.6   Are the environmental and health risks of using nanomaterials estimated in advance, and if is this not the case, is the company willing to do so?

4.3.7   Does the product reduce the environmental impact; it is, as such, fully re-usable (applying the "cradle to cradle" principle)?

4.3.8   Has an attempt been made to make use of completely degradable materials from which the product is made?

4.3.9   Is a maximum life cycle of the product being deliberately pursued? Is not only the extension of the life cycle of the product being considered, but also a longer proper appearance? (This is to prevent "throw-away behaviour" of the user of a still properly functioning product).

4.3.10 Are, where possible, sustainable technical innovations and solutions based on natural principles? (e.g. by imitation of natural cycles and functional and material efficiency of ecosystems and natural habitats).

4.3.11 Are measures taken to make users/consumers aware of their impact on the environment and the finite nature of Earth's resources?

4.3.12 Are in the development and manufacturing of the product harmful effects on air, water and soil prevented or limited?

4.4   Responsible handling of a moral dilemma.

Although moral dilemmas can have different natures, there is always a tension between the performance of an assignment or task and the official and accepted rules, codes and laws, or professional integrity, the social insight or personal conscience of a person. The following considerations can be made:

4.4.1   Has the precautionary principle been applied, i.e. has to the best of people's knowledge and ability it been ensured that any risks and adverse side effects of the application can be socially justified by the objective and the expected benefits?

4.4.2   Have people, in case of a permanent dilemma, consulted with involved colleagues, supervisors or counsellor in the organisation, during which the interests of those involved have been respected as much as possible?

4.4.3   Does personal conscience outweigh all other considerations? Are people in that case willing to forego participation in the realisation of the product? Are people willing to disclose abuses to the public, regardless of the consequences?

Appendix 1: Recommendations working conditions International Labour Organization (ILO) [mail van Diederick 23 sept 2015]