Tests for Evaluation Actions

Compiled by the National Institute for Engineering Ethics

1. Harms Test
Do the benefits outweigh the harms, short and long term?

2. Reversibility Test
Would I think this was a good choice if I traded places?

3. Colleague Test
What would my professional colleagues say?

4. Legality Test
Would my choice violate a law or policy of my employer?

5. Publicity Test
How would my choice look on the front page of tomorrow’s newspaper?
6. Common Practice Test
What if everyone behaved this way?

7. Wise Relative Test
What would my wise Aunt Tilly or Uncle Joe do and would I want them to know what I am doing?

8. The Hiding Test
Do I want people to know what I am doing?

9. The Self-Respect Test
How will I feel about myself after making this choice?

10. Other Tests - ???

These tests promote decisions based upon how we would feel about what we do, or if someone would know or if we would get caught. However ideally the best decision is to take the right action because it is the right action to take – rather than the fear of consequences.