



# Ethics on the Move Part 4

*YOUR KEY TO THE TAX COMMUNITY*

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- Caryn is CA(SA and RA, who has lectured extensively at UKZN (and other institutes) specialising in Advanced Financial Accounting, returning to this space in 2023. Subsequently, Caryn specialised in facilitating Ethics conversations, keeping assurance practitioners updated and unpacking legislation for the financial sector.
- Caryn has conducted training for accountants since 2006 on various topics and has consulted on a number of technical issues. Since January 2011, Caryn has focussed on being a technical freelance consultant and trainer to the accounting profession.
- Caryn has worked extensively with analysts, directors and other users of financials to interpret, prepare, analyse and forecast information based on these financials.
- Caryn is also a member of the following SAICA bodies and committees: Eastern Region Council, National Small and Medium Practices Forum, the Accounting Practices Committee, and Chairs the Legal Practices and Accountants Committee and the Midlands District Association



# Clear Messages: Effective Communication in Ethical Decision-Making

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

George Bernard Shaw, Nobel Prize-winning playwright



For values or guiding principles to be truly effective they have to be verbs. It's not "integrity," it's "always do the right thing." It's not "innovation," it's "look at the problem from a different angle." Articulating our values as verbs gives us a clear idea - we have a clear idea of how to act in any situation.

— *Simon Sinek* —

A photograph of Simon Sinek, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is holding a black microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. Overlaid on the image is a quote in white and yellow text.

**Leadership** is a way of thinking, a way of acting and, most importantly, a **way of communicating.**

— *Simon Sinek* —

# Importance of Perspective

**Positive  
Viewpoint**



**Negative  
Viewpoint**



**Everything depends on  
the way you see 🙌**

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## *African Proverb*

A flea can trouble a lion more  
than a lion can trouble a flea.

### *Meaning*

Don't underestimate the  
significant impact of seemingly  
minor things.

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@BLACKGIRLWHOMANIFESTS / ART OF POETS

# Ethics in Practice

## Why Ethics Matters for Tax Practitioners

- **Ethics in Practice:** Ethical principles are essential in maintaining client trust and upholding professional integrity.
- **Impacts of Ethical Lapses:** Failing to adhere to ethical standards can lead to reputational damage, legal consequences, and loss of client confidence.
- **Foundation of Client Relations:** Ethics build a stable foundation for trust and long-term client relationships, key in tax advisory.

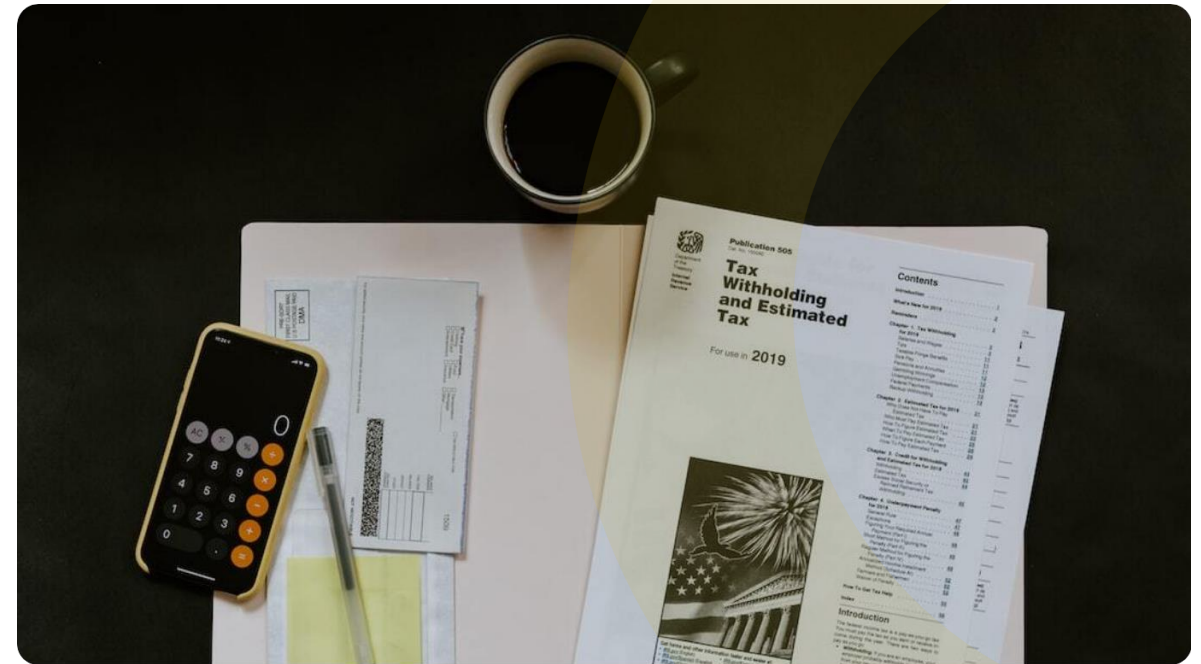


Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

# Ethics Need to Be Acted On

## Aligning Principles with Practice

- We can be as ethical as a saint, but if we don't speak up and act accordingly....
- **Principles Aligned with Actions:** Ethics in tax practice means acting consistently with professional standards, even without oversight. **'The true test of a man's character is what he does when no one is watching.'** - John Wooden
- **Cultivating Ethical Culture:** Promote workplace values where ethical standards are part of daily operations and decision-making.
- **Accountability:** Encourage team accountability for maintaining and promoting ethical behaviors.



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# Transparency and Honesty

## The Foundation of Client Trust

- **Building Client Confidence:** Transparency in our work fosters trust, helping clients feel secure in financial dealings. 'Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.' - Thomas Jefferson
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Strict adherence to regulations protects both the practitioner and client from legal risks.
- **Consequences of Dishonesty:** Failing to maintain transparency risks penalties, reputational harm, and client trust.



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# Effective Communication Skills:

- Techniques for clear and concise communication in reporting.
- How to communicate complex financial information to non-financial stakeholders.

Listening  
is not simply **hearing**  
the words that are spoken.

Listening is understanding  
**why** the words were spoken.

@simonsinek

# The Role of Active Listening

## Essential for Ethical Client Communication



### **Listening to Understand**

Active listening enables practitioners to fully grasp clients' needs.

**'Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.'** -  
**Stephen R. Covey**



### **Encouraging Open Dialogue**

Creating an environment where clients feel safe to voice concerns fosters trust.



### **Clarifying Misunderstandings**

Ensures clients are accurately informed and comfortable with the advice given.

# Building Trust Through Communication

## Establishing Credibility and Reliability



### **Consistency in Messaging**

Reliable, consistent communication establishes practitioner credibility.



### **Demonstrating Competence**

Clear and informed communication shows expertise and builds trust.



### **Strengthening Client Relationships**

Trust leads to deeper client loyalty and stronger referrals.

# Crisis Communication:

- Having difficult conversations
- Preparing for and managing stakeholder reactions.
- The impact of effective communication on client relationships.

# Legal Implications of Communication:

Understanding the legal responsibilities of accountants in communication.

Risks of miscommunication and misinformation.

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# Managing and dealing with staff

- Setting expectations

Questions and Thank you!