



Ethics in Government

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First goal

Community Chest

**GET OUT
OF JAIL, FREE**



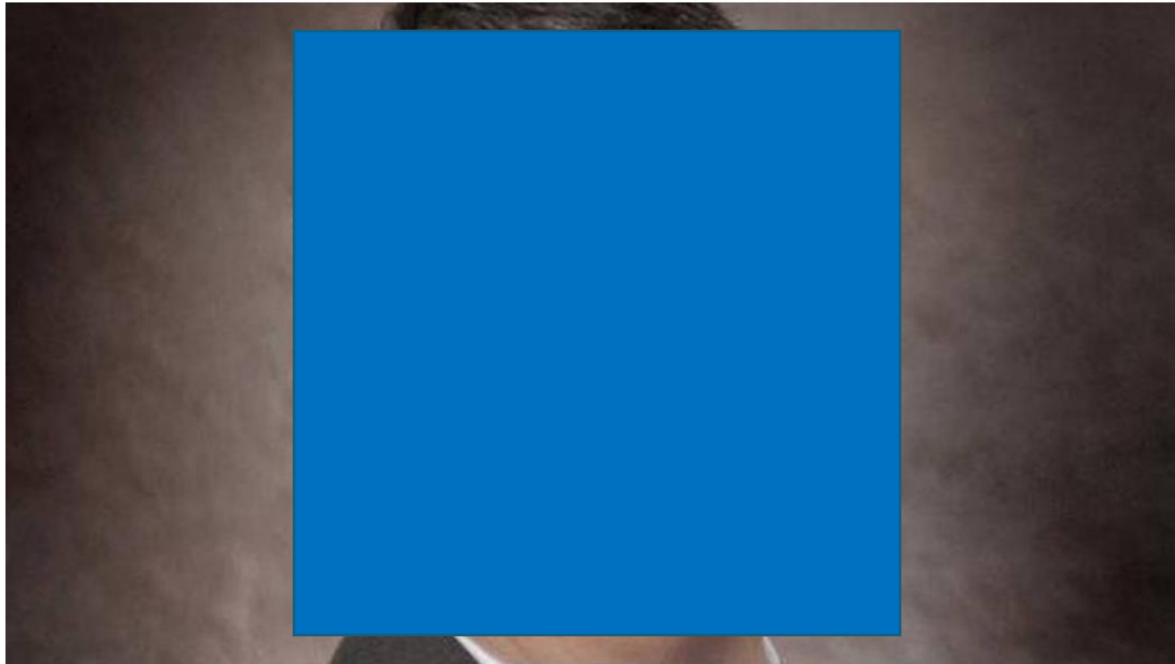
THIS CARD MAY BE KEPT UNTIL NEEDED OR SOLD

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Please don't end up on a slide...



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CRIME

County treasurer charged with misusing public funds July 2018





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 County Treasurer  charged with seven felony counts of misuse of public funds.



Rita Crundwell



Most common ethics/corruption problems in Idaho*

- Embezzlement of public funds
 - Dipping into petty cash
 - Using government purchasing cards for personal use
 - Depositing checks into a personal account
 - Submitting false invoices to be paid to personal account
- Open Meetings/Executive Sessions

How Ethics Problems Happen

Information Problems

- “Sector Confusion”
- Didn’t know policy
- Believed they had implicit permission

Reasoning Problems

- Ends justify the means
- Justifications

Loyalty Problems

- Right v Right choices

Information Problems

- “Sector confusion”

open meetings

open records

disclosure requirements

receipt of gifts

accounting for expenses

Case study: Conflicting Loyalties

- Your best friend is an employee of the County. In a meeting over potential budget cuts, you learn that her job might be eliminated. As the meeting ends, the Dept. head reminds everyone that the meeting is CONFIDENTIAL and everyone nods yes. On your way home, you remember that your friend is just about to put a down payment on a new house. Do you tell her about the job cut possibility?

Thinking problems

- Ends justify the means

“working around” bothersome rules or laws to
get a good thing done

Protecting the jurisdiction or colleague by
covering something up

Thinking problems

- Justifications

“We aren’t paid enough so...”

“That’s how they do it at the state, the city, etc.”

“That’s how we’ve always done it”

“Just this one time...”

Desperation?

- Addictions: gambling, drugs, drinking, shopping...

Case Study: The Vase

- You are an County official. A few days before Christmas, a package arrives at your office. Inside is a card from the vice-president of a large corporation in your city. The company has never done business with the county. The card says, “You are doing a great job for our county and we just wanted you to know that we appreciate it. We hope you will accept this token of our gratitude.”
- You open the package and find a beautiful crystal vase that you estimate to be worth \$75 to \$100. Do you accept the vase? Would your answer be different if you worked for a private company?

The “Gift Equation,” or why it is problematic to accept gifts

The “Giver”

- May think they’ve “bought you”
- May tell everyone
- May be harmless



You (the only part you control)

- Know what the gift means to you
- Know you can’t be



The Public

- May think your impartiality is impacted
- May be hearing that you’re

The Dangers of the “Most Trusted Employee”

- The perpetrator of many embezzlements are the person everyone trusts.
 - Sometimes the only person who understands a complex system for money and purchasing.
 - Busy elected officials don't have time (or understanding?) to double check the employee's work.
- Jim McNall: “hire people you don't trust so you watch them like a hawk...”

Title 74: Transparent and Ethical Government

- Ch. 1: Public Records
- Ch. 2: Open Meetings
- Ch. 4: Ethics in Government Act (conflict of interest process)
- Ch. 5: Prohibition Against Contracts with Officers
- Ch. 6: Public Integrity in Elections

Contracts

- **74-501. Officers not to be interested in contracts.**

“Members of the legislature, state, county, city, district and precinct officers, must not be interested in any contract made by them in their official capacity, or by any body or board of which they are members.”

Nepotism

- **Bribery & Corrupt Influence Act—Idaho Code Title 18, Chapter 13**
 - **Nepotism**
 - **No person related to a Commissioner or hiring person by blood or marriage within the 2nd degree can be paid to work for the County.**
 - **Relatives within the 2nd degree include: spouses, parents, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren, cousins, aunts & uncles, nieces & nephews.**

Ethics Resources

Idaho Attorney General's Manuals

- Ethics in Government
 - Open Meetings
 - Public Records

Whistleblowing

- State and Federal laws protect whistleblowers
- Government employee policy should include process/policy on whistleblowing
 - Who do you tell?
 - What is the process?

Thank You

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