

Jesus Christ: Ethics Lessons for Project Managers

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ABSTRACT: When we think of Jesus Christ, the first reflex is to associate Him with religion, which is quite normal, Jesus being the son of God and at the origin of Christianity. By cons, Jesus Christ was not a religious person. He was a great leader and teacher, very practical, very popular, very close to those who were in need. His actions and teachings are today the attributes of a modern leader. Christians (as well as non-Christians) should be the first to realize that the teachings of Jesus go beyond the sphere of religion, and that they can learn much from Him, as did the people of His time. In academic archives on project management, there is only one article that directly discusses the topic of Jesus Christ. By cons, there is no article on the topic of Jesus Christ and project management in terms of ethics. The purpose of this article is to apply to project management some ethical teachings of Jesus Christ, ethics not (yet) being part of the ten areas of knowledge in project management included in the PMBoK of the Project Management Institute (PMI).

KEYWORDS: Jesus Christ, project management, deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, moral neutralization, project team, trust, redemption

INTRODUCTION

In projects that are complex—with significant budget, content, and time constraints—the notion of ethics becomes more important because the planning and execution of projects depend on the availability of accurate and true information, allowing project managers to make appropriate assessments and decisions (Kvalnes, 2014, p. 597). Project managers often face ethical issues and must act according to their duties and obligations.

In the academic literature, there are several definitions of ethics. According to Clarkson et al. (2012), ethics is “the study of what constitutes right or wrong behavior. Ethics has to do with fairness, justice, rightness or wrongness of an action” (p. 93). Another definition of ethics is “inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality where the term morality is taken to mean moral judgments, standards and rules of conduct” (Taylor, 1975, p. 1). According to Séguin (2010), “ethics is a discipline that deals with the set of rules of conduct and standards considered as good and that must be followed in order to establish harmonious relationships in society, to make sense of to his actions and to be good with oneself” (p. 5). “Ethics is the study of the basic principles for determining conduct. We might say that ethics is the process of thinking about action and, on the basis of that thinking, taking

action. Ethics is the process of thinking about morality or the application of moral principles to specific situation” (Cafferky, 2015, pp. 51-52).

A business ethics definition is “the principles and standards that determine acceptable conduct in business organizations” (Ferrel et al., 2011, p. 36) or “values, standards, and principles that operate within business” (Desjardines, 2009, p. 9)

The Project Management Institute (PMI) adopted in 1998 a code of ethics and professional conduct. This code provides guidelines for the values (responsibility, respect, fairness, and honesty) that underpin the decision-making process that guides the actions of project managers. Some authors consider that this code remains too general and theoretical, and except for values-related guidelines, it does not provide tools and practical guidance applicable in specific situations encountered by project managers (Loo, 2002, p. 490; Padhi & Mishra, 2017, p. 101). Bredillet (2014) also points out that the Code of Ethics of the Project Management Institute (PMI), although rooted in the ethical approach, remains limited (p. 558). Padhi and Mishra (2017) suggest the idea of incorporating ethics into the PMBoK as an area of knowledge in order to allow project managers to conform to the PMI values (p. 101).

It is interesting to make the connection between Jesus Christ and ethics because the Bible presents Jesus as a

great teacher (Matthew 7: 28, 29) and that He attaches great importance to ethical behavior (Matthew 7, Mark 10:19, Mark 12:31). Also, the Bible confirms that Jesus Christ had superior knowledge and intelligence than the rabbi teachers of the rabbinical schools of his day (Luke 2: 46, 47) (Oluikpe, 2015, p. 115). According to Skiena and Ward (2013), Jesus Christ is the most famous personality in the history of mankind. His popularity, which dates back to the dawn of time (Mark 1: 45, Mark 3: 7-8, Mark 4: 1, Luke 4: 42), is due, among other things, to his teachings, ethics having a big part.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the academic literature, there is a single paper on the topic of Jesus Christ and project management: the paper of Yngvason et al. (2012). The authors studied the life of Jesus Christ as described in the four Gospels and learned lessons about leadership in project management. By cons, there is no article in the academic literature on the topic of Jesus Christ and project management in terms of ethics. However, there are several articles that deal with ethics in project management. Some notions from the articles cited below form the theoretical framework of this paper.

The Ethical (Professional) Codes of Professional Associations

According to Helgadóttir (2008), professional project management associations should develop codes and guidelines for their members (p. 748). Bredillet (2014) proposes that codes of ethics be rethought according to Aristotelian ethics and go beyond the normative limitations of the deontological approach (competing duties and results) and consequentialist approach (focuses on the result to the detriment of the duties and means); be shorter; and be focused on values rather than on means, regulations, violations, penalties, or prohibitions.

In the time of Jesus Christ, Jewish law was included in the Talmud and Torah, the rabbinical schools being responsible for its teaching and the establishment of ethical rules in Jewish society (Luke 2: 46,47), (Oluikpe, 2015, pp. 117-118). Since early childhood, Jews were required to study and learn the laws with rigor in order to avoid a new exile (Oluikpe, 2015, p. 116). The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-47) are found in the Torah (part of the Old Testament of the Bible), some of the Decalogue being at the origin of certain ethical concepts in business in contemporary society (Cafferky, 2014, p. 2: Calkins,

2000, p. 343). Because, according to the Protestant view, Jesus Christ was never enrolled in the rabbinical school (Oluikpe, 2015, p. 133), it would be interesting to discover what was the code of ethics of Jesus.

Ethics Training

Padhi and Mishra (2017) agree with Helgadóttir (2008) and argue that the Project Management Institute (PMI) should provide ethics training to its members as well as guidelines on ethical challenges (p. 101). They go further and propose that the PMI should impose punitive measures on its members for ethical violations in projects.

Jesus Christ is generally recognized as a great leader and teacher; training on ethics has been an important part of his agenda (see Matthew 5-7, Sermon on the Mount). It would therefore be important to find out what his lessons were about ethics in project management.

The Three Main Theories of Ethics: Utilitarian, Deontological, and Virtues

“There are often no simple answers to ethical dilemmas in the workplace but familiarization with the different ethical theories as well as organizational ethical guidelines, if they exist, can help persons make better informed decisions” (Loo, 2002, p. 493).

According to the theory of utilitarianism, an individual should act in the interest of a greater number of people (utility principle, cost/benefit analysis) (Harrison, 2004, p. 2). The most important current of the theory of utilitarianism is consequentialism. According to consequentialism, an action is morally good because it has consequences that are good (or, in a dilemma, better than those of other possible actions). For instance, a project leader may find it morally preferable to confess to his superiors that the costs of the project he is managing will be greatly exceeded because the secrecy would have disastrous consequences for the project and the company. Or he might find it morally preferable not to admit cost overruns because the admission would have disastrous consequences for his job (loss of employment). He would then adopt the consequentialist approach.

According to deontological theory, an act is morally good because it satisfies certain moral duties or obligations, regardless of its consequences. For example, a project leader might find it morally preferable to confess to his superiors that he is significantly over-spending the costs of the project he manages because his duty is to be honest with the management of the company and the project sponsor. He may also find it morally preferable not to

admit cost overruns because his job as a project manager is to deliver the project with the necessary adjustments. In both cases, he would adopt the deontological approach.

Aristotle and Plato are precursors of the ethics of virtue. Inspired by the works of several authors, including Aristotle, Büchler (2017) emphasizes that

an action is good, within the framework of the ethics of virtues, if, and only if, it is accomplished for a good reason to act and in the right way ... The virtuous individual is the one who possesses practical wisdom, that is to say, he has the capacity to evaluate the situation in which he finds himself, to select the right thing to do (good reason to act) and the right way to do it (the right attitude), in his repertoire of experiences, and understand that he is doing the right thing for the right reason.

According to Aristotle, practical wisdom is acquired through learning and practice (Bredillet, 2014, p. 550). It would be interesting to discover what theory of ethics Jesus Christ comes closest.

Moral Neutralization

The concept of moral neutralization offers a way to analyze and understand the ways in which project members speak and reason about their choices (Kvalnes, 2014, p. 598). Sykes and Matza (1957) and Ribeau and Eisner (2010) have done research on this concept. According to this concept, people who generally respect the rules and who conform to moral norms somehow manage to minimize their cognitive dissonance and behave in a dishonest way that is in conflict with their convictions and values. Moral neutralization can occur under certain circumstances. According to Kvalnes (2014), “Social psychology experiments indicate that features of the situation crucially affect people’s moral behavior” (p. 594). Darley and Batson (1973) conducted a study at Princeton University examining “the influence of several situational and personality variables on helping behavior in an emergency situation suggested by the parable of the Good Samaritan” (p.100). Kvalnes concludes that circumstances have a stronger influence on conduct than character, helping behavior being “an instant decision likely to be situationally controlled” (p.108).

Sykes and Matza (1957) identified five techniques that people use to justify the neutralization of morality: denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of victim, condemnation of condemners, and appeal to higher loyalty. Denial of responsibility is invoked when a person says that he or she acted without having a real choice, that he or she acted out

of necessity and that it is a matter of survival. The denial of injury is the minimization or even the negation by the person concerned of the damage it has caused, justifying either that the consequences are minor and will soon be forgotten, or that, given the large number of people involved and the complexity of the project, nobody will see a difference. The denial of victim is invoked by a person who admits that his actions have had a negative impact, but justifies this for the purpose of restoring justice because: a) the other party started it; b) the other party did the same thing; or c) the other party would have done the same thing under similar conditions. The technique of condemnation of condemners is used by a person who doubts his protesters by arguing either that they do not understand the particularities of the project or the situation or that they have an ideology and a questionable moral agenda. The technique appeal to higher loyalty is used by a person who denies having been motivated by personal interests, but rather by the duty to honor an important moral obligation, such as loyalty to a family, a company, an employer. This fidelity seems more important to the person than honesty, justice, or other moral values.

It would therefore be important to discover if Jesus Christ, as a project leader, encouraged the use of the different techniques of neutralizing morality because He had to face several important situations (training and management of team, management crowd, confrontations with Pharisees and scribes, false accusations, condemnation to the death penalty, etc.).

METHODOLOGY

The Bible was written between the year 600 BCE and 60 ACE. It is the best-selling book of all time, with about 3.9 billion copies. Jesus Christ is the central character of the Bible. According to the Christian perspective, the Old Testament foretells the coming of Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 18:15, Numbers 24:17, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1: 22-23, Isaiah 53, Micah 5: 2, Daniel 9: 25-27). The New Testament is the second major part of the Bible describing the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises relating to the Messiah. The life of Jesus Christ is told mainly in the four Gospels, all of which have a different outlook on his life and work. If we consider as a project the formation of the Christian church, given the number of believers today (about 2.5 billion people) and its duration (having thrived for 2000 years), we can consider this project as having known great success.

This paper will study the teachings of Jesus Christ in terms of ethics, as found in the four Gospels of the Bible,

teachings that can be used by project managers in the exercise of their functions. The method that will be used is to systematically read the verses of the four Gospels, analyze them, take the lessons out of ethics, and classify them in the categories from the literature review, which you will find in the Appendix. Two online translations were used: New King James version and the Bible in Romanian, Cornilescu translation.

RESULTS

After the study of the four Gospels, many of the verses related to the literature review were found. According to the themes identified above, the verses were placed in the following categories: utilitarianism (consequentialist) ethics, deontology ethics, virtue ethics, and techniques of moral neutralization. Three other categories have been added in connection with other teachings of Jesus Christ about ethics but which have no correspondence with the literature review consulted: ethics and the formation of a successful project team, inspiring trust, and relating to people who engage in misconduct. The detailed results of the research are available in the Appendix.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Interpreting Verses Related to Consequentialist Ethics

John Stuart Mill saw in the teachings of Jesus Christ the essence of utilitarianism. (Cafferky, 2015, p. 169; Ryan, 1987, pp. 293-294). However, in the four Gospels, the author found no verse that shows that Jesus Christ supports utilitarian ethics. "He [God] does indeed desire the greatest happiness for his creatures; however, his definition of happiness is different from ours" (Cafferky, 2015, p. 177). "Utilitarianism does not quite fit into the words of Jesus" (Scarborough, 2012, p. 15). On the other hand, we can consider the project of Jesus Christ to be, in a way, a consequentialist project because its purpose was to save as many people as possible (John 5:24, see also Romans 6:23). Presumably, Jesus Christ considered that the cost to be paid, his life, was lower than the expected benefits, the salvation of humanity. The lesson here is that in the project management context, the project leader should consider project delivery as the greatest benefit possible. If in the circumstances, for the project to be delivered, the leader must leave their post, the project leader should be ready to do so. The author draws the same conclusion below.

Interpretation of Verses Related to Deontological Ethics

In the four Gospels, we can see that Jesus Christ emphasizes the importance of respect for laws and regulations (Matthew 22: 16-21), and He claims to have come not to abolish the law but to fulfill it: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5: 17). For Jesus Christ, the law is represented by the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-47, Mark 12: 28-31). It is important to consider the Ten Commandments as a whole (Cafferky, 2014, p. 6). The Ten Commandments therefore represent the deontological code of Jesus Christ, a code that could be applied also to the management of projects. According to Steward (2009), cited by Kilian (2010, p. 15), deontological theories include Kantianism and Divine Command Theory. Harrison (2004) thinks that deontology draws on ancient codes of behavior such as the Ten Commandments (p. 1).

In terms of ethics, perhaps the most important duty that Jesus encourages people to fulfill is the duty known as the "Golden Rule": "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). This Golden Rule deserves more attention to show how important it is for project managers. It could be the subject of future research.

The analysis of the four Gospels makes it possible to emphasize that Jesus Christ is resistant to temptations, whatever the circumstances. We can take as an example his encounter with the evil in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-10). Each time Jesus Christ responded with "It is written ...", which again indicates that Jesus Christ gave high importance to the respect of laws and regulations. Following the example of Jesus Christ, who resisted attempts of corruption on the part of the evil, the project leader should not yield to the temptations of corruption but should remain honest. He should follow the rules and written laws that govern his profession ("It is written"). This example shows that codes of ethics, laws, and regulations are important and have their reason to be.

According to the above, we are tempted to believe that Jesus Christ focuses strictly on deontological ethics. Nevertheless, this is not always the case because Jesus Christ also shows the limits of being solely focused on duty to rules.

First, Jesus shows that strict adherence to codes, laws, and regulations does not guarantee an ethical behavior

without having also a good attitude (justice, mercy, fidelity). The text (Matthew 23:23) is a good example, Jesus condemns the behavior of the Pharisees and scribes who strictly followed the laws but did so hypocritically.

Second, Jesus Christ is not blindly following the rules and shows that the context of the situation must be taken into consideration to allow saving a life. He gives the example of David, who does not respect the law and eats the bread of proposals and also gives to his team because they were in danger of life (Mark 2:26-27).

Third, Jesus Christ showed that the law could prevent someone from doing good to others. Jesus made many healings despite the opposition of those who considered the law to forbid it (see Luke 10:13-17, Luke 14:1-6, Matthew 12:9-13). “Then He said to them, ‘Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?’ But they kept silent. And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other” (Mark 3:4-5).

Jesus was not doing away with laws; law and regulation have a proper function, but He showed their limits. The author believes that project managers should consider these three limits in the application of ethical codes.

Interpretation of Verses Related to the Ethics of Virtue

The author agrees with Wofford (2012): “The New Testament is strongly virtue ethical and the Old testament bears its own marks of a virtue ethical core. In fact, the Ten Commandments themselves show that the Law is concerned with the person more than the behavior.”

In the author’s opinion, Jesus Christ is closest to the theory of virtue because He focuses on the respect of laws and regulations (good reason to act) and on the development of the character of the person (the right way to act—good attitude). The Sermon on the Mount, for instance (Matt 5-7), “is a powerful description of and argument for virtue ethics” (Wofford, 2012). “It is widely admitted that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount . . . constitute a high point in the ethical tradition of western culture. At the same time, it seems true that the ethics of the [Sermon on the Mount] are not understood, not appreciated, and not practiced” (Hagner, 1997, p. 44). Further research is needed to explore the thesis of Jesus’ ethical lessons that we can find in the Sermon on the Mount that are relevant to project management.

In the context of project management, we can consider the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue as

good reasons for doing the right things. For instance, the adultery-related command most likely relates to relationships among project team members. An adulterous relationship between two (or more!) team members is likely to go wrong and, therefore, put the project in danger (sabotage, withholding information, underperformance, etc.) in addition to seriously tarnishing the reputation of those affected or even the end their careers. Moreover, in light of the revelations following the #MeToo campaign (Wikipedia, 2017), the importance of the command “you will not commit adultery” and the possible consequences are much better understood than before.

“You will not kill; you will not steal; you will not say false witness; you will do no wrong to anyone” are commandments related to the observance of laws and regulations (Mark 10:19, Matthew 19: 18-19). Failure to respect these commands by the project leader could have dramatic consequences for the manager, for the project, and even for the company if the project is highly strategic.

The command “honor your father and your mother” could be interpreted as the duty of the project manager to honor (respect) the management of the company, the sponsor, and the promoter of the project, which would allow the project leader to stay in the position and be happy in the company (“to have a long life,” Deuteronomy 5:16).

In terms of the ethics of virtue, the third commandment of the Decalogue, “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain” (Exodus 20:7), is bound to the virtue of keeping his promises, which is essential in the success of projects. The third commandment is often oversimplified by Christians to simply mean the ban on swearing or using vulgar language. “The primary application of this commandment is in making promises, be they in the marriage, the family, or in the marketplace: It forbids calling God to witness a promise or pledge you are making to someone when you either have no intention of keeping the promise, through carelessness forget to keep it or break the promise because it becomes inconvenient to keep it” (Cafferky, 2014, p. 17).

The Bible reveals that Jesus Christ has always kept his promises (2 Corinthians 1:19-20). Following the example of Jesus Christ, project leaders should always keep their promises. In a way, it can be considered that when a project leader agrees to do a project, he implicitly promises to deliver it within the golden triangle (time, cost, quality) with of course, some flexibility. Also, if the project is morally suspect, the project leader should refuse to do it.

According to the ethics of virtue, the right way to act—act with a good attitude—is the second necessary condition for considering a good action. Jesus Christ puts a very precise diagnosis on the cause of all unethical behavior: “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23).

Jesus Christ gives also the only solution to ethical problems: the development of a moral character of the person (authenticity, justice, mercy, faithfulness, generosity, compassion, honesty) because only a good character can produce good things while a bad character produces only bad things. “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things” (Matthew 12:33, 35).

Jesus does not, therefore, focus on strengthening laws, regulations, norms, or codes because this would not change anything (Luke 18:10-14). Codes of ethics could be rethought according to the Aristotelian vision, as proposed by Bredillet (2014, p. 560) or companies could implement the ISO37001 anti-corruption standard or any other standard or law, but that will not solve the problems of corruption and lack of ethics in project management. Jesus Christ puts much emphasis on the development of a person’s character (Matthew 5:8, Mark 10:15, Matthew 23:23-28, Luke 11:39-44, Luke 12:1, Matthew 16:12) and do things with the right attitude (authenticity, justice, mercy, faithfulness, generosity, compassion, honesty) because the right attitude comes from the heart (Luke 6:43-45, Matthew 12:33-35). One and only one individual ethical development will prevent the project leader from having unethical behavior, not the constraint of laws, regulations, standards, policies and codes of conduct. “Internalized moral perspective refers to higher levels of moral development. When confronted with difficult ethical challenges, leaders with higher levels of moral perspective are expected to think more broadly and deeply about ethical issues” (Hannah et al., 2011, p. 562).

The character of Jesus Christ was recognized even by his adversaries (Mark 12:14). We can draw the conclusion that the project leader should be recognized by other stakeholders as a genuine, equidistant and honest person in order to have the necessary authority in the performance of his duties.

“Jesus was generally recognized as a great leader and teacher by his friends and foes” (Oluikpe, 2015, p. 115). Jesus offered holistic and practical training to His disciples. They learned with him ethics, spirituality, appropriate language, proper conduct, and so forth. “He lived by what He taught. He taught mercy (Matthew 5:7; 12:7) and He showed mercy (Mark 10: 47-52). He taught humility (Matthew 20:25-28) and He showed humility (John 13:1-15). He taught men to keep their words simple and true (Matthew 5:33-37) and He did the same (Mark 15:1-5). His authority came not from rhetorical hypocrisy but from personal authentic integrity” (Oluikpe, 2015, p. 125).

Following the example of Jesus, professional project associations, including PMI, should provide training to its members about ethics and the project leader should be the first ethical trainer of his team and set an example. According to Aristotle, virtue, virtue ethics, and the learning of both are rooted in some community and culture (Lawler & Salzman, 2013, p. 463). Also, the author agrees with Padhi and Mishra (2017, p. 101) and supports the idea of incorporating ethics into the PMBok as an area of knowledge.

Interpretation of Verses Related to the Techniques of Moral Neutralization

The author has found no paper in the academic literature on the topic of Jesus Christ and techniques of moral neutralization.

The author also did not find verses related to two of the five techniques of moral neutralization, denial of injury and denial of victim. We can understand from here that Jesus Christ does not encourage these two techniques.

Jesus Christ does not agree either with the technique of appeal to higher loyalty. We can understand this from the dialogue that Jesus Christ had with the Pharisees and scribes who transgressed one of the commandments of God, “honor your father and your mother” for the benefit of their tradition. They decided to no longer help financially their parents by appealing to higher loyalty to God (Matthew 15:1-9). Jesus said that people always had to rely on the higher authority and the will of God as expressed in the Decalogue, but the faithfulness invoked in this case by the Pharisees and scribes is not sincere because they follow only their own interest, of a financial nature.

Jesus Christ also did not want to use the technique condemnation of condemners, despite the fact that his protesters did not understand the particularities of his project (ministry) (Luke 23:1-24) and that they also had

a ideology and a questionable moral agenda (Mark 12:14-17, Luke 23:2).

A particular perspective deserves to be put on the technique of denial of responsibility. Jesus Christ gives us another brilliant example. Given a very complex situation for him (faced with the death penalty), Jesus tells the truth about his project (ministry) and reveals all the consequences (Matthew 26:62-66, Mark 14:61-65, Mark 15:1-5, Mark 15:15-20, Mark 15:29-32, Matthew 27:50). We can understand that for Him, his project was more important than his life. In the project management context, we can conclude that the project leader is called to consider the project no more important than his life, but more important than his position. A project leader should defend the interests of the project even if it should result in losing the job, so the technique of denial of responsibility is not acceptable.

In the light of the aforementioned, we can conclude that, in the project management context, none of the moral neutralization techniques, denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of victim, condemnation of condemners, or appeal to higher loyalty is acceptable. The author could not find any example in the Gospels where Jesus Christ used moral neutralization techniques.

The author doesn't agree that the circumstances have a stronger influence on conduct than character as concluded by various studies (Ariely, 2012; Darley & Batson, 1973, p. 107; Doris, 2002; Heath, 2008; Mazar et al., 2008). Regardless of the circumstances, Jesus did not use any technique of moral neutralization. On the contrary, Jesus focuses on character development. A circumstance is only an occasion that shows the true character of a person. In a given circumstance, a person will act according to who he or she really is, according to their values and principles. This person questions their moral values and the moral principles that guide their actions in different situations. Character influences the behavior of a person in a situation. It is possible that the different circumstances are also opportunities to learn what our character is. The Apostle Peter and the other apostles were very sincere when they promised Jesus that they would not deny him (Matthew 26:35), but they did not know themselves well enough at that time.

Ethics and the Formation of a Successful Project Team

Why is ethics important for the formation of the successful project team? Project leaders can learn something from Jesus Christ.

Jesus called his disciples to follow him. In the Jewish culture of his day, the disciple invariably took the initiative and attached himself to his preferred teacher, but Jesus was exceptional in calling the disciples he wanted. Implicit in becoming a disciple of Jesus and learning from him was a radical act of commitment to him, which implied a renunciation of status and prestige, possessions, and security. It implied many things, among them that Jesus' disciples would indeed physically journey with him, submitting to his leadership, applying themselves to his teaching, and learning from his ministry which was to become theirs. (Ferdinando, 2013, p. 362)

When Jesus called someone to be part of his team, this person immediately accepted without hesitation. We can take as an example the nomination of the first apostles (John 1:35-58, Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 2:14). Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, James, John, and Levi Matthew all eagerly accepted to follow Jesus Christ, leaving behind their trades and their families. These people did not follow Jesus Christ because of His past miracles because the first miracle Jesus did came later at Cana in Galilee (John 2:11). All these people did not blindly follow a stranger. They had heard of him before meeting him for the first time (John 1:45). Jesus Christ, therefore, had an excellent reputation (John 1:46), a reputation that necessarily passed through ethics. Tim Keller (2008) and Bucci & Lewis (2016) write that Jesus was the most morally upright person who ever lived. According to Fletcher (2014), "Holy Scriptures affirm Jesus as the fullness, brightness, and fully embodiment of God's nature and holiness on earth as the superior ethical human." Jesus built only later the "technical" side of his reputation by his teachings and his miracles. Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, James, John, Levi Matthew, and certainly others (Luke 10:1, 17) considered that to be part of the team of Jesus Christ was for them a great privilege.

To be able to build a successful project team, the project leader should first be an ethically recognized professional. All will want to work with and for a project leader who is right, who always says the truth, who keeps their commitments, who respects the laws and regulations, who is incorruptible, because they will feel safe and will always have the right information in the changing environment of the project. A project leader who is, let's say, the best from the technical point of view but who is ethically defective will have difficulty first of all in attracting and then retaining the best resources and maintaining a successful team. Performance comes from trust and

confidence and those are built on ethics. Because of the project leader's ethical reputation, others should consider it a privilege to be part of the team (see also Mark: 2:15-17, Matthew 9:9, Luke 19:1-10).

Inspiring Trust

"There is a very strong link between trust and performance. It is the role of the leader to create this performance. He achieves this by inspiring confidence" (Duluc, 2013, p. 103). Jesus Christ confirms the idea that performance necessarily passes through trust. Jesus "provides a role model for high ethical behavior, instills pride, gains respect and trust" (Yngvason, 2012, p. 400).

When we think of Jesus Christ, among the things we remember are the miracles He did. Jesus did a series of miracles that we can relate to the compassion He had for those in need (Matthew 14:14, Matthew 20:34). But a second series of miracles we can relate to trust and faith (Mark 5:24-34, Matthew 9:22, Mark 5: 35-36, Mark 6:1-6, Mark 9:23, Mark 10:46-52, Matthew 8:1-13, Matthew 14:25-33, Matthew 14:35-36, Matthew 15:28, Matthew 21:19-21, Luke 7:47-50, John 4:42). All these miracles have in common faith: "your faith has healed you"; "your faith has saved you"; "be not afraid, only believe"; "thy faith hath made thee whole"; "go thy way and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." For the miracle to come true, the seeker had to trust Jesus Christ. Of course, Jesus Christ could do the miracle without the seeker having confidence, but the message He wants to convey is deeper and also addresses the leaders.

In the project management context, the project leader must inspire such confidence that determines the members of the team to surpass the expected results, determining them to perform "miracles" in terms of performance (Matthew 21:19-21). The project leader should be an inspiring person, by their ethical character, and thus gain a great respect and admiration from their team. This will determine the members of the project team to develop and surpass their performance, all in the benefit of the project, as it will be more enjoyable and motivating for them to do what they have to do.

Relating to People who Engage in Misconduct

Jesus Christ gives a brilliant example on this subject. When he was arrested, Jesus Christ saw the apostles bury themselves and leave him alone (Mark 14:45-51). This blow should have been very difficult for Jesus. After this event, it is well known the story of the Apostle Peter, one of the apostles with whom Jesus had a very close

relationship, who denied Jesus Christ three times before the rooster crowed (Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:34, 54-62 and Matthew 26:69-75). Imagine a project leader who is abandoned and denied by their own team! Or imagine one or more project team members who have, in a certain circumstance, been deviating from the ethical standpoint. What should be the reaction of the project manager? What was the reaction of Jesus Christ? Despite the deviant behavior of the apostles, Jesus forgave them (Mark 11:25-26, Luke 17:3-4). Moreover, because the apostles sincerely regretted their behavior, Jesus Christ recovered them and reintegrated them into the project. This choice was very rewarding for the project; the work of the twelve apostles (Apostle Paul will later replace Judah Iscariot) was quite extraordinary afterwards, and their degree of commitment to the project and fidelity to Jesus Christ were remarkable. There are many examples that show us that Jesus Christ always tried to recover (save) those who had the potential to do good things and sincerely regretted their mistakes: Luke 7:36-47, John 8:10-11, Luke 19:1-10. An excellent example of how Jesus Christ works is found in Mark 2:15-17. Jesus Christ, contrary to the habit of the scribes and Pharisees, spends his time and eats with publicans and people of bad life. Jesus knew their potential and wanted to exploit this potential in favor of future projects.

"The linkage to the redemption and ransom work of Christ harkens back to His mission, stated in the key reference verses (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45). A valid and valuable effort should be made by leaders to follow the pattern of Jesus by forgiving and serving individuals with weaknesses, by seeking to restore them to useful contributions to the work of the kingdom of God and to future success in life. This approach would seem to align with at least one trait noted in several servant leadership models that describe a servant leader as committed to developing others" (Bucci & Lewis, 2016, pp. 14-15). "Jesus's methods of managing people can be linked to transparent, servant and transformational leadership style" (Yngvason, 2012, p. 405).

According to Harper (1990) and Hayes (2008), cited by Bucci and Lewis (2016, p.14), as many as 75% of employees have engaged in some form of theft, fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, sabotage, and unexcused absenteeism or otherwise harmed their employer. Project leaders could take the example of Jesus Christ and reintegrate into the project teams those who have exhibited deviant ethical behavior, sincerely regret their behavior, and have potential to contribute to the success of the project. It is a safe bet that these people will be more

attached to the project and will contribute significantly to the delivery and success of the project. At the same time, by reintegrating these people and trusting them again, the project leader prepares for the future, laying the groundwork for future projects, projects in which these people can be important resources.

CONCLUSION

The paper showed that Jesus' ethical teachings go beyond the sphere of religion and can be applied to project management. Also, the author supports the idea of incorporating ethics into the PMBok as an area of knowledge.

It is very clear that the code of ethics of Jesus Christ is composed of the Ten Commandments. Jesus Christ places a great deal of importance on the respect of the laws and regulations as a result to the development of the character of the person, which brings him closer most of the ethics of virtue. No code of ethics, law, or regulation can prevent a person from exhibiting unethical behavior; only a personal ethical development can do it. Following the example of Jesus, the project professional associations should provide ethics training to its members and the project leader should set an example.

The paper showed also that there is a direct link between ethics and performance.

The paper lays the groundwork for further research to explore the thesis of Jesus' ethical lessons that we can find in the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12) and in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) that are relevant to project management.

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**APPENDIX:
VERSES RELATED TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW (ETHICS)**

Category	Verses	
Utilitarianism/Consequentialist ethics	John 5:24 Matthew 5:14-16 Matthew 26:38-39 Mark 14:61-65 Mark 15:1-5	Mark 15:15-20 Mark 15:29-32 Matthew 22:16 Luke 23:1-24 Matthew 27:50

Category	Verses	
Deontology ethics	Mark 10:19 Matthew 19:16-21 Matthew 5:17-18 Matthew 23:23	Matthew 5, 6, 7 Matthew 6:14-15 Matthew 22:16-21 Luke 18:10-14

Category	Verses	
Ethics of virtue • Good reason to act	Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31 Luke 10:13-17 Luke 14:1-6 Matthew 12:9-13 Mark 3:1-5 Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:3-4 and Matthew 12:1-5	Mark 10:19 Matthew 13:49 Matthew 18:7-9 John 7:24 Matthew 5:14-16 Matthew 22:16-21, Luke 20:21-26 and Mark 12:14-17
Ethics of virtue • Good attitude	Mark 12 :28-31 and Matthew 22 :36-40; John 15 :12-13 Matthew 23 : 23-28 and Luke 11 :39-44 Luke 12 :1 Matthew 16 :12 Mark 7 :18-23	Mark 10:15 Matthew 18:7-9 Luke 6:43-45 and Matthew 12:33, 35 Matthew 5:8 Matthew 15:10-20 Luke 18:10-14

Category	Verses	
Moral neutralization techniques:		
• Denial of responsibility	Mark 14:66-72 Mark 2:23-28 Matthew 12:2-7 Matthew 26:34, 62-66, 69-75	Mark 14:61-65 Mark 15:1-5,15-20, 29-32 Luke 23:1-24 Matthew 27:50
• Denial of injury	no verse related	
• Denial of victim	no verse related	
• Condemnation of condemners	Luke 23:1-24	Matthew 22:16-21, Luke 20:21-26 and Mark 12:14-17, Luke 23:2
• Appeal of higher loyalty	Matthew 15:1-6	Mark 7:9-13

