

The Eight Ethics Principles

In all my professional relationships, I hereby agree to abide by the eight ethics principles of the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa and the Financial Standards Board Ltd.

Principle 1 – Client First Place the client’s interests first.

Placing the client’s interests first is a hallmark of professionalism, requiring the financial planning professional to act honestly and not place personal gain or advantage before the client’s interests.

Principle 2 – Integrity Provide professional services with integrity.

Integrity requires honesty and candour in all professional matters. Financial planning professionals are placed in positions of trust by clients, and the ultimate source of that trust is the financial planning professional’s personal integrity. Allowance can be made for legitimate differences of opinion, but integrity cannot co-exist with deceit or subordination of one’s principles. Integrity requires the financial planning professional to observe both the letter and the spirit of the Code of Ethics.

Principle 3 – Objectivity Provide professional services objectively.

Objectivity requires intellectual honesty and impartiality. Regardless of the services delivered or the capacity in which a financial planning professional functions, objectivity requires financial planning professionals to ensure the integrity of their work, manage conflicts and exercise sound professional judgment.

Principle 4 – Fairness Be fair and reasonable in all professional relationships. Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.

Fairness requires providing clients what they are due, owed or should expect from a professional relationship, and includes honesty and disclosure of material conflicts of interest. It involves managing one’s own feelings, prejudices and desires to achieve a proper balance of interests. Fairness is treating others in the same manner that you would want to be treated.

Principle 5 – Professionalism Act in a manner that demonstrates exemplary professional conduct.

Professionalism requires behaving with dignity and showing respect and courtesy to clients, fellow professionals, and others in business-related activities, and complying with appropriate rules, regulations and professional requirements. Professionalism requires the financial planning professional, individually and in cooperation with peers, to enhance and maintain the profession’s public image and its ability to serve the public interest.

Principle 6 – Competence Maintain the abilities, skills and knowledge necessary to provide professional services competently.

Competence requires attaining and maintaining an adequate level of abilities, skills and knowledge in the provision of professional services. Competence also includes the wisdom to recognize one’s own limitations and when consultation with other professionals is appropriate or referral to other professionals necessary. Competence requires the financial planning professional to make a continuing commitment to learning and professional improvement.

Principle 7 – Confidentiality
Protect the confidentiality of all client information.

Confidentiality requires client information to be protected and maintained in such a manner that allows access only to those who are authorized. A relationship of trust and confidence with the client can only be built on the understanding that the client's information will not be disclosed inappropriately.

Principle 8 – Diligence
Provide professional services diligently.

Diligence requires fulfilling professional commitments in a timely and thorough manner, and taking due care in planning, supervising and delivering professional services.