

## CREATE A POLICY

A policy about reporting illegal or unethical practices should include:

- Strong ethics and morals about what is and is not acceptable
- Formal mechanisms for reporting violations, such as hotlines or online forms
- Clear communications about bans on reprisal, and how the employee disclosing information will be protected
- A clear connection between your code of ethics and performance measures – for example, in the performance review process, employees can be held accountable not only for meeting goals and objectives, but for doing so in accordance with the stated values and business standards of your company

## SUPERIOR SUPPORT

Senior management, starting at the top with the CEO, should demonstrate a strong commitment to encouraging employee to report concerns. It should be communicated by all managers at all levels, who are continuously trained in creating and facilitating an open-door policy regarding employee concerns.

## FLY YOUR ETHICS REPORTING/WHISTLEBLOWING FLAG

To create a culture of transparency and honesty, it's vital for employees to hear about the policy regularly. Management should make every effort to talk about the commitment to ethical behaviour in memos or newsletters to company personnel. Publicly acknowledge the value of employees who pinpoint ethical issues. Encourage this atmosphere of openness and display the sort of behaviour you expect of your employees.

## INVESTIGATE AND MAINTAIN

Managers must investigate all allegations promptly and thoroughly, reporting the origins and the results of the investigation to a higher authority, or designated person. Not following through with an allegation will only create cynicism about the seriousness of your organization's ethics policy.



## TALK TO YOUR EMPLOYEES

Talk to your employees. Hear their opinions about the company culture face to face. Find out their understanding of what is expected of them, and inform them on how to report an unethical issue. Make sure that individuals reporting information are met with trained, calm interviewers.

For help building your own ethics reporting line, visit: <http://www.confidenceline.net/index.php>