ETHICS OR CORRUPTION?
Building a Landscape for Ethics Training
in Southeastern Europe

by

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Introduction

The fall of Milosevic’s regime in Serbia, the last country with neo-communist government in Southeastern Europe (SEE) poses a great new challenge for the region of more than 100 million people. Four consecutive wars had created opportunities for smuggling, corruption, bribery and graft in and around war zones. Countries in the region suffered not only from various ethnic-cleansing actions and its consequences but also from illegal activities of criminal elements associated with instability and confusion.

Under current conditions, corruption may be seen as a way to overcome the uncertainties of a weak state and a poorly developed market economy. Many SEE countries have been slow to develop clear positions on conflict of interest. In some cases elected politicians engage in commercial activities that may benefit from the laws they enact.

It seems now that time has come for international community to invest more organized efforts, energy and resources in supporting the establishment of sound, ethically sensitive political, economic and legal systems in this strategically important area. Corruption and graft seems to be beyond acceptable level in most countries of the region. International assistance and private investments in many SEE countries are under influence of exorbitant costs associated with corruption. More successful legal and managerial control and suppression of corruption and opportunistic behavior of public officials is required. A revised strategy to battle the corruption is needed. It could accelerate progress throughout the SEE.

A common practice in contemporary democratic market-oriented countries is to hold public servants to higher standards than may apply to other professions. From the
political and legal perspectives the “double standard” seems entirely reasonable. However, it is increasingly difficult even in the western world to apply this standard successfully (La Palombara 1994).

There are a variety of reasons why some level of corruption is inevitable. Nevertheless, in developed democracies, not only the relative amounts, but also pervasiveness and overall importance are different. Ethical behavior offsets corruption so that it does not threaten economic and political development nor distort political systems to a point beyond recognition.

Our task in this paper is not to suggest a comprehensive, anti-corruption strategy. Rather, we would like to examine views on the ecology or landscape of public administration in developing countries as well as the role of adequate education, training and learning processes.

Ecology of Public Administration and Public Trust

The rapidly changing ecology of CEE countries requires that emerging governments review, create and adjust their mechanisms for ensuring high standards of ethical conduct by their public employees. Such a challenge requires comparative analysis in a framework that improves performance. Several contributions to such a framework are reviewed below.

Ecology of Public Administration

As these nations bring about a democratic transition, it is important to realize that economic necessity is not the sole driver that induces a regime change (Gill 2000). The movement toward democracy is equally linked to effective political actors and a civil society. In turn, these imperatives determine each country’s location in a global geopolitical structure that will ultimately determine the configuration of government and efforts to support democratic action through building of public trust. Such a notion anticipates differences in structural and normative issues concerning laws, values, norms and institutional arrangements to fulfill the nation's needs.

Using an ecological approach to examining the role of ethical conduct in public administration highlights key factors that can be particularly useful (Khator 1994, Riggs 1994, Caiden 1994, Heady 1996). Khator (1994) recalls earlier comparative studies that have focused on the nature and scope of public administration, and have found it to be an inseparable part of a larger political system. Riggs (1994) supports Khator's notion and rejects an administrative-politics dichotomy. Caiden (1994) links public administration to the culture in which it functions. The purpose of these suggestions is to illustrate that a focus on public administration and its efforts to combat corruption are more inclusive than simply public administration and the public servant. Analysis of ethics and ethical behavior must include the social, economic and political systems.

Controlling corruption requires political morality to inspire society and influence government organizations to pursue integrity and accountability. Citizens expect public servants to manage public resources properly and make decisions based on social equity. Fair and reliable public services inspire public trust and create a favorable environment for businesses, thus contributing to the markets and
economic growth (PUMA Policy Brief 7 2000). This connection is realized in the OECD recommendation to member countries for "Principles for Managing Ethics in Public Service" (PUMA Policy Brief 4 1998) which includes:

1. Core ethical standards and principles that guide public service must be developed.
2. A legal framework created for communicating minimum obligatory standards.
3. Professional socialization, training and internal consultation made available to the public servant.
4. Protection for public servants through rights and obligations.
5. Commitment by the political leaders to foster ethical climates through high standards of conduct.
7. Clear rules of ethical standards to guide the behavior of public servants in dealing with the private sector.
8. An organizational environment that fosters ethical behavior.
9. Management policies and procedures that demonstrate commitment to ethical standards.
10. Merit and other mechanisms to promote integrity in public service.
11. Making public servants accountable to their superiors, and more broadly, the public.
12. A system of detection, investigation and punishment of wrongdoing.

**Western Snapshots**

One of the prime responsibilities of a government must be to build an environment of justice and rule of law, honesty, transparency and trust. In a democratic society, government will fail if it does not carry public confidence (Murray 1997). Governments around the globe have in recent years been paying increased attention to ethical standards and public servants behavior.

A poll in Arizona showed that 71 per cent of respondents believed that lawmakers would accept bribes if they were offered (Joseph and Edna Institute of Ethics 1990). In England, the relationship between lobbyist and elected members of the parliament led Prime Minister John Major in the 1994 appointing of Lord Nolan to lead a Committee on Standards in Public Life (Lord Nolan 1995). Further, consider the implications of bribery in Italy – judge DiPietro’s “Mani Pulite” (Clean Hands) investigation that created havoc in Italian public life, or “La Mordida” cases in Latin America, so called “Baksheesh” in North Africa, problems in Germany with ex Chancellor Kohl at the center, “Recruit Scandal” in Japan, and Michael Milken and insider trading in USA.

Acceptance of corruption has risen in the last decade or so and ethical conduct of those elected or appointed to the positions of power has become a central concern for most if not all societies. Developed countries with demonstrated results in battling corruption or comprehensive strategies to defeat it can assist with their experience. International organizations and NGO’s can also be immensely helpful.
The appearance of accepting bribes by lawmakers and failure to follow standards of acceptable political conduct by elected officials is destructive to the prime responsibility of government to build an environment of trust between the institutions of government and the citizens. Worldwide decline in the trust and confidence of public leaders can be attributed to poor leadership and the growth of corruption and dishonesty in politics (Nye 1997). A fuller understanding of this decline can be gained by examining public trust in government.

Public Trust

Trust is key to individual cooperation and collective action between the various actors in the ecology of public administration. Greenleaf argues that "humans have not always been trusting, but trust is the cement that makes possible institutional solidarity, from the family to the world society" (Greenleaf 1996).

It is difficult to define trust and even more difficult to measure it. From a rational or economic perspective, trust can be defined as a decision, based on self-interested behavior, to grant someone discretion in order to maximize one's own benefit. Marsh and Olsen define trust from an ethical perspective and observed that "trust is undermined by an expectation of reciprocal consequence because it converts a relationship into simply another version of economic exchange" (March and Olsen 1989). Carnevale defines trust as "faith or confidence in the intentions and actions of a person or group to be ethical, fair and non-threatening concerning the rights and interests of others in social exchange relationships" (Carnevale 1992).

The level of public trust in government is influenced by several factors including economic, cultural and political. Fukuyama articulates, "a nation's well-being as well as its ability to compete is conditioned by a single pervasive cultural characteristic, the level of trust in society" (Fukuyama 1995). Berman sees trust as a measure of socio-economic conditions and argues, "Negative community conditions, such as economic stagnation, low income and racial strife reduce economic and political resources and contribute to a distrust of government (Berman 1994).

Unethical behavior, such as corruption, destroys public confidence and trust in government. This is especially important for nations as they transition to democratic institutions. The effort to strengthen the connection between government and its citizen must transition through the ecology of public administration. The key challenge to these emerging governments will be to adapt their missions to the needs of their citizens and ensure core values and standards meet public expectations. To translate these values into action, countries need to legislate standards of conduct and create environments where core and traditional values guide the public servants decision-making and actions.

Administrative Culture

The administrative culture of the governments must be studied and understood as a critical element of societal ethics. For public service training to be effective, it must be supported by an administrative culture that is oriented toward civil values, toward results
that meet the needs of the recipients of public services. What seriously impedes development of democratic institutions and values? Administrative culture oriented toward procedures rather than toward client, performance or results. Unchanged personnel policies within the public service often inhibit staff realignment and adequate selection and promotion. Persons with unclear “ethical scores” staying at the important positions within the civil service project an image of helplessness and invalidate efforts to implement codes of conduct.

The public service system and status of the public servants also needs improvement. Blaming summarily the public service for most sins is not the best policy option for those active in politics in SEE transitional countries. A well-educated populace with internalized civil society values is a precondition for ethical behavior in the public sector. It will create an environment of support and encouragement for an efficient and effective, adequately rewarded public service.

Many factors contribute to unethical behavior. For countries transitioning to democratic institutions, the absence of civil service laws and regulations and an unpredictable administrative displacement due to changes in political leadership enhance this risk and are among the main causes of corruption in civil service in SEE countries (Verheijen and Dimitrova 1997). They suggest that public administration in these countries develop an anti-corruption package that includes formulating ethical codes to direct civil servants and training civil servants to respect ethical rules of administration, the rule of law and appropriate legal instruments and their implementation. Beyond this structural approach of creating an ethical environment, consideration should also be given to a normative perspective.

**Structural and Normative Approaches to Ethics**

As with the development of public administration, consideration has to be given to the ecology in which ethical perspectives must develop and function. Such ecology can be characterized as an “Ethical Landscape,” as shown in figure 1. It illustrates the key elements that must be considered in emerging countries. Problems of coping with corruption and opportunistic behavior though ethical systems, notwithstanding any discussion of ethics in public administration, must involve comparison between a structural and normative school of thought. The structural perspective focuses on formal-legal arrangements, primarily regulatory and legal prescriptions through which the government seeks to channel and control behavior, while the normative perspective examines how ethical values are made operational in organizations.

Figure 1
“ETHICAL LANDSCAPE”
Emerging Countries

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BUREAUCRATIC
- Efficiency
- Efficacy
- Expertise
- Accountability

DEMOCRATIC
- Citizenship
- Public Interest
- Equity

ETHICAL CONTROLS

NORMATIVE
- Moral Development
- Values
- Decision making

STRUCTURAL
- Codes of Ethics/Conduct
- Legislation
- Inspector Generals
- Whistleblowers

Public Trust
Privatization
Market Development
Building Public Organizations
Political Environment
Socioeconomic Issues

Political Environment
Building Public Organizations
Structural Perspective

A structural perspective was popular among the early public administration theorists in the United States. Such an approach relies heavily on the values of efficiency, efficacy, expertise, loyalty and accountability. Principles of scientific management, as elaborated by Frederick Taylor, sought to place economic emphasis on these structural values.

The intellectual origins of the structural framework came from the Weberian model of democracies which articulated rational principles from the Wilsonian dichotomy of public administration and politics, and from the Goodnow and Willoughby studies of comparative administration and the application of rationalism (Pugh 1991). This movement was designed to replace the market system model of political decision-making.

By creating a systematic process a structural framework was thought to ensure continuity and consistency. Early theorists provided a methodology by which these content values are assessed against established rational goals and objectives using utilitarian principles as the criteria for action. For example, Simon (1945) explicated a process of vertical value integration that should take place in the organizational context.

The values of efficiency and effectiveness in the structural perspective can be seen in the movements toward decentralized public administration systems. Such systems can be found in the recent U.S. approach to Reinventing Government and worldwide application of new public administration that touts entrepreneurship and privatization in government. Such initiatives can also be seen in decentralized discretion and systems of personal initiatives, voluntary cooperation, joint ventures and committee work (Cleveland 2000).

Given the need for transparency and accountability in emerging countries, the effectiveness and policy implications of structural remedies are of great importance. Structural arrangements are key to the elaboration of key values in most OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries (PUMA 2000). From legislative frameworks of accountability and control to codes of ethics in professional associations and organizations, OECD countries seek structural controls by punishing breaches of core public service values.

Although much literature is supportive of ethical codes, there is no demonstrated relationship between codes, administrative behavior and public confidence and trust in government (Thompson 1995). However, the strengths of codification include setting clear standards of behavior consistent with social needs, accountability, operationalization of concepts, increased transparency of government and due process.

In an organized society, the two fundamental modes of ethical controls - structural and normative - must be supportive of the other. Efforts at reform must keep in mind that structural initiatives are geared at behavioral changes and not an end themselves. Structural changes must consider leadership, flexibility and accountability for results (OECD 1999).

Normative Perspective of Public Administration Ethics

Less precise than the structural perspective, a normative view of public administration ethics relies on the values of citizenship, public interest and social equity. The value of citizenship from governance to co-production of government services is critical to emerging democracies and their quest to inspire public trust and create a favorable environment for economic development. The notion of public interest is a term that has been discussed in public administration literature for decades without much precision. Lippman (1955) suggested that public interest is what people would choose if they saw clearly and thought rationally. Called into question as a viable representation of reality, public interest still remains fundamental to a
democratic framework and a normative approach to ethics. Social equity denotes a spirit of "fairness, justness and right dealing which regulate the intercourse of men" (Hart 1974).

The methodology of a normative approach to ethics is deductive reasoning from a deontological perspective. In such an approach, reasoning from a general to a specific sense about the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by existing rules, societal principles, values and personal beliefs. In essence, a public administrator searches for some principle that guides his or her decision-making or provides justification for his or her decision (Whittmer 2000). This approach provides a framework to guide and justify managerial decision-making. Yet, decisions are a product of various factors, including structural codification. Most importantly, this approach employs values inherent in the society, political system and governance in which the individual resides. Various individual and environmental forces influence ethical behavior.

In summary, the obvious comparison of these two competing schools of thought is that the structural perspective is based on external controls through codification of laws and regulations and the normative perspective is based on values of rightness and wrongness. Concern over the possible inadequacy of relying solely on formal and legal remedies has sparked an interest in a normative dimension of ethical management in global discussions (Gilman and Lewis 1996). As stated earlier, our purpose here is not to suggest an entire anti-corruption campaign, but to suggest a normative strategy to communicate and inculcate core values and ethical standards for public servants.

Values, Ethics and the Changing Public Administration

Ethics and values are inextricably intertwined. An understanding of values clarifies many of the issues related to ethics in public administration (Gortner 2000). Rokeach (1970) suggests that values are beliefs about conduct and goals, a predisposition to act in a certain way. Kluckhohn (1962) argues that: "A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection of available modes, means and ends of action." Van Wart (1998) views public administrators carrying out their duties in a value-laden and value driven environment. "Managerial, ethical, and political values are not separate," he asserts.

In response to demands for greater responsiveness and transparency, western governments are moving away from hierarchical structures toward a more decentralized and "webbed model" in which much of the responsibility and accountability is placed upon individual public managers. Identifying core values upon which to base decisions is a first step being taken among OECD countries to create a common societal understanding of expected behavior. Over one-third of OECD countries have updated their core public service values in the last five years and further reviews are still being undertaken (PUMA Policy Brief No. 7 2000). In these revisions, countries have re-examined and re-emphasized traditional values while giving them a modern content and adding new values to reflect an increasing devolution of authority and results based public service culture. The eight most frequently stated core public service values and the number of countries stating each value are:

1. Impartiality - 24 countries
2. Legality - 22 countries
3. Integrity - 18
4. Transparency - 14
5. Efficiency - 14
6. Equality - 11
7. Responsibility - 11
8. Justice - 10

Supporting the issue of shared values across different cultures, Gilman and Lewis (1996) found "identified commonalities including shared values and norms" in their experiences from a 1994 Conference on Ethics in Government, in which more than 100 participants from 53 countries exchanged expertise and insights. Such values, they wrote, are closely related with "democracy, market economy and professional bureaucracy." They found that values set the context for public bureaucratic behavior that falls within the
range framed by a dominant value system, proposed and agreed upon by many of the conference participants.

For example, during the meeting the moderator asked whether ethical values were a focus in training professionals in the conferees' government. Approximately one-half of the participants responded affirmatively. Michael Baker, director of Fraud Control Policy and Investigations in Australia's Department of Defense, discussed how they have adopted a new management framework with the attention to organizational ethos to prepare public managers for their responsibilities. Similarly, Canada has adopted an integrity-based approach in preference to relying "solely upon laws and regulations." Ramon Escovar Salom, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Venezuela noted that "credibility and confidence" are ethical foundations of democracy and the market economy. Overall, the conferees agreed that a cross-cultural perspective that allowed for mutuality as well as differences was possible, and that professional public administration "must remain intellectually open to global dialogue on shared values, norms and structures" (Gilman and Lewis 1996).

Public organizations are moving to decentralization and forcing accountability issues to lower levels in the leadership chain. Fox and Miller (1996) have contrasted the modern and postmodern views. Views that are applicable to this essay include:

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<th>MODERN</th>
<th>versus</th>
<th>POSTMODERN</th>
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<td>Integration</td>
<td>versus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centralization</td>
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<td>Decentralization</td>
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<td>Totalization</td>
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As important as it is to consider structural ethical controls, the movement of public administration toward self-accountability suggests as great a need to consider internal normative controls. **While we are seeing international actions against corruption as a reaction to enforce ethical decision-making through compliance, a normative course is equally important.**

Normative Approach to Individual Accountability and Responsibility

There is no such thing as devolution in organizations without accountability and responsibility (Ulrich 1995). Accountability centers on external control and responsibility focuses on internal control. The dispersal of power among more participants calls for greater external participation in the public’s business to hold public leaders responsible and creates a dependence on these external groups (Thompson 1995 and Gortner 1991, 1995). This dispersal of power requires the leader to include external groups' values in the decision making process, further complicating the public manager’s responsibility in managing the organization.

Individual value structures are shaped by at least four components, as shown in figure 2. Individual attributes are the mental attitudes created by influences from family, religious activities, parental influences and cultural norms. Societal expectations that shape ethical reasoning are normally found in public laws, policies and norms of public and private behavior. The
organizational structure prescribes the system of authority and accountability in which the public servant must operate. These structures, mostly hierarchical bureaucratic in public institutions, sometimes require political maneuvering that may be at odds with ethical decision making (Cooper 1998). The organizational culture, a set of rituals, myths, values and norms that exist alongside a formal organizational structure, exercise powerful influence over the conduct of its members. These cultures may subvert the efforts of organizational leaders to accomplish ethical goals and may even encourage unethical conduct (Cooper 1998).

These individual values are intertwined with ethical reasoning. Individual values serve as guideposts for decision-making and conduct and are enduring, not transient (Hitt 1990). Individuals make a judgment about which course of action is correct based on the belief that the action is socially and personally preferable. Once established, these enduring beliefs become fixed and difficult to change. As shown in figure 3, values are the end-state of behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. Where attitudes can be changed by rationality, beliefs and values do not change as freely.

If the individual values created by the four components in figure 2 conflict with those of the organization and its leadership, discordance in values is created. Such discordance leads to:

1. Incongruity between the organization’s statement of values and their real meaning,

2. Incongruity between the values of one department and another, and

3. Incongruity between the statement of the organization’s values and the behavior of the leadership (Hitt 1990).

Competing values external and internal to the public organization, are major determinants of ethical reasoning in organizations and are the prime source of ethical dilemmas. In situations where incongruity exists, there inevitably develops a hierarchy of values so decision-makers can avoid gridlock with the organizational and organizational member’s competing values (Gortner 1991). This hierarchy may be implicit or explicit. It influences the actions of those individuals that work in the organization and colors their perceptions and behaviors. If this guidance system is not stable, then the decisions we make are based on the current situation and not a set of congruent and stable values. In most cases when there is incongruence between the individual and organizational values, a gap exists between the “is” and the “ought” (Skidmore 1995). When this occurs in ethical conduct, the reactive nature of the organization’s leadership is to enforce ethics through compliance.

OECD studies and cases indicate public servants value their obligations that bind individuals to organizations and create voluntary restrictions on autonomy. Typically,
individuals will accept external moral authority when it is independently filtered. The problem is that most public service leaders do not follow a consistent approach to ethical decision making and accomplishing ethical behavior in the bureaucratic organizations they lead.

While formal codes of ethics offer some standards of conduct and guidelines for ethical decision-making, a more effective approach is to mesh code enforcement with a normative approach to establishing an ethical climate.

**Training and Ethics: SEE Reality**

Public Administrative style, methods, hierarchy and training are closely interrelated with ethics. Training alone is not enough. However, serious, sustainable improvements of the public service without adequate education and training seem to be impossible. Evaluation of training policies in every country in the region appears to be necessary. Public servants must understand what is acceptable behavior, and, in the end, when the risk of detection and punishment outweighs the gains.

In the actual situation in SEE, beside appropriate legislation, established, accepted ethical standards by policy makers and senior officials are among the preconditions of training effectiveness. For adequate training we need adequate trained trainers. They will largely determine the quality of the public service and ethical conduct of civil servants. “Old style” trainers, with values and prejudices established under communist rule cannot provide appropriate training. Modern trainers should be able to understand, internalize and apply new, ethics-based training strategies.

At the individual level, the problem is not knowledge or skills. The problem is the mindset and mind maps of the public servant. To change this mindset requires a specific training strategy. When training is organized haphazardly, without training needs analysis or as a result of reorganization efforts in a series of unrelated, non-sequential activities insensitive to the ethic standards, it is both inefficient and ineffective. The environment for ethical learning processes within the public service and on the job becomes inadequate.

Missions of the United Nations, EU and other agency's public administration experts confirm in many cases that corruption was not treated as the top training priority. The ethics standards of public servants behavior are largely neglected. Better coordinated international intervention to administrative reform processes is required. Emphasis on democratization including human rights protection is unconvincing if not reflected in the ethical conduct of public servants.

Training concepts, content and methodologies must be adapted to national context. What may be morally unacceptable in one culture may not be so judged in another. Granted, there are some universally acceptable, basic ethic standards. But in SEE, after more than half of the century operating in a system insensitive to ethical problems and corruption, a specific regionalized response is required.
Training policy and role, mission and objectives depend on the strength of the education system. The training system can only build on what education system is able to offer; the existence of a sound institutional educational system that can back up the training system is essential. But the educational system provides only partial information on the social, political and economic environments in which ethical principles are nurtured.

When internalization of ethical norms by the young public servants at the central and local level is absent, inappropriate, obsolete or irrelevant to the country’s actual needs, training alone cannot fill the gap. At this time, in many countries in the region, a considerable adjustment in both curricula education and training are necessary as well as a more profound commitment to ethics among public servants and students.

Training Landscape for Ethical Behavior in SEE

Under communism, corruption served as a way around the rigidities of overly centralized states. Individuals in important positions in the bureaucracy were legally entitled to decide who will get certain services. In many ways corruption assured supplies of scarce goods or important services. But the prospect of obtaining bribes gave the officials reasons to create more bottlenecks in order to obtain more bribes.

The custom of receiving bribes grew and made many people from almost all walks of life lawbreakers and thus vulnerable to blackmail by the corruptive system. Corruption became an almost universal form of the control over entire society. Incentives to make payoffs from too many rules became a system of control. Some of those rules were introduced, as it seems, exactly for that purpose, as they provided the discretionary right of bureaucrats to provide variety of approvals, licenses, permits and certificates. In many cases these documents or actions were unnecessary and counterproductive. Yet, over regulation and strictly hierarchical structure of public service means citizens still live in an administrative and not a civil society.

The corruption, conflict of interest and bribery are not administrative problems. The political, economic, social and legal ecology in a country define the content, frequency and effects of such behavior. What can be done within the bureaucracy to control it? One solution is adequate education and training and its influence on behavioral change in those in charge.

In transitional societies, there is scarcity of organizations that offer adequate training and some inherent limitations in curricula design. However, public officials that undergo training are usually already holding important positions within the public service. Countries are relatively small and their labor markets are underdeveloped. In some cases, due to lack of personnel, those professionals and managers are almost irreplaceable. The impact of training, therefore, could be much more important than in developed, market societies. Style of service is a common problem with government bureaucracies in transition countries in the region, whose staff too often appear to believe they are there to
rule rather than to serve. This is a political, social and administrative problem. It also has critical ethical dimensions.

In many transition countries the quality of service from central and local government has been slowly improving as a consequence of variety of initiatives and activities. Key to this improvement is systemic training in the public service. Better service means learning more and reacting in a timely manner in the interests of clients and stakeholders. However, legal and ethical issues related to corruption, graft and conflict of interests are often inadequately presented in the training programs and training material.

Values Alignment as a Training Strategy

Values alignment as an element of an ethics training program can have a positive effect on public trust and facilitate efforts to combat corruption. Aligning values concentrates less on what must be prevented, but more on what is to be accomplished. Values define moral character and are noninstitutional by definition, and create the justification for an individual’s beliefs, decisions and actions. Few organizations attempt to use such an approach (Lewis 1991). However, as we have discussed, while the political, social and economic conditions of the ecology of public administration does exert pressure on public servants to conform, the most decisive pressure is coming from the bureaucracy itself.

Studies have shown an empirical connection between bureaucratic organization goals and individual values. Bruce (1994) used survey results to determine that city employees felt a substantial ethical influence from their public service managers and supervisors. Menzel (1996) found values, such as excellence, quality and teamwork, have an important influence on public administration organizational performance. Similar findings by Berman, West and Cava (1994) found that an adoption of ethics management strategies decreased absenteeism and increased acceptance of an adopt-a-customer orientation in many public bureaucracies.

Other studies examined informal strategies to incorporate values in ethics management. Berman, Cava and West found that “moral leadership strategies are more effective than regulatory or code based strategies.” Their studies show that leadership involvement strategies help avoid conflicts of interest and increase fairness in job assignments. Ethics also effects productivity in public administration organizations. Bruce (1994) hypothesizes that ethical employees are active, not passive. Active approaches, such as proactive management techniques, have a more profound effect on productivity than passive approaches, such as codes and laws. In Bruce's study, a number of city clerks in cities indicated that “shared commitments to high standards occur together in municipalities where ethical conduct is encouraged.” She concludes that there is evidence to support a participatory approach to ethical conduct in organizations.

Supporting this concept are Blanchard and O’Connor (1997) in their book, Managing By Values. Their process involves aligning values with daily practices, and is
accomplished in a participatory fashion with management and employees. Their “game plan,” incorporates clarifying the mission of the organization, determining values, accomplishing shared values, and aligning these shared values with daily practices.

This approach is the basis for training conducted at the Leadership Development Center of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service. Managers reported that conducting these sessions within their work units does help to align their individual values with organizational missions and goals. They report reduced conflicts, reduced absenteeism, increased productivity and reduced ethical problems. The focus and influence exerted by the leader and the alignment of values has had an effect on ethical behavior in this agency. This training has also been effectively delivered to Eastern European and South American public administration leaders. Moreover, the integration of participatory management theory with values alignment at these training sessions has been very well received.

Achieving skills to develop a normative ethical system that is congruent with structural and organizational values requires the training steps outlined in figure 4.

Figure 4

Steps to Create an Ethical Environment Using Values Alignment Approach

A brief explanation of each step includes:

Step 1. Standards of conduct and other structural issues that affect core values within must be clear. Those involved, including citizen special interest groups, advisors from the economic systems within the country, political officials, senior managers from the bureaucracy, supervisors and employees in the public service and other identified
stakeholders must agree upon a set of core values, expectations and boundaries of authority.

Step 2. Once this framework is determined, it must be communicated to each stakeholder and time allowed for each individual to internalize the information. Regulatory guidelines, policies and organizational boundaries must be correlated with these values.

Step 3. Individual employee (and work unit) values should be discovered and aligned with the core values including decision processes and day-to-day rituals. A participatory approach to this process will encourage an increased sense of inclusion and openness among employees. This leads to perceptions of increased control of the workplace and workplace trust (Olen 1998).

Step 4. Leaders can now create a strategy of public administration that describes the underlying values within the organization. This information comes from clarified values and expectations. This strategy along with the implementing policies and procedures should be reviewed regularly and aligned with these values. For example, suppose that a value discovered in a work unit is responsibility. Then policies and procedures should ensure individuals are given the opportunity to exhibit that value. Furthermore, appropriate procedures and sanctions should be included to deal with misconduct and deviation from the values and included in new or revised code of ethical conduct.

Strategy and planning sessions within each unit must include ethical considerations. These strategy sessions, which focus on overarching values and objectives, should include key stakeholders, allowing for a transparent view of the process and allowing greater scrutiny.

Trained Trainers and Public Servants

A stock of properly educated manpower in the public service is vital for any significant improvement in ethical conduct. Such a reservoir is dependent on strategies and policies that support investment in educational and training institutions.

To achieve this end, a “critical mass” of well-trained trainers in public administration is critical. The single most important impediment in addressing the ethical issues in training is the dearth of adequately trained faculty. Any trainer or researcher within either higher education, training research or public service training itself should have involvement in ethics training and research. This should apply to all areas of public administration and public policy making in SEE transition countries - both central and local levels.

Demographic factors, migration and emigration of skilled manpower and inconsistent policies of development lead to a condition of continuing shortage of skilled public service people-power. It makes it difficult for the public service in SEE to attract an adequate supply of properly educated and trained civil servants. Rules to guarantee career paths and adequate remuneration and incentives for public servants are key components of a comprehensive approach.
On the supply side, strong education and training institutions must be considered strategically important for the development of ethical behavior. All of these elements must be reflected in each country’s manpower development strategy.

Many governments have demonstrated the determination to deal with the problems of the training for ethics. In 1989 the U.S. Federal government enacted the Ethics Reform Act streamlining and strengthening the rules the conflict of interest and increasing the requirements for financial disclosure. Training on these rules ensues. In 1992 the US Office of the Comptroller General reported that shortcomings in training and lack of commitment of top managers were found to be two major reasons why more progress had not been made. It reported that almost three-quarters of the staff surveyed were unaware of the protection offered by the whistleblower legislation. Again, enhanced training and educational efforts followed to insure awareness.

In the report of the Auditor General to the Canadian House of Commons in 1995 the subject of ethics training was cited. Less than 6 percent of staff had received ethics related training. The Auditor General called for training which “provided information on ethical values and formal rules in Government and “would provide public servants with the tools to deal with ethically questionable requests”… and ethical dilemmas”. It also concluded that enhancement of ethics in government is not a matter of quick and easy initiatives and programs, but of long-term, sustained effort. The need for ethical behavior must be communicated clearly and repeatedly. And it must be both promoted and exemplified from the very top. If ethical principles are seen to be implemented in everyday decisions at senior levels, it can be expected that the behavior of people in more junior positions will reflect this commitment. **Ethics leadership is of paramount importance at all levels of management.**

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper has been to examine alternatives to adequate education and training to combat increasing corruption in the public bureaucracies of SEE countries. An ecological view of public administration provides a linkage between society and the public bureaucracy, a basis for decisions on value and structural frameworks and instructions on the nature of training needed for implementation.

SEE countries transitioning to democratic institutions must include in their development all sectors to enhance transparency and builds long-term public trust. Anticorruption efforts, including structural and normative approaches to ethical controls, must be aligned with the core values unique to each country’s ecology. The valid principle of self-interest all too often becomes selfishness. A society that allows its public leaders and civil servants to act without adequate restraint and oversight on antisocial malpractice runs the risk of self-destruction. Legislative regulation and enforcement are essential to control carelessness or greed.

The National Integrity Systems Source Book of the Transparency International outlines a number of basic components, including regulations and enforcement actions, for systems of government that aspires to a high degree of morality and transparency. Some excerpts include: (Murray, 1997):

1. Transparent and honest election processes.
2. Open and fair parliamentary structures, processes and procedures.
3. Rules to counter conflict of interests in public life
4. Public bureaucracies with values of public service
5. Public servants adequately paid
6. Administrative law ensuring accountability of decision-makers
7. Effective public financial and performance audit processes
8. Independent judiciary
9. Transparent and competitive public procurements processes
10. Free press, both challenging and responsible
11. Independent organizations of civil society

The list seems to fit the SEE countries' agendas transition in administrative reform and reorganization processes.

A legal framework including a code of ethical conduct is critical. But a civilized service should be based on self-control and policed by shared values that promote to leadership positions those who comply with the shared values. **Key shared values must include honesty, stewardship, respect for human dignity, and concern for others.**

As studies have shown, the key to developing an ethical environment is to deal with both the structural and normative approaches that set ethical parameters. Building trust with citizens requires congruence between the actions of the public servant and dominant societal beliefs and values. Knowledge that is unconnected with action lacks significance and value (Whittmer 2000). As Aristotle noted: *"We are inquiring not in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good, since otherwise our inquiry would have been of no use"* (Aristotle 1941).
References


