

By Jocelyne Hébert, in collaboration with Daniel Jolin

## A MANDATORY COURSE ON PROFESSIONALISM A guide for your thoughts!

Regardless of your field of practice and your area of activity, in your professional life, you will inevitably be faced with situations that have nothing to do with calculations and drawings. Ethical and professional conduct issues are intangible but oh so real and complex! And the solutions to such problems could not be farther from any algorithm. What should we use as a basis when pondering these issues?

The Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (hereafter “the Ordre”) fully understands the magnitude of the challenge this represents for you as well as every other member. After having conducted a number of studies and surveys, it created a new course on professionalism which will not leave you indifferent.

Designed to be offered on line and thus accessible at all times from your own computer, this course will give you a lot to think about. Its content will help you improve your knowledge in ethics and professional conduct; its interactive format, which includes videos, scenario-based simulations, questionnaires and activities, will help you look at your practice with a critical eye, and this from a professionalism vantage point, on a day to day basis.

Since it is mandatory for all members of the Ordre (see the publicity on the following page), this course will provide all Québec engineers with common knowledge in matters of ethics and professional conduct.

### **FROM ONE MODULE TO THE NEXT, ACTORS RECREATE REAL CASES**

The Ordre banked on dynamic elements for its new course. First of all, you will be welcomed by a narrator who will accompany you throughout the entire course. You will also meet a team of engineers, played by professional actors who, during the course, will be placed in various situations inspired by real cases which you can ultimately transpose into your actual professional experience.

These examples, as well as various exercises, will help you fully understand and grasp the content, which is divided into four modules.

The first module, “The engineer in society”, explains why engineers play such a crucial role in the community. You will no doubt identify with situations in which the subject matter deals with engineers’ ubiquitous contribution, a contribution that is much more complex nowadays, the work they carry out and the repercussions of such work having a defining impact on society and the environment, and the important issues all engineers must face, be they financial or those related to risk management, to name a few. This module also demonstrates the public’s expectations with respect to engineers: legitimate, numerous and very high expectations.

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In order to put forth this important contribution and meet those expectations, engineers must know what being a professional entails. Module 2 deals with this subject, “The professional status in Québec”. Why did we, as a society, classify engineering as a profession? On what characteristics was this decision based? Did you know that by becoming a member of the Ordre, you become, by the same token, bound by a social contract which includes privileges and obligations, namely towards the public? This section clearly illustrates that engineers are unlike other operatives or performers and that they must always carry out their obligations in line with the public’s safety.

That being said, in order to assume your professional obligations, it is better to rely on sound judgment, which will namely be based on the values of engineering: competence, a sense of ethics, responsibility and social commitment. Module 3, “Professionalism, first and foremost a question of values”, presents these values and their function in the practice of engineering. Your professional experience may have already taught you that engineers manage to overcome difficulties through these entrenched values. As testament to this, a deficient sense of ethics has created numerous problems which have often made the front page.

The Ordre has declared this shortcoming as being inadmissible and fights it on many levels.

You will then enjoy the team of engineers’ “adventures” in module 4, “Applied professionalism”. While carrying out a project, the actors must face various difficulties that they will overcome by turning to the fundamental values and duties of the profession, which are consolidated namely in the Code of ethics of engineers. This is presented in terms of reference relating to professionalism which you will be able to keep and use as a reference tool in your practice. The course ends with a knowledge validation exam, a multiple choice questionnaire, which must be passed successfully.

The mandatory course on professionalism... a source of inspiration for many years!