

# *Code of Ethics*

*for Trade and Services*

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EDITION



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SUPPORT FROM



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TECHNICAL COOPERATION



# *Code of Ethics* *for Trade and Services*

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# Code of Ethics for Trade and Services

## I. Introduction

Economic activity of the Trade and Services sector provides most of the jobs of the active population of the developed and global economies nowadays, definitely contributing to the creation of wealth.

In this context, Trade and Services Sector entrepreneurs, managers and professionals are faced with new civilization requirements on how to respect fundamental human values, at different levels:

1.1. The target of each company's business is people and to satisfy their needs. To safeguard people's core values of safety and well-being is a fundamental ethical dimension of management. Therefore:

- Value creation has to guarantee not only the respect of the legal framework where corporate activity and economic efficiency are inserted, but also the increased well-being of everyone and the preservation of the environment. Business ethics is only complete if it guarantees corporate sustainability in terms of profits, people and the future of the planet.
- Companies involve many non-business partners whose interests have to be safeguarded, with special emphasis on their employees. Their health and safety at work and their personal and professional development have to be guaranteed for true corporate ethics.

1.2. Associativism plays an important role in the promotion of corporate ethics in the Trade and Services sector. Aware of such responsibility, Confederação do Comércio e Serviços de Portugal – CCP – and its affiliate associations adopt this Code of Ethics, approving the norms prescribed therein and submitting it as a real management tool to the represented companies, namely in the following subjects:

- The respect due to the final consumers and customers.
- The trade practices concerning competitors and suppliers regarding the competitive dimension and shared values.
- The employees' personal development, condemning every form of discrimination, namely those based on their belonging to minority groups and on their gender.
- The protection of the environment.
- Solidarity towards the communities where the companies develop their business, including minority groups.
- The relationship with the State and the guarantee of an adequate legal framework.
- International relations.

## 2. General principles

This Code of Ethics is based on a set of principles, incorporating the activity in the Trade and Services Sector, which are the following:

2.1. The voluntary adherence to this Code that, due to its nature, constitutes a referential in evolution. The rules therein constitute the framework recommended by CPP to the companies of the Trade and Services Sector that can adopt it as a reference for the creation of their own Codes of Conduct.

2.2. The promotion of sustainable development based on the full exercise of the companies' social responsibility, on the encouragement of the entrepreneurial spirit and on the promotion of technical and personal development of the professionals of the Sector, dignifying their activity.

2.3. Strict compliance by the companies with the applicable specific legislation and with the Sector' agreements and conventions.

2.4. The intervention of each subscriber Association or Company, by itself and with the Confederação, to promote the good practices among its associates in a pro-active way and complying with the norms of this Code.

## 3. Associations and companies

3.1. The Sector's Associations and Companies, which adhere to this Code of Ethics, consider themselves active partners in the disclosure and applicability of this Code. They comply with its principles in their internal life and in the associative activities that they develop, making the necessary adaptations.

3.2. If any of the adhering Companies does not comply with the principles of this Code, the Associations will intervene to reset the good practices and, in case of recurrent non-compliance, they will publicly denounce them.

3.3. CCP will create a Ethics National Council for Trade and Services Conselho Nacional de Ética, to deal with recurring situations of non-compliance with the ethical norms of this Code.

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## 4. Market

Trade and Services' companies will act transparently and in fair competition in the market for a higher efficiency of transactions and increased customer satisfaction.

### 4.1. Customers

Trade and Services' companies will observe a transparent relationship with their customers based on the following rules:

4.1.1. The correct information of the services they provide, their technical characteristics, post-sale service, prices and payment conditions, either for traditional trade and services or transactions and service provision through E-commerce.

4.1.2. Trade practices which respect the customer or the user's free choice.

4.1.3. Advertising messages which respect righteousness, identification and truthfulness principles, within the strict conformity with third-party rights.

4.1.4. Complaint services which are effective to answer customers' requirements.

4.1.5. In case of divergence, and whenever possible, the use of extra-judicial mechanisms of mediation and arbitration.

### 4.2. Competition

The companies in the sector must compete fairly, accepting and respecting the operating rules of a market economy:

4.2.1. Their performance will be governed by transparency and righteousness principles, based on a competitive valuation focusing on the performance, merit and quality of their offer.

4.2.2. They must adequately reflect their costs on the prices charged, expressly renouncing every practice which may forge competition, to exploit an eventual dominant position in the market or to take advantage from the dependence of third-parties and impose inappropriate conditions or set discriminatory practices.

4.2.3. They shall specially abstain from any anti-competition methods aiming at eliminating competitors by refusing to sell, by setting discriminatory sales or by the practice of selling below cost.

4.2.4. They expressly renounce to use any disloyal means to deviate customers and, namely, they will not pass on false, misleading or damaging advertising messages that may affect competitors' reputation.

### **4.3. Suppliers**

The companies in the sector must maintain a loyal and friendly partner relationship with their suppliers, based on rules, which can assure a fair share of the benefits and of the responsibilities of the value chain in which they operate:

4.3.1. Companies will choose their suppliers according to similar ethical requirement criteria, assuming themselves as active participants to correct their trade practices.

4.3.2. The relationship with suppliers will be established according to transparent processes based on an equitable relationship and the strict compliance with the contractual conditions agreed upon.

4.3.3. Companies have to work out with their supplier any customer complaints.

### **4.4. E-commerce**

Trade and services based upon new information and communication technologies have also to conform to the following specific rules:

4.4.1. Companies operating through e-commerce have to answer in time, from the day when the customer sends the order to the company, and to inform with precision about eventual delays.

4.4.2. If the product is not available, companies must suggest, in a clear way and as an alternative, a new delivery date or the repayment to the customer.

4.4.3. Companies have to give clear and sufficient information to the consumer customer's decision, supplying exclusively the products ordered on-line, in conformity, in general, with the consumer protection rules and, in particular, with the rules of distance sales.

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### 5. Human Resources

Cooperation, solidarity and mutual respect will be promoted among every company employee, based upon the acceptance of the rules of this Code.

#### 5.1. Company policies

The management of the companies in the sector will develop human resources policies, which guarantee:

5.1.1. That people will be dignified, not allowing discriminatory practices or other practices that in any way may affect the personal or professional integrity of the employees.

5.1.2. Companies must develop practices and establish understanding platforms between the needs, which, on the one hand, allow the necessary flexibility to meet the requirements of competition and, on the other hand, assure the safety, and the employability needs of their employees.

5.1.3. Permanent professional valuation of the employees while they work for the company, guaranteeing the respect for the employees' quality of life, namely the observance of the working hours and acknowledging their merit as a result of productivity gains.

5.1.4. The adhering entity is responsible for the conformity, by every employee, with the company's ethical behaviour patterns. The employees' performance will be guided by the highest standards of personal integrity and honesty, by the respect for confidentiality, conforming to every applicable legal and ethical disposition.

5.1.5. The companies will require a correct professional conduct from their employees; they must behave courteously, be available and attentive to every person they relate to, respecting their individual differences.

5.1.6. The unacceptability of any behaviour which, baselessly, harms the colleagues' reputation, namely through biased judgements, rumours, unsubstantiated information.

5.1.7. Each employee's intellectual property must be respected in every situation.

5.1.8. Personal information on any employee is subject to the confidentiality principle. Its handling is limited to the employee himself and the personnel responsible for the safekeeping, maintenance and treatment of that information.

5.1.9. The hiring of people under age will be avoided, even in the cases foreseen by the work legislation, whenever it may in any way affect their personal development and school career.

5.1.10. No intimidation, discrimination, threat and moral or sexual harassment will be allowed on any of the employees in every scope of the life of the company.

## **5.2. Equal opportunities**

Special efforts will be made to guarantee the same opportunities to everyone cooperating professionally with the companies. Any form of discrimination will be fought persistently:

5.2.1. The principle of non-discrimination based on ascendance, handicap, gender, ethnics, language, country of origin, religion, political convictions and union affiliation will be followed.

5.2.2. Companies should promote equal opportunities and of dealing with men and women, namely in what concerns access to jobs, training, professional promotions and remuneration.

5.2.3. The right to a private life must be respected in every situation.

5.2.4. Employees suffering from a non-contagious disease should continue to work if they are allowed to do so from a clinical point of view based on the evolution of their health; which cannot, in any case, support an opinion on their performance with the aim of eventually dismissing them.

## **5.3. Training**

Investment in human capital will be specially favoured through continuous professional training of every employee, contributing to the on going development of the companies, valuing and protecting free initiative:

5.3.1. The hiring, selection and improvement of employees will be based on technical criteria, whenever possible with the help of a specialist of the area in question and disclosing the process to interested parties.

5.3.2. Companies must encourage their employees to embrace in a quality and productivity culture, searching for opportunities to enhance their performance through a learning attitude during their lives.

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### 5.4. Safety, hygiene and health at work

Companies must promote a healthy and safe work environment aiming at valuation and well-being, promoting trust, respect, justice and encourage innovation. Consequently:

5.4.1. They must offer the employee an environment that encourages active participation in the prevention of professional risks.

5.4.2. They get acquainted with the requirements of the jobs and of the professional risks to be able to conduct medical examinations in order to avoid non-adaptation situations of their employees to their jobs and assure health supervision in terms of the risks to which they are exposed at their work.

5.4.3. They will promote ergonomic analysis, in interaction with the interventions in the areas of occupational safety, hygiene and health, to eliminate/reduce professional risks, to improve quality and increase productivity, adapting the work to the man and this one to his job.

### 6. Environment and Heritage

Companies must pro-actively act to preserve the environment in their operating activities, assuming that the environment is everybody's responsibility and they will also contribute to protect the heritage of the communities where they are located. For this purpose:

6.1. They must actively cooperate in environmental policies of residues and garbage separation, focusing on the management of scarce goods and favouring the usage of biodegradable/recyclable materials.

6.2. They must ensure that their operations do not cause, either directly or indirectly, any aggression or loss to the communities' heritage, taking care of their external image to respect the archaeological, architectonic, urban and linguistic patrimony and improving the quality of life in the cities.

## 7. Social Responsibility

The management of the companies in the sector will pay particular attention to the subjects of corporate social responsibility, sustainability and citizenship:

7.1. They should promote company policies that develop social responsibility either internally or externally.

7.2. They should participate in social intervention projects, sponsoring and developing civic, social and cultural activities in the communities where they are located.

7.3. The community should benefit from them as a result of joining together public utility and the companies' participation in its life; the companies offer their competencies to the development of community projects, namely through corporate volunteership.

## 8. Corporate social responsibility towards the State

The relationship that, at all levels, the Trade and Services Sector maintain with the State must submit to the rules of this Code, namely:

8.1. Companies should fulfil every obligation towards the State, namely in what concerns taxes, and condemn corruption by State agents whenever they are aware of them.

8.2. They should satisfy in time and with total transparency, if confirmed to be of general interest, the requirements of public powers and their respective regulating and supervising agents.



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