

Contestant ID: _____

Time: _____

Rank: _____



ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

(540)

REGIONAL 2026

PRELIMINARY

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Failure to follow any of these rules may result in disqualification:

1. **Submission Requirements:** Contestants must submit this test booklet along with any printouts.
2. **Permitted Items:** Only the equipment, supplies, and materials specified for this event are allowed in the testing area. Previous BPA tests and sample tests (whether handwritten, photocopied, or typed) are not permitted.
3. **Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices will be monitored according to ACT standards.
4. **Copyright Compliance:** A contestant will be DISQUALIFIED for violations of the Copyright and Fair Use Guidelines.
5. **Topic Adherence:** Contestants who do not submit an entry that follows this topic will be disqualified.

DESCRIPTION

Explore the application of ethical frameworks to various aspects used in business today.

REGIONAL PRELIMINARY SCENARIO

Marcus is a software engineer at Digital Solutions and recently started working on a confidential technology integration project for a high-profile client. Because of the sensitive nature of the project, all team members signed a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and were explicitly instructed to avoid discussing any project details outside of designated internal channels.

One evening, Marcus meets with former college classmates for dinner. During casual conversation, he mentions how exciting his new project is, vaguely describing some of the new systems being developed and the companies involved, without using official names. His intent is to impress his peers and demonstrate that he's doing impactful work.

The next day, Marcus receives a message from one of his dinner guests: her boyfriend works for a competing tech firm and is "really curious" about the integration project Marcus mentioned. She asks if he can provide more details, promising to keep it between them. Marcus is flattered by the attention and tempted to share a little more. After all, he thinks, he didn't say anything *technically* confidential the first time, and this would just be a "friendly follow-up."

Marcus now must decide: Should he report the initial conversation to his manager, say nothing and ignore the follow-up request, or risk sharing more to build influence with his peers?

Should Marcus disclose his actions to management and reaffirm the boundaries of the NDA, or attempt to manage the situation quietly without drawing attention? What are the professional and ethical expectations moving forward? In your solution, include recommendations using your *Ethics and Professionalism Resources Manual* as a guide.