

Ethics Approval Number: 2012/105

Study Title: The perceptions of ethical leadership on influence tactics and conflict resolution styles

Researchers: Guy Curtis, Yilin Huang, Rita Titley

Summary of the study: This study examined workers' perceptions of the extent to which leaders are ethical, and whether ethical leadership is related to leaders' influencing methods and styles of managing conflict. Participants in this study completed questionnaires that asked them about the ethical behaviour and values of their leaders, and their leaders' use of influencing methods and styles of managing conflict. It was predicted that more ethical leaders would be perceived as using influence methods such as logical persuasive arguments, consulting and working with staff, appealing to higher values, and pressuring staff to do the right thing. It also was predicted that more ethical leaders would use conflict management styles that considered the needs of the other party to the conflict not just their own. Ethical leadership was related to conflict management styles that focus on the needs of the other party. As expected, ethical leadership was related to leaders using influence tactics that appeal to higher values, however, it was also related to influence tactics that are generally seen as less effective in management such as appealing to individual friendships in order to get tasks completed. The findings have contributed the understanding of ethical leadership, which is a relatively new field of research, by uncovering some of its connections to leadership behaviours.