

Another example is the attorney who wants the expert to become an advocate. As experts, we need to keep a perspective that we are teachers who are trying to convey our opinions in an objective way to help the jury reach a just verdict. Experts should never be hired to advocate for the client, that is the responsibility of the attorney. Juries want to believe that experts are providing them with the information necessary to reach a fair verdict while attorneys are attempting to persuade them because they are being paid to handle that role.

As members of the American College of Forensic Examiners Institute, we take a pledge to:

- Investigate the truth.
- Report only the truth.
- Avoid conflicts of advocacy.
- Conduct ourselves ethically.
- Preserve the highest standards of our profession.
- Share our knowledge and experience with other members in a professional manner.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Express expert opinions based upon knowledge, skill, education, training, and experience.

This is not a creed we should take lightly. This is an oath which we should take to heart since honesty and integrity should be at the base of our opinions. The principles of ACFEI should have a profound impact on the way we conduct ourselves as experts. These principles state:

ACFEI and its members are to remain completely objective and use their ability to serve justice by making an accurate determination of the facts involved.

ACFEI members are not advocates for one side or the other. Members should not intentionally withhold or omit any findings or opinions discovered during a forensic examination that would cause the facts to be misinterpreted or distorted.

ACFEI members should not misrepresent or overstate their credentials, education, training, experience, or membership status.

ACFEI members are expected to refrain from any conduct that would be adverse to the best interest and purpose of ACFEI.

Members are to be forever vigilant of the importance of their role and to conduct themselves only in the most ethical and professional manner at all times.

In a nutshell, experts should handle themselves with honesty and integrity because we all have to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror and know the only thing we end our day with is our own honor.



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