

## What are ethics

Personal beliefs regarding what is right and wrong

Behaviour that conforms to generally accepted social norms

The law

Virtues and vices

Belief systems

Integrity

## What is an ethical dilemma?

A situation where two values, responsibilities or obligations are in conflict. Value v Value

## Consequentialism

Position that conduct consequences form the basis for judgement of appropriateness

"Do the ends justify the means?"

Thus, from a consequentialist standpoint, a morally right act (or omission from acting) is one that will produce a good outcome, or consequence.

Some argue that consequentialist and deontological theories are not necessarily mutually exclusive

## Decision maker must recognise ethical

nature of problem or ethical decision making can not come into play

Research shows ethical issues stimulate a different part of brain to neutral  
People more likely to be ethically aware if

1 believe peers will see as ethical

problem (people look to social environment for cues)

## Ethical awareness / judgement (cont)

2 Ethical language used to present problem (framing the problem can influence response, also use of euphemistic language)

3 There is potential for serious harm (morally intense)

## Cognitive Barriers

### Barriers to Fact Gathering

Overconfidence

"Confirmation Trap"

Barriers to Consideration of Consequences

Tend to reduce number of consequences considered to simplify decision making  
Consider own consequences more than those of others, perhaps due to immediacy

May ignore consequences which affect only a few people. Put self in their shoes.

May underestimate risk due to illusion of optimism, illusion of control

Escalation of commitment over time. Somethings get bigger as time goes on and people have a tendency to continue due to the time already put in  
Barrier to Integrity

People are likely to think positively about their own Ethics. Known as Illusion of superiority or illusion of morality

### Barriers to Gut Feel

Be careful trusting your gut because it may be wrong

Unconscious attitudes likely bias our decision making

Non-rational emotions

## What is

business ethics?

Choices about what the laws should be and whether to follow them

Choices about economic and social issues outside the domain of law

Choices about the priority of self interest over the company's interests  
The principles, norms, and standards of

conduct governing an individual or group

## Normative approaches to ethics

Focus on  
Consequences - consequences

Utilitarian theories

Focus on duties, Deontological obligations, principles

Virtue Ethics Focus on integrity

AKA  
Prescriptive

Normative ethics is the study of ethical action. It is the branch of philosophical ethics that investigates the set of questions that arise when considering how one ought to act, morally speaking.

## 8 step guide to sound decision making

1. Gather the facts
2. Define the ethical issue/s
3. Identify affected people - stakeholders
4. Identify the consequences
5. Identify the obligations, and the reason for each one
6. Consider your character and integrity
7. Think creatively about solutions
8. Check your intuition/gut feel

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# Ethics Cheat Sheet

## Kohlbergs 6 stages of moral development

### Level 1: Pre-conventional morality (less moral than is typical)



### Level 2: Conventional morality (typical level of morality)



### Level 3: Post-conventional morality (more moral than is typical)



## Who is affected by ethics?

Individuals

Employees

Managers

Executives

Industries

Society

## Deontological ethical theory

Normative

Concerned with the action taken, not the consequences

Position that the most moral decision is based on rules, duties and obligations

AKA Duty, Obligation or Rule based ethics

## Virtue ethics

Normative

Founded by Plato and Aristotle

Considers actors motivation, intentions and principles and the type of character one ought to be in determining the most moral solution

Focuses more on the integrity of the moral actor than on the moral act itself  
Goal is to be a good person simply because that is the person you wish to be

## Influence of individual differences

Individual differences affect ethical judgement and actions

Differences:

Framework or Preferences  
Ethical 1)  
Decision - Idealism, the person's concern for welfare of others or 2)  
Making relativism person's emphasis on ethical principles being case by case  
Preconventional, Cognitive Conventional, Postconventional/  
Moral principled.  
Development - See Kohlberg's 6 stages of moral development  
Locus of Control Internal or external perception of control over life events. Taking responsibility for one's own behaviour

Machiavellianism - Self-interested behaviour

## Influence of individual differences (cont)

Moral Disengagement	Ideas that normal people don't partake in bad behaviour unless they have convinced themselves they are doing the right thing.
	Judgement of a MD person can not be relied upon

## Toward Ethical Action

Script Processing

Cognitive frameworks that guide our thoughts and actions  
Cost-Benefit Analysis

Too simplistic a way of analyzing

No moral dimension

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