

# Immanuel kant

Philosophy



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Kant: The Categorical Imperative. I work as a member of a team of four at a commercial organization. We are good friends and spend a lot of time together. However, there is an underlying element of competition in our relationship, which we choose to ignore. We are all aware that the Manager is considering offering a promotion to one of us. It is evident that we are all being evaluated before a decision is taken, and my friend Tom and I are the most likely candidates for the promotion.

In these circumstances, I accidentally come across a memo on the Manager's table. It instructs all employees to put in three hours of work on Saturday, in order to cater to the expected flood of holiday shoppers. The memo has obviously been overlooked by the secretary. It is also obvious that the information will be broadcast later to all of us. My friends, ignorant of this, plan a weekend road trip, and set out early on Friday evening. I find myself excusing myself from the trip on the pretext of a bad cold. The next day, I put in my time at the office. On Monday, the Manager offers me the promotion.

My silence is definitely an ethical decision. My motive of securing the promotion makes me hide the information in the memo from Tom. I am aware that this action is in conflict with my duty as a friend. However, I justify my action on the basis that I am not responsible for the road trip: in fact the idea is Tom's. Tom voluntarily goes on the trip. I am not using Tom as a tool to achieve my aims. My duty to myself overrides my obligation to help a friend, which is an imperfect duty. While my action may not be morally right on the basis of Kant's categorical imperative, it can be partially justified according to Kant's second formulation. However, I must confess that my action makes me uncomfortable and I feel rather guilty about it.