

Critiquing philosophical approaches to ethical decision making



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Critiquing Philosophical Approaches to Ethical Decision Making The purpose of this paper is to examine the conclusions that I reached for each of the three scenarios listed in Appendix B. I will explain how I reached each conclusion and why I believe each conclusion to be ethical. In Scenario 1 the mayor of a small town needs to decide in favor of economic prosperity or in defense of his elderly citizens.

For this scenario I chose the same conclusion for each of the three philosophical approaches - the mayor could allow the developer to build on the proposed location as long as provisions are made for the relocation of the nursing home and the senior recreation center. In regard to the philosophical approach of consequentialism, the AACSB states that " we should analyze decisions based on the harms and benefits to multiple stakeholders and choose a decision that produces the greatest good for the greatest number of people" (Brooks, 2007).

The mayor would be turning down an estimated \$150 million in tourism dollars and several hundred new jobs for the citizens by defending the nursing home. He would be taking away the elderly citizens' home and recreation center should he decide in favor of the developer. Either way, the consequences would be unfavorable for one of the parties. Therefore, he should decide to allow the developer to build once a location has been found for the relocation of the nursing home and the recreation center.

His town will benefit from the economic prosperity and new jobs and the elderly citizens will still have a place to live and enjoy their recreation. This results in the greatest good for the greatest number of people. According to Brooks (2007), "...deontologists focus on the obligations or duties motivating
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a decision or actions..." (p. 330). The mayor must decide what action would be best for the entire community as well as the elderly citizens. As the mayor, he has a duty to do what is best for all of the citizens of his town, not just a select group. He can accomplish this by allowing the developer to build once the elderly are relocated.

Virtue Ethics relies on the character and integrity of the mayor to do what is right for all parties who will be affected by his decisions. Being responsible, loyal, compassionate, and fair, he looks to do what will benefit the community, the developer, and the elderly citizens. He finds a solution that is best for everyone that will be affected by his decision. In Scenario 2 Catalina must decide whether or not to report and cancel three sales so that she and her coworkers can receive their bonuses. Using the consequentialism philosophy, this was kind of two-sided.

If Catalina took the advice of her fellow employee, she would report the three sales in order for everyone to get their vacation packages, larger bonuses, and new equipment, then cancel the three sales the next year. This would seem to be the result to bring the greatest good to the greatest number of people. However, there would be negative consequences that should not be overlooked. She would be costing the company and the stakeholders by causing the entire branch to receive benefits that otherwise would not be paid. She would also know that she was not honest in her reporting.

As a consequence, she could lose face with the company and could lose her job. She should not report sales that she did not make. The deontology approach is based on her focusing on her duty to make ethical decisions. For <https://assignbuster.com/critiquing-philosophical-approaches-to-ethical-decision-making/>

this reason, she will not report, then cancel, the three sales that she is short. Her moral duty to the company (and herself) is for her to be honest in her reporting. Because of her being honest and loyal, she will stand by her virtue ethics and not report sales that she did not make. It would be wrong for her to put aside her virtues to help her coworkers take advantage of benefits that were not earned.

In Scenario 3 Malcolm must decide whether or not to report his roommate to the police after witnessing a drug deal in their apartment. Based on all three of the philosophical approaches, Malcolm has no other choice than to turn his roommate in to the police. Consequentialism requires Malcolm to consider the consequences of his decision. Should he choose to remain silent, he is putting himself and his other roommates in jeopardy. By allowing the one roommate to have drugs in the apartment, they would all be responsible if the roommate were to get busted.

That would do harm to Malcolm's and the other roommates' reputation when none of them were responsible. Therefore, Malcolm needs to report the roommate to the police and let him face his own consequences without involving the others. Deontology requires Malcolm to report his roommate to the police out of obligation and duty to do so. The roommate is involved in criminal activity which is against the law. Malcolm and his roommates have the right to live in an environment where their own liberties are not being jeopardized by another person.

Malcolm, being an honest, law abiding citizen, has the responsibility of sticking to his own values under the philosophy of virtue ethics. For this reason, he must report the roommate to the police. Otherwise, he would be

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acting against his true character. He uses his courage to make the right decision and follow through on the reporting to the police. By sticking to his own values, he also shows his other roommates the kind of person he really is, someone they can rely on to make the right decisions for the good of them also.