

# [Rocket singh from the point of view of business ethics](https://assignbuster.com/rocket-singh-from-the-point-of-view-of-business-ethics/)

The movie begins with the introduction of Ranbeer Kapoor as Harpreet Singh Bedi. He has just graduated from college and is enthusiastic about being a salesman. He lands up a job as a computer salesman in a multinational company AYS Solutions. In no time he realizes that his principles of operating with honesty and integrity were considered obsolete. He is looked down when he complains about a person asking for bribe to install his company computers. Thereafter he is prohibited from contacting any prospective clients. It becomes clear that his boss wants him out. During this time he gets a slipup from a colleague to visit a prospective client. The client is a startup and cannot afford the company price for two computers. At this point Harpreet offers to try and cut down the prices. He finds that his company overcharges the customers. Harpreet then assembles the computers with the help of one of his colleagues. He uses a wholesaler as supplier. The final payment, he however, bills it on the name of Rocket Sales Corporation. Thus, the story of a new Harpreet Singh Bedi and Rocket Sales Corporation starts.

As the movie continues a few more people from AYS joins the gang. These people work in AYS and works for Rocket Sales Corporation. This corporation however does not use bribe to win contracts. It offers computers at lower prices, better services and 24 hour helpline. This helpline is one of the numbers from AYS which are unused. Harpreet Singh maintains a list of all the facilities Rocket Sales Corporation uses of AYS to pay back the value to AYS when the right time comes. With time the sales of Rocket Sales Corporation increases and begins to affect the business of AYS. At this time the CEO of AYS becomes restless and tries to find out more about Rocket Sales Corporation. However he is not able to find out much as the company has not given any address but only a phone number.

AYS CEO tries to bribe Rocket Sales Corporation and also offers to buy them, but to no avail. He becomes desperate and in his desperation finds out the entire plot. He calls all those involved in the scheme and fires them. Rocket Sales Corporation is overtaken by AYS and Harpreet Singh goes to jail. He feels embarrassed for letting his family down. Harpreet then joins a shop like Reliance world as a service boy.

On the other side, AYS uses the same corrupt means in Rocket Sales Corporation and starts to lose business again. The customers are more interested in ethical, honest and effective methods than bribes. AYS CEO realizes that Rocket Sales Corporation has no value in itself but in its people.

In the end, the CEO tries again to get Harpreet back to manage Rocket Sales Corporation but he denies the offer. Finally, the CEO returns Rocket Sales Corporation back to Harpreet and he manages the organization with his original team in his new office.

There are different ethical issues related to business taken up in the movie and we would try to study them with help of some theories based on ethics

## Ethical Theories

## Domain of Ethical Theories

These are some of the theories of ethics that we have used in our analysis of the movie ‘ Rocket Singh – Salesman of the year’. These theories can mainly be distributed in two parts,

Theories based on conduct and

Theories based on character

## Deontological Vs. Teleological Ethical Systems

Theories based on conduct are further sub-divided in theories of consequences (Teleological Theories) and theories of duty (Deontological Theories). Teleological Theories contains the theories of Ethical Egoism and Utilitarianism. These theories suggest that different consequences may suggest different ethical actions and a morally right action is one that produces a good outcome, or consequence. At the same time, Deontological theories suggest that rightness and wrongness of an action can be determined by the nature of the action itself rather than its outcomes.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy dealing with right and wrong. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition is “ the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation.” To comprehend the Deontological and Teleological separations is a philosophical study; there are varying definitions that can be based simply on a person’s individual point of view of these types.

Deontological ethics is the study of moral duty; obviously, morals are based on many separate views, as a result, it is important to understand the varying perceptions. In the study of deontological ethics, it is the right or wrong of the action that defines it. This is versus the teleological ethical system, which focuses on the good or evil of the action and the person committing the action. Emmanuel Kant first defined these principles, ²” Kant held that nothing is good without qualification except a good will, which is one that wills to act in accord with the moral law and out of respect for that law, rather than out of natural inclinations. He saw the moral law as a categorical imperative-i. e., an unconditional command-and believed that its content could be established by human reason alone.” Ethical formalism tends to dictate the logic of the approach, and does not necessarily contemplate what benefits the human versus the law, however is based purely on the action and whether it is right or wrong. Another form of deontological ethics is egoism, in which the action must benefit the person committing the action, again however basing the form on the action versus the potential morality or reflection of god, as teleological arguments tend to be. Lastly, there is natural law, and the approach based on survival of the fittest, versus contributing to the whole. When utilizing this approach it is necessary to understand that according to “ natural law” it is necessary that some humans, animals, etc, fail.

A teleological argument, or argument from design, is an argument for the existence of God or a creator based on perceived evidence of order, purpose, design, or direction – or some combination of these – in nature. The word “ teleological” is derived from the Greek word telos, meaning “ end” or “ purpose”. Teleology is the supposition that there is purpose or directive principle in the works and processes of nature. Immanuel Kant called this argument the Physico-theological proof.

## Ethical theories based on Self Interest vs Interest for Others

Theories based on concern for self and concerns for others are mainly three theories, which are different from each other. If concern for self is high and concern for society is low than such a theory is considered as Ethical Egoism. In this theory, individual always comes ahead of the organization. In Utilitarian theory, both individual and society concerns have to be balanced. It is considered to be the idealist theory. While, in the theory of Altruism society always comes ahead of the individual and personal gains are not as important as gain of society as a whole.

## Theory of Egoism

Egoism is a teleological theory of ethics that sets as its goal the benefit, pleasure, or greatest good of the oneself alone. It is contrasted with altruism, which is not strictly self-interested, but includes in its goal the interests of others as well. There are at least three different ways in which the theory of egoism can be presented:

psychological Egoism– This is the claim that humans by nature are motivated only by self-interest . Any act, no matter how altruistic it might seem, is actually motivated by some selfish desire of the agent (e. g., desire for reward, avoidance of guilt, personal happiness). This is a descriptive claim about human nature.

Ethical Egoism– This is the claim that individuals should always to act in their own best interest. It is a normative claim. If ethical egoism is true, that appears to imply that psychological egoism is false: there would be no point to saying that we ought to do what we must do by nature.

But if altruism is possible, why should it be avoided? Some writers suggest we all should focus our resources on satisfying our own interests, rather than those of others. Society will then be more efficient and this will better serve the interests of all. By referring to the interests of all, however, this approach reveals itself to be a version of utilitarianism, and not genuine egoism. It is merely a theory about how best to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number.

An alternative formulation of ethical egoism states that I ought to act in my own self-interest–even if this conflicts with the values and interests of others–simply because that is what I value most. It is not clear how an altruist could argue with such an individualistic ethical egoist, but it is also not clear that such an egoist should choose to argue with the altruist. Since the individualistic egoist believes that whatever serves his own interests is (morally) right, he will want everyone else to be altruistic. Otherwise they would not serve the egoist’s interests! It seems that anyone who truly believed in individualistic ethical egoism could not promote the theory without inconsistency. Indeed, the self-interest of the egoist is best served by publicly claiming to be an altruist and thereby keeping everyone’s good favor.

Minimalist Egoism– When working with certain economic or sociological models, we may frequently assume that people will act in such a way as to promote their own interests. These are not a normative claim and usually not even a descriptive claim. Instead it is a minimalist assumption used for certain calculations. If we assume only self-interest on the part of all agents, we can determine certain extreme-case (e. g., maximin) outcomes for the model. Implicit in this assumption, although not always stated, is the idea that altruistic behavior on the part of the agents, although not presupposed, would yield outcomes at least as good and probably better.

## Utilitarian Theory

‘ Greatest benefit for the largest number’

This origin-of-ethics theory, proposed by Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, declared that all action should be directed toward achieving the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Originating in the 1800s, this theory strongly represents the (duh) utilitarian ideas of the industrial revolution: “ Let’s make things work!” There are 2 main sub-categories of Utilitarian theory:

Act-utilitarians believe that people should perform actions that serve other people. That is what makes one ‘ good.’

Rule-utilitarins believe that rules are made for the good of the majority of people. Therefore, a good person follows the rules.

A standard criticism of Utilitarian theory is that it would be perfectly morally acceptable to execute innocent people to prevent social ill for the majority. However, most of us find this immoral.

Utilitarianism is the ideas that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its utility in providing happiness or pleasure as summed among all sentient beings. It is thus a form of consequentialism, meaning that the moral worth of an action is determined by its outcome.

Utilitarianism is often described by the phrase “ the greatest good for the greatest number of sentient beings”, and is also known as “ the greatest happiness principle”. Utility, the good to be maximized, has been defined by various thinkers as happiness or pleasure (versus suffering or pain), although preference utilitarians define it as the satisfaction of preferences. It may be described as a life stance, with happiness or pleasure being of ultimate importance.

Utilitarianism can be characterised as a quantitative and reductionist approach to ethics. It can be contrasted with deontological ethics (which do not regard the consequences of an act as being a determinant of its moral worth) and virtue ethics (which focuses on character), as well as with other varieties of consequentialism.

## Theory of Distributive Justice

‘ Equality of burden and benefit’

Distributive justice concerns what some consider being socially just with respect to the allocation of goods in a society. Thus, a community in which incidental inequalities in outcome do not arise would be considered a society guided by the principles of distributive justice. Allocation of goods takes into thought the total amount of goods to be handed out, the process on how they in the civilization are going to dispense, and the pattern of division. Civilizations have a narrow amount of resources and capital; the problem arises on how the goods should be divided. The common answer to this question is that every individual receives a fair share. Often contrasted with just process, which is concerned with just processes such as in the administration of law, distributive justice concentrates on just outcomes and consequences.

## Virtue Ethics

Virtue ethics is currently one of three major approaches in normative ethics. It may, initially, be identified as the one that emphasizes the virtues, or moral character, in contrast to the approach which emphasizes duties or rules (deontology) or that which emphasizes the consequences of actions (consequentialism). Suppose it is obvious that someone in need should be helped. A utilitarian will point to the fact that the consequences of doing so will maximise well-being, a deontologist to the fact that, in doing so the agent will be acting in accordance with a moral rule such as “ Do unto others as you would be done by” and a virtue ethicist to the fact that helping the person would be charitable or benevolent.

Virtue theory is an approach to ethics which emphasizes the character of the moral agent, rather than rules or consequences, as the key element of ethical thinking. This contrasts with consequentialism, which holds that the consequences of a particular act form the basis for any valid moral judgment about that action, and deontology, which derives rightness or wrongness from the character of the act itself rather than the outcomes. The difference between these three approaches to morality tends to lie more in the way moral dilemmas are approached than in the moral conclusions reached. For example, a consequentialist may argue that lying is wrong because of the negative consequences produced by lying – though a consequentialist may allow that certain foreseeable consequences might make lying acceptable. A deontologist might argue that lying is always wrong, regardless of any potential “ good” that might come from lying. A virtue ethicist, however, would focus less on lying in any particular instance and instead consider what a decision to tell a lie or not tell a lie said about one’s character and moral behavior.

## Principles of Ethical Leadership

According to the principals of ethical leadership, any leader should have these five qualities imbibed into him to serve ethically and justly.

Firstly, a leader should always respect others and point of view of others whether he agrees with them or not.

Secondly, he should not only serve self interest but also interest of others. A leader has to follow utilitarian theory of ethics.

Thirdly, he must show justice while taking decisions and making choices, as the consequences of his choices in most cases will not be limited to himself.

Fourthly, a leader should always show honesty and should be show integrity in whatever he does, if his followers will believe that he is unethical than the organisation will not sustain.

Lastly, he should look to build community and for the welfare of community which is dependent on me.

## Analysis of Movie Rocket Singh – Salesman of the year

The analysis of the movie will be divided into four parts based on the theories of ethics being used, i. e., the movie would be analyzed on the basis of theory of egoism, utilitarian theory, theory of distributive justice and theory of ethics.

The movie has appealed to the viewers as being light and refreshing. The movie would be analyzed on the basis of the ethical theories stated above. Some of the analysis may seem to contradict but certain ethical theories do contradict under different circumstances.

## Analysis on the basis of Theory of Egoism

Harpreet Singh did what he felt was just. Like all, his feelings of just and unjust were determined primarily on his life experiences. People are taught certain basic values. They use these values as base and build upon them as they learn from their life experiences. These secondary values may be entirely different from the basic values if the experiences are very stressful.

On the basis of his values, Harpreet Singh acted in his interest. Similarly, other characters in the movie acted according to their interests. This theory accepts their actions as being right if others would have done so in the same position. Assuming everyone to be sane, everyone would have done the same thing under same circumstances. Hence, the judgment part is limited. Harpreet Singh and everyone else are thus acting ethical in their part.

## Analysis on the Basis of Utilitarian Theory

Utilitarianism is the ideas that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its utility in providing happiness or pleasure as summed among all sentient beings.

According to this theory, even when Harpreet Singh had opened a company in his bosses company, nobody other than his small group knew of it. Thus summing up the feelings of all the people involved, who knew of the plot, the feeling turns out to be pleasant. It thus may seem ethical if no one else knows about the situation. This is so because this theory deals with the opinion of others or the interest of all.

Also, from another point of view, the customers were happy with the services of Rocket Sales Corporation. The employees of Rocket Sales Corporation were happy with the progress of their company. Except for the interest of AYS services, the interests of everyone else were being served. Thus utility in providing pleasure or happiness sums up as positive. Hence, according to this theory, the act of the main protagonist may seem ethical in nature.

## Analysis on the Basis of Distributive Justice

According to this theory, there is ‘ equality of burden and benefit’ in the society.

Starting Rocket Sales Corporation under AYS solutions may seem beneficial to some. If everyone does the same, then it becomes more burdensome than beneficial. Such practices, thus may seem just, but are actually as unethical as the practices of bribing to win contracts followed by AYS solutions.

Thus on the basis of distributive justice theory the act portrayed in the movie is unethical.

## Analysis on the Basis of Virtue Ethics

The components of virtue theory are:

7 virtues – faith, hope, charity, courage, justice, temperance, wisdom

7 contrary virtues – humility, kindness, abstinence, chastity, patience, liberty, diligence

7 sins – vanity, covetousness, lust, wrath, envy, gluttony, sloth

The character Harpreet Singh had all 7 virtues and he seemed free from greed or envy. He started the business with intentions of doing good to people in general. Only the act was performed in violation of law. On the basis of these virtues the protagonist seems virtuous and kind hearted.

On the other hand, his boss, manager of AYS had the qualities of vanity, greed, wrath, envy in him. He himself had been operating business by means of bribes. He thus does not seem virtuous.

## Analysis on the Basis of Marketing Ethics

Marketing ethics is the area of applied ethics which deals with the moral principles behind the operation and regulation of marketing. Some areas of marketing ethics (ethics of advertising and promotion) overlap with media ethics.

marketing necessarily commits at least one of three wrongs:

Damaging personal autonomy. The victim of marketing in this case is the intended buyer whose right to self-determination is infringed.

Causing harm to competitors. Excessively fierce competition and unethical marketing tactics are especially associated with saturated markets.

Manipulating social values. The victim in this case is society as a whole, or the environment as well. The argument is that marketing promotes consumerism and waste. See also: affluenza, ethical consumerism, anti-consumerism

In the movie, AYS solutions have marketed its product as the best. It has made itself a reputation of a market leader, a company which sells the best quality products. In actual, its products are not above market standards.

In one scene, the repair person intentionally burns the circuit board so that he can charge his client for a burnt circuit board. In this way they will earn more. Marketing for own personal interest, to influence peoples opinion and mislead them is unethical. But it is generally followed by almost all companies. The motive to do business is to earn profit. Many companies which are concerned brands, are selling products which harm the society in general. Be it carbonated drinks, cigarettes, alcohol or even unhealthy foods. They survive on the pretext that consumers want it. But they drive demands with their advertisements and branding. Govt. cannot take a stand because they are not considered as unethical as drugs etc by society. They thus survive in the good faith of people in general, giving them incomplete information.

Similar to this, AYS solutions duped people by making them believe that their products were best in industry. But in another context it is considered ethical, since to promote ourselves is not wrong. People can decide on what they know, and to tell them about us is also our responsibility. Hence, it can be said that AYS solutions was only promoting what it believed, that it was the best company in the industry and sold the best products available.

Thus one argument would put AYS solutions as unethical, but another would call it as ethical; if the company argues that what it communicated was what it believed to be true.

## Analysis of the Ethical Nature of All the Characters

## Puri –

As the owner of AYS solutions, he believes in getting the work done by hook or by crook. With no regards to values like honesty and truthfulness he pursues his greed energetically. He does not flinches in offering bribes from watchmen to managers. It does not seem that he respects many people and treats them as a means to earn profits. He does not understands the values and ethics in business and treats them as sham. He therefore, treats Harpreet as a dumb fool who will never rise.

The views that Puri has formed may have reasons to them, but from a neutral point of view they don’t seem ethical. Its only in the end, when he returns Rocket sales Corp. back to Harpreet, it seems he has a side which he had suppressed for long. He shows due respect to Harpreet for what he is and maybe realizes his mistakes.

Except for theory of egoism, Puri seems unethical being judged on other three theories.

## Nitin Rathore –

As being junior to Puri, Nitin seems a person who learns quickly in ways of deceit. Like Puri, he is into deceit and bribes to achieve his targets. He therefore, seems as unethical as Puri.

But as time passes, he seems to learn virtues from Harpreet. With the right company, he relearns what he felt was stupidity – honesty, integrity and truthfulness. He finds the honest way of life as maybe not very profitable economically (he had an offer to be vice-president if he finds about Rocket Sales Corp.) but very satisfying emotionally(he does not betray even under such an incentive). He develops integrity, self respect and qualities of a virtuous man. So even though he was not ethical initially but he is a changed man by the end, because of the right company.

## Giri –

This character watches porn in his office and trusts no one. He deceits for profit and is concerned with money, from Rocket sales or AYS. But he is a man of his word, can be trusted and does not betray any of his people. His ethicality is a grey area as he neither seems very bad nor very good.

## Koena –

She is the receptionist who wants to be known as more than a thing of attraction. She is concerned about Harpreet when he is out casted by his team because of his values. She shows compassion for people in general. But is also cunning and understands the hidden motives of the people involved and acts accordingly. Overall, she seems ethical. At some places where the ethicality of her actions may be questioned, it can be explained by a general urge to protect onself(i. e. an act of self-defence).

## Chhotelal Misra –

He is the waiter who is not confident about his abilities. His sense of worth is low. But as a person he is decent, modest, honest, polite and faithful. He is neither an ambitious man nor is greedy. He is ethical and a decent person.

## Harpreet’s patient grandpa, P. S. Bedi –

His grandpa is caring and decent. He values Harpreet and is supportive. He is angry at his grandson for his illegal act. But still he understands the innocence in the act and helps Harpreet overcome his guilt. He motivates Harpreet to live a life of honesty. Of what is projected in the movie he is ethical.

## Sherena –

She is Harpreets lover. She does not leave him after she gets to know about Rocket Sales Corp.. She somehow understands and supports him. She even lends her apartment as the office. But even though she understands what was done was illegal, she supports the act. With the kind of portrayal given to the character, it is tough to decide whether the act is ethical or unethical. Had she blown the whistle she may have seemed too virtuous. Yet she would have betrayed the faith. And what she did seems as something almost anyone else would have done. Hence, calling her unethical may seem a strong word.

## Harpreet Singh Bedi –

Being the hero he does what people would love. He is portrayed as a simple lad out of college, full of hope and energy. He stands for honesty, but being insulted for the same he starts his own company under AYS. He intends to pay back his boss for the resources he has used, i. e. electricity, mobile bills and rent. But apart from this he has also used the company information which is very valuable. He uses the company contacts and wins clients from them. He also takes his salary from AYS. He may be innocent and polite by nature but this act is not. Had he started Rocket Sales Corp. After leaving the company, he may not have got such an advantage over his competitors. Apart from this dishonesty he seems ethical and likable in a general sense.

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