

# Sample essay on ethical contexts

[Health & Medicine](#), [Addiction](#)



## **Ethical dilemma**

Since the United States is arguably the most natural disaster prone area in the whole world, it occurred to me that working at the center for Preparedness and Recovery might be wise career choice for me. Besides, helping people in times of need has always been a calling of mine. This work was also very well suited for me since I grew up in a morally strong background. Everyone in my family was involved in one way, or another in giving back to the community. Therefore, this job is much as a duty for my country as much as it is my calling. Therefore, when I recount the events that took place when we were out in Texas helping a community that was in a wildfire prone zone, you will believe me when I say that what I made the best decision given the situation.

I had just joined the team at the center of Preparedness and Recovery in 2012 when my team was called up to help the community back in Texas where wildfires were occurring every day. While most wildfires occur in places that are lightly inhabited, they easily spread out into areas where people live. In addition, people living in such areas are usually widely dispersed and therefore even harder to manage. We had been alerted of a yet another wildfire that had a high possibility of getting to people's homes and therefore our response was swift and hurried since we knew we had a lot of distance to cover.

Using the county road, we could see smoke rising from miles ahead of us. We moved around, collecting either locals who had refused to move to safety zones believing that they were not in harm's danger or others who had not heard the wildfire alert to move. After collecting all the people, we decided to

do a standard last minute round up of places that the county had indicated as abandoned. After driving through different roads for as long as we would, my teammate and I decided to return the five locals that we had round up and remove them from the danger zone when we received a call that someone might be trapped in the house that was definitely in the path of the wild fire. Being that we were the only rescue team close enough, we decided to go for the rescue. The closer we got the more nervous I became. I would also sense that the rest of people in the van were getting nervous, as well. The smoke was getting thicker, and we could hear the rasping of burning leaves.

We could hear a man screaming on the top of his lungs when we got closer to the said cabin. Unfortunately, we had not got there in time since the fire had already reached near the back entrance of the cabin and so we could only use the front door. Unfortunately, the front door was locked. Looking through the window, I saw the man lying in the floor next to a wheel chair unable to move. Apparently, he had fallen down from his wheelchair since he was paralyzed from the waist down, and that was why he could not reach for the keys to the door.

### **How I handled the situation**

I could feel it was getting hotter and the smoke getting thicker than ever before. However, the door just would not budge. The door to the cabin was made from very tough wood and the windows had rails meaning that we would not be able to access the house through them to save the paralyzed man. We really tried our best, but the fire had now caught the house, and this meant that we were now in danger. We did not have the proper

equipment to stop a fire or even break the door down and, therefore, my teammate, and I had to make a decision very fast. Although we really wanted to help this man, we now had to get out of there soon as all our lives were now in danger. Leaving that man helpless in the kitchen floor was the hardest decision that I ever made in my life. I could not hold back my tears as we drove away from the house only hoping that the man would die from the smoke before the flames got to him.

### **How u might or might not change how I handled the situation in the future**

Many tragedies happen in my line of work, but the events of that day have always affected me. Maybe it was the helpless state that the man was in or it might have been the fact that we were so close to rescuing him, but I always question me if we made the right decision ethically. Looking back, I realize that we had not only put ourselves in danger but also the people that we had rescued earlier on. Given that we also had civilians in the sight, we should not have stayed for such a long time at the cabin. Although we felt that it was morally correct to help the man in the cabin for as long as we could, we should not have risked so many lives in the process.

### **What I might do differently in the future**

In the future, if a call were made requiring my team and me to rescue stranded civilians in a danger prone area, I will always make the initiative ensuring that the safety of the civilians already rescued before reentering a danger free zone. The anxiety of knowing that many more lives were in danger engaging in activities that were not their responsibility was something that I would not want to deal with in the future. They also should

not have been exposed to the emotional burden that we exposed them to that day when we left the helpless man in the floor of that cabin. However, painful it was, it was more ethical to save the five lives than risk them for one man. These are the kind of ethical challenges that we face every single day in our profession.