

Name:

Hamza

ID:

16469

Subject:

Professional Ethics

Submitted to:

Sir, Ahmad Hassan

Q1

Ethics is the word that refers to morals, values, and beliefs of the individuals, family or the society. The word has several meanings. Basically it is an activity and process of inquiry. Secondly, it is different from non-moral problems, when dealing with issues and controversies. Thirdly, ethics refers to a particular set of beliefs, attitudes, and habits of individuals or family or groups concerned with morals. Fourth, it is used to mean 'morally correct'.

The study on ethics helps to know the people's beliefs, values, and morals, learn the good and bad of them, and practice them to maximize their well-being and happiness. It involves the inquiry on the existing situations, form judgments and resolve the issues. In addition, ethics tells us how to live, to respond to issues, through the duties, rights, responsibilities, and obligations. In religion, similar principles are included, but the reasoning on procedures is limited. The principles and practices of religions have varied from time to time (history), region (geography, climatic conditions), religion, society, language, caste and creed. But ethics has grown to a large extent beyond the barriers listed above. In ethics, the focus is to study and apply the principles and practices, universally.

Explanation

It may be worthwhile to define ethics first. To my mind, ethics is all about justice, fairness, morality. I use these terms as synonyms. (For those who define these terms differently, just substitute the word that you use when you mean fairness towards others.)

I **define** ethical values as those which govern our attitudes and behavior towards others, and affect them in a way that may be just or unjust.

To my mind the ethical values that govern our attitudes are (in that order):

1. Preservation of life. The preservation of life takes priority over all the other values that may follow. Within these, the most important is the preservation of one's child's life or that of an innocent, followed by the preservation of one's own life, followed by the preservation of the life of an evil person.
2. Rationality is the next, and will most strongly govern our behavior provided that there is no conflict with item no 1.
3. Natural justice is third, and will prevail unless it conflicts with items 1 and 2.
4. Non-maleficence. The degree of harm is also very, very important. Severe harm to another must be avoided more than mild harm.
5. Autonomy
6. Fidelity (fulfillment of a promise)
7. Public good
8. Veracity (truthfulness)
9. Loyalty (includes patriotism)
10. Beneficence

11. Altruism (there's some difference between beneficence and altruism. Won't go into this here)
I've been working on developing a hierarchy of ethical values. Initial results suggest the order above. There are likely to be several more values I haven't included. Also, each value seems to be greatly influenced by the degree of harm it causes.

At present, this order is not established. Most of my colleagues on this study believe that it will never be, and perhaps they are right. But I am quite certain that some, perhaps most, of these values have grades or sub-classes (e.g. mild harm, severe harm, small untruth, major untruth).

Example:

The problem with ethics is exactly that there isn't a universal law for it. There isn't one set of considerations which will always give the right answer.

Personally, I'm in favour of being kind. If there is kind solution to a problem then that's the right solution. Except that I know that it is not always the case and so I harbour a number of convictions of which I'm fully aware will be considered unethical by most people, while I "know" that it is the best and therefore the most ethical solution.

If there were a "simple" formula for being ethical, there wouldn't be a need for ethical councils, but they are in many places.

These councils are composed of people we generally consider of being ethical.

If we look at the definition of ethics, it read

Ethics or moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct.

Right and Wrong. Moral also deals with it and that point to the problem: right and wrong are defined by what we're used to and is not the result of neither logic or a specific theory and is also not given by any god.

So, sorry, but there aren't any examples of good ethics, because universally accepted good ethics does not exist.

The true religion teachings teach compassion, patience, feeding the hungry, defending the oppressed, self-constraint, forgiveness; those should bring people together and should transform earth into a paradise

The God who created people has empowered them with original gifts; the gifts of minds, intelligence, and the conscience are internal personal Prophets for each human to guide him to the basic measures of the good things to do and the bad things to avoid

People who never heard of Prophets are not forsaken because God has equipped them by internal prophets and they will be guided to the wisdom by their original gifts

The person can have morality based on the gifts of reason and conscience if he likes for others what he likes for himself (applying the golden rule)

The person becomes immoral when he does not make use of the gift of conscience and allow himself to be wicked and unjust.

We have not created the gifts of conscience and reason.

Morality and good deeds are not enough for salvation; salvation requires obedience and repentance in addition to the good deeds.

We should remember that the true religion teachings will not change

Feeding the hungry is a virtue as taught by all prophets and it will remain so until heaven and earth pass away

Defending the oppressed is a virtue as taught by all prophets and it will remain so until heaven and earth pass away

Self-constraints, patience, forgiveness and resisting temptations are virtues, and will remain so until heaven and earth pass away

Abortion is a sin because it means killing an innocent soul and it will remain as a sin until heaven and earth pass away

Homosexuality is a sin as taught by all prophets

Premarital sex is a sin as taught by all prophets

Sex outside marriage is a sin as taught by all prophets

and it will remain as a sin until heaven and earth pass away

Creation of male and female is one of the signs of God; marriage is the recommended relationship between male and female.

Qur'an 30:21

'And one of His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find comfort in them. And He has placed between you compassion and mercy. Surely in this are signs for people who think'

The common ground of all religions and all different sources of wisdom is 'the golden rule'
What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

Confucius

Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself. – Zoroaster, Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29

"Do not do to others what angers you if done to you by others." - Socrates

"What thou avoidest suffering thyself seek not to impose on others."— Epictetus (55-135)

"Do not do to others what would anger you if done to you by others." – Isocrates

Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill – Buddha

One who, while himself seeking happiness, oppresses with violence other beings who also desire happiness, will not attain happiness hereafter. – Buddha, Dhammapada, 10

"Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant with the weak and wrong. Sometime in your life, you will have been all of these." Gautama Buddha

No one saves us but ourselves. No one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the path

— Gautama Buddha, Sayings Of Buddha

"Remember always that you are just a visitor here, a traveler passing through. Your stay is but short and the moment of your departure unknown."

Dhammavadaka

"It is a man's own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways."

— Gautama Buddha

Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule

Buddha

One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma. Other behaviour is due to selfish desires. – Brihaspati, Mahabharata. Hinduism

Analysis of those teachings show that they are similar to the prophet's teachings, similar spiritual fruits from similar gardens watered by the same spring, inspired and gifted by the same great creator

He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of ten thousand prayers

Zoroaster (c.628 - c.551)

It is o.k. to question the purpose of life; that is a wise thing to do.

What is the value of life if we do not know the purpose of that life?

"It is the greatest good for an individual to discuss virtue every day...for the unexamined life is not worth living" - Socrates

In my opinion, I would consider these examples of ethics.

1. Integrity in personal and professional matters
2. Honesty, truthfulness and sincerity
3. Loyalty and allegiance
4. Responsibility, reliability and dependability
5. Charity and kindness
6. Respect for others and their property
7. Self-discipline and acting with reasonable restraint
8. Knowing the distinction between right and wrong and good and bad behavior

Examples of ethical behaviors in the workplace includes; obeying the company's rules, effective communication, taking responsibility, accountability, professionalism, trust and mutual respect for your colleagues at work.

Q2

Norms deal with standards of appropriate behavior. ... The terms are all similar in that they deal with right and wrong in behavior. They are **different** in that **norms** deal with **societal** standards, **morals** involve value judgments by individuals or **society**, and **social** are based upon **rules** (usually dictated by **society**)

Explanation:

There isn't a single widely-accepted answer to this question, and it's a matter of live debate. There are basically two schools of thought on it.

The first, and probably the commonsense view (if there is a commonsense view on this topic) is that there is an overlap between moral norms and social norms: that is, for some moral norm, that norm would be different if some particular social norm was different. This view is quite prevalent among people who work on issues related to the law: David Owens is a good example of someone who defends this view, especially in his book *Shaping the Normative Landscape* and his recent paper 'Wrong by Convention'. It's also the view you'll find among functionalists about ethics, such as David Copp (*Morality, Normativity, and Society*), as well as relativists like David Wong ('Pluralistic Relativism', *Natural Moralities*) and J. David Velleman (*Foundations of Moral Relativism*). No, I don't know why all these people are called David. On this line of thought, the conditions under which a norm is both social and moral is where it meets the requirements of being a social norm and of being a moral norm, and these requirements are compatible with each other.

The other view is that the categories don't overlap, normally because moral norms and social norms have very different foundations. This view is popular among people who come from the issue from the perspective of the social sciences, or from social and developmental psychology, because even children as young as three-and-a-half reliably and robustly distinguish between local norms, which are clearly social norms based on regularities within some local context (e.g. their playgroup) and global norms that are meant to hold no matter what the context (e.g. they shouldn't hit their siblings, not because the teacher says not to, but because it is wrong *simpliciter*). This identification continues throughout adult life. Recently there has been an extended defence of this view in the jointly authored *Explaining Norms* by Brennan, Eriksson, Goodin, and Southwood, which rolls into it a range of papers on this topic by Nic Southwood (esp. 'The Moral/Conventional Distinction' and 'Norms and Conventions', co-authored with Lina Eriksson). On this view, the requirements for being a moral norm is incompatible with the requirements for being a social norms--in the Brennan/Eriksson/Goodin/Southwood line, because moral norms are 'practice independent' (are what they are no matter what the nearby social practices are) while social norms are paradigmatically 'practice dependent' (are dependent on the nearby social practices for their content).

I think the best bang-for-your-buck for getting to know about this subject is to read Owens's 'Wrong by Convention' for the first school of thought, and Southwood's 'The Moral/Conventional Distinction' for the second school of thought.

This chapter examines two kinds of non-formal norms: moral norms and social norms. Paradigmatic examples of moral norms include the norms that exist in most societies forbidding murder, rape, and torture, norms of truth-telling and promise-keeping, and norms of beneficence. Paradigmatic examples of social norms include norms forbidding nudity in public places, norms of gift-giving, and norms of address. The chapter proposes a radically different account of what makes moral norms and social norms fundamentally different. According to this view — the Grounds View — what makes moral norms and social norms different is not the form or content of any principle but the grounds of the normative attitudes that constitute them. The grounds of a normative judgement are the considerations that justify the relevant normative principle in the mind of the judge.

Examples:

Some **Examples of moral and social norms** Are to treat others with respect, not to lie, to be supportive or to tolerate cultural and religious differences. The word norm is associated with rules and morality can be interpreted as customs, beliefs or habits.

So it can be said that moral norms are a guide to good behavior, based on the customs, habits and beliefs that guide the behavior of people, about what should be done, because it is good and what is not, because it is bad.

That is, moral norms are a list of rules or values that can improve a person's behavior in their daily life and favor their interaction in society.

They are closely linked to Ethics because it deals with good behavior, as well as with freedom, because its fulfillment is of free decision, since people assume them by themselves, of their own volition.

There are different moral norms that are adapted to the different social groups. Ignorance of these norms could influence wrong decisions, which may lead to harmful behaviors that morally deform society.

These actions are not judged by the Law, but will be evaluated by other people through personal reflection or value judgment.

Depending on the social structure of communities and their beliefs, both religious and cultural, moral norms may vary.

However, some of them are universally shared, such as respect for life, for children, for the family, which are mainly taught from the family, school, some media and the church.

These spaces of formation and encounter, should reinforce in their members these rules of coexistence, since it would be of great importance to be able to anticipate the behavior of others before a given situation and to get to live in more human societies.

Q3

if *trust* is important to you in *all* your relationships; if honesty and integrity are qualities you need to depend on, then we need to practice good ethical behavior in *everything* we do, not just when it's convenient.

Among the reasons to be ETHICAL, regardless of occupation are to:

- Make society better. When we help make society better, we are rewarded with also making better own lives and the lives...
- Treat everyone equally. Equality is a cornerstone of most Western democracies, where all individuals are afforded the...
- Secure meaningful employment. Often employers will look at a person's past behaviour as a predictor of future behaviour.
- Succeed at business. If you are employed in an occupation in which there you must...

We need to be ethical because it defines who we individually and us a society. These are norms of behavior that everyone should follow. Our society might fall into chaos if we accept that each of us could pick and choose what the right thing to do is. Some people may lie; others may not do what they say they will do; still others act irresponsibly and engage in harmful behavior.

There is nothing wrong with pursuing one's own interests. However, an ethical person must be willing – at least sometimes – to place the interests of others ahead of self – interest, because of our responsibility to a civil society.

Q4

The Six Pillars of Character® are the core ethical values of CHARACTER COUNTS! These values were identified by a nonpartisan, nonsectarian (secular) group of youth development experts in 1992 as “core ethical values that transcend cultural, religious and socioeconomic differences”.

The Six Pillars of Character are: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. We recommend always using the Pillars in this specific order and using the acronym “*T.R.R.F.C.C.*” (terrific).

Each of the Six Pillar of Character traits are used within our CHARACTER COUNTS! program to help instill a positive school climate and a culture of kindness, making schools a safe environment for students to learn.

Trustworthiness

Honest in conduct (not stealing or cheating), Integrity, Reliability (promise keeping) and loyalty
Safeguard public confidence in the integrity of the organization by displaying honesty in all dealings and avoiding conduct that might create the appearance of impropriety. Go beyond what is legally required to permit public scrutiny of your activities. Examples:

- The goal of corporate communication is the truth – well and persuasively told. In our advertising and other public communications, we will avoid not only untruths, but also exaggeration and overstatement. (Caterpillar, Inc., “A Code of Worldwide Business Conduct and Operating Principles”)
- Our business is based on a strong tradition of trust, it is the reason our customers come to us. Honesty and integrity are cornerstones of ethical behavior – and trustworthiness and dependability are essential to lasting relationships. Our continued success depends on doing what we promise – promptly, competently and fairly. (American Express Company Code of Conduct)

Respect

Civility (courtesy and decency), Autonomy and tolerance

Treat others with dignity – the way you would like to be treated. Be civil, courteous and decent with all employees, customers and business partners. Examples:

- We will consistently treat customers and company resources with the respect they deserve. . .we treat one another with respect and take pride in the significant contributions that we come from the diversity of individuals and ideas. . . we owe our supplied the same type of respect that we our customers.(Northrop Grumman Values)

Q5

Based on international center for ethics in Business by Douglas R. May

These are the steps of approaching ethical problems.

1. Gather the facts – Don't jump to conclusions without the facts. Questions to ask: who, what, where, when, how, and why.
2. Define the ethical issues – don't jump to solutions without first identifying the ethical issue(s) in the situation.
3. Identify the affected parties (stakeholders) – Who are the primary (direct) and secondary (indirect) stakeholders?
4. Identify the consequences – Think about potential positive and negative consequences for affected parties by the decision (Focus on primary stakeholders to simplify analysis until you become comfortable with the process).
5. Identify the obligations (principles, rights, justice) – Obligations should be thought of in terms of principles and rights involved
6. Consider your character and integrity – Consider what your relevant community members would consider to be the kind of decision that an individual of integrity would make in this situation.
7. Think creatively about potential actions – You may have some choices or alternatives that have not been considered.
8. Check your gut – Even though the prior steps have argued for a highly rational process, it is always good to “check your gut.”
9. Decide on the proper ethical action and be prepared to deal with opposing arguments – Consider potential actions based on the consequences, obligations, and character approaches. Do you come up with similar answers from the different perspectives?

Ethics test may be perform with following test:

1. Harm Test:

This highlights an important component of the useful ethical approach with goal of minimizing harm and maximizing benefit.

2. Publicity Test:

This test captures the approach know as virtue ethics.

3. Reversibility Test:

This test captures the idea of universalizing one's actions.

4. Code of Ethics Test:

This test is about the decision – maker's duties in his or her role as a professional.

5. Feasibility Test:

Can the solution be implemented given the time, technical, economic, legal and social considerations? This is a practical issues test.

Harm/Beneficence Test

The *Harm Test* highlights an essential component of the utilitarian ethical approach, the goal of minimizing harm and maximizing benefit. In contemplating an action, we do our best to envision its consequences, especially those likely to take place and those whose occurrence would produce severe harm. We then compare different courses of action in terms of the benefit to harm ratio they are likely to produce. We attempt to maximize this ratio.

Steps in Applying the Harm/Beneficence Test

1. Identify those who will be affected by your action.
2. Identify the impact your action will have on these people.
3. Determine whether this impact is harmful (Does it produce physical or mental suffering, impose financial or non-financial costs, deprive others of important or essential goods?) or beneficial (does it increase safety, quality of life, health, security, etc.)
4. Repeat these steps for the best available alternatives and compare them in terms of the benefit to harm ratio they produce.
5. Conclude by answering this question: Which alternative produces the best ratio of benefit to harm?

Problems with the Harm Test

Problem: Students may be tempted to either stop too soon or go too far in their drawing out the consequences of an action. Too much enquiry will produce a "paralysis of analysis" for the student and discourage him or her. Too little may be an issue of a lack of moral imagination, lack of motivation, or a desire to support a predetermined decision.

Solution: One approach is to emphasize the reasonable person standard (or perhaps reasonable computer scientist or reasonable software engineer). But it is possible that students lack the moral imagination to be creative about the possible outcomes for various stakeholders. Some structuring of the process can help here. Ask students to consult the ImpactCS framework to help them get their list of stakeholders complete and to help them think of additional dimensions along which harm or benefit might occur. Ask them to list the elements of the socio-technical system to find additional stakeholders.

Publicity Test:

In the *Publicity Test*, a person's actions manifest essential elements of his or her character. What we do reveals who we are. Our actions provide others with a window through which they can view our souls. Under this test, when I contemplate an action, I ask whether I would want to be known as the kind of person who would do this. For example, if the action were cowardly, would I want to be known as a coward? If the action were irresponsible, would I want to be revealed (to myself as well as to others) as irresponsible?

This test encapsulates the approach known as virtue ethics. Virtue ethics is less about how right or wrong a particular action is and more about the character of the person. Thus, in this test, the action is judged in terms of what it says about the person, rather than on any effects that action may have.

Steps in Applying the Publicity Test

1. Consider that the action you are about to perform provides a window through which others can see who you really are.
2. Then take the perspective of those others who are about to judge your character through your action.
3. Ask the following question: Would others view you as a good person for what you are about to do?

Variation:

Consider the following list of virtues: Responsibility, Honesty, Articulativeness, Perseverance, Loyalty, Cooperativeness, Creative Imagination, Habit of documenting work, Civic-Mindedness, Courage, Openness to Correction, Commitment to Quality, and Integrity. Does your action manifest any of these? Does it manifest the opposite, i.e., vices such as cowardliness, dishonesty, etc?

Problems with the Publicity test

Problem: Many students reduce the publicity test to the harm test by considering only the consequences of making the action public. For example, blowing the whistle on your company for illegal dumping of toxic wastes would fail the publicity test (under this misconception) because the consequences of making this dumping public would be the loss of your job and the adverse publicity suffered by your company.

Remedy: Any utilitarian calculation would include weighing the risk to your job and your company's image against the benefits brought to the public by revealing to them the illegal dumping. But this is the job of the harm principle, not the publicity principle. The issue here is what your action reveals about *you* the agent. What would people think about you if you passively went along with this illegal dumping? (Would they consider you a coward?) What would people think about you if you resisted this action, even to the point of going public and putting your job at risk? (Would they see you as a person of moral integrity who strives to do what is right even at the expense of personal sacrifice?) Perhaps your coworkers would look at you as disloyal (lacking the virtue of loyalty) but this would have to be weighed against the way the public you are trying to protect would view your action. Application of the publicity test can get complicated. But students can sort through most of this by keeping focused on the issue of what this action says about the agent as a moral person. Assume that our actions provide a window into our souls. What, then, does this particular action say about you as a person? Do you want to be known as the kind of person who would do this?

Reversibility Test:

The *Reversibility Test* captures a central idea in Kantian formalism, the idea of universalizing one's actions. It is also the main idea behind the Golden Rule. Positively, it tells us to do to others what we would have them do to us. Negatively, it tells us not to subject anybody to something when we would be

unwilling to have them subject us to it. Thus, we are treating reversibility as a key procedure to asking the universalizing question: "would I recommend that all persons in this situation act this way?"

On the worksheet, we add the guidance that the test is about treating others with respect. Again, we do this in the spirit of Kant who sees the issues of treating other as ends (rather than only means) as an issue of respecting the autonomy of all humans. Kant sees the universalizing question and the ends question as essentially the same, and so we combine them into this test. We think it helps make the test a more faithful caricature of Kantian ethics.

Steps in Applying the Reversibility Test

1. Determine *who* is going to be affected by your action.
2. Determine *how* they are going to be affected.
3. Reverse roles: put them in your place (as the agent or doer of the action) and yourself in their place (as the one subjected to the action).
4. Answer this question: If you were in their place, would you still find the action treated you with respect?

Closely related, alternative tests:

- Does the proposed action treat others with respect? (Does it recognize their autonomy or circumvent it?)
- Does the action violate the rights of others? (Examples of rights: Free and informed consent, privacy, freedom of conscience, due process, property, freedom of expression)
- Would I recommend that this action become a universal rule?
- Am I treating others in this situation only as a means to my own ends? (one is allowed to treat others as means, as in a business transaction, but not *only* as means)

Problems with the Reversibility Test.

Problem: Many students misapply the reversibility test in situations where they are being asked to comply with a morally questionable proposal. Take the case of the supervisor ordering you to dump a drum of toxic chemicals in the field behind the plant. A group of students might claim that this would fail the reversibility test because it upsets the supervisor: if you changed places with her, you would be upset when she refused to carry out your order.

Remedy: There are several responses to this. First, would she really be upset that a subordinate refused to carry out an order that was illegal? Second, the issue in the reversibility test is not whether your action may upset someone, but whether it treats those who will be affected by your action with respect. Refusing to carry out your supervisor's illegal order is consistent with treating her with respect if, in your refusal, you make it clear that the grounds of your refusal is not your lack of respect but your concern about the illegality of the order; in other words you are not objecting to the person but to the order. Third, an action may not be reversible with all stakeholders especially if stakeholder interests conflict with one another. In this situation, you must work to honor all the conflicting interests. If this should prove impossible then you must honor those that have the highest moral value. Sacrificing the safety and health of the people living near your plant in order to keep from upsetting your supervisor seems to get it backwards. Finally, have them focus on the action of the supervisor. Is his action reversible in relation to you or to the public whose health and safety is at stake? If his action violates the test of reversibility and you, nevertheless, go along with it, then your compliance would also violate this test.

If students have trouble working with the idea of reversibility, have them substitute other closely related tests. The Golden Rule is familiar and turns on the notion of reversibility. Another alternative would be to have them look at the rights involved. (Formalist ethical approaches argue that reversibility underlies our system of basic human rights and duties.) A third alternative is to have them examine whether their course of action treats stakeholders with respect or upholds their dignity.

Problem: Closely related to the previous problem is the tendency to reduce the reversibility test to the harm test. Often the question, "Would I think this a good choice if I were among those affected?" gets converted into the question, "What impact would my proposed action have on others?"

Remedy: Point out that the reversibility test focuses, not on the consequences of your proposed action, but on whether this action treats others with respect. Does it circumvent their ability to make decisions for themselves? Does it deceive or manipulate them? Is it paternalistic toward others in that it seeks to make decisions for them that they are capable of making themselves? Results enter into the answers to these questions but they are not the central issue; the central issue, again, is whether the proposed action treats others with dignity.

Code of Ethics Test

The *code of ethics* test asks that the agent benchmark the proposed course of action with the recommendations of a professional code of ethics. Engineers, for example, should look at the impact of their decisions on public health, safety, and welfare; almost all engineering codes identify this as the area of paramount responsibility.

Steps in Applying the Code of Ethics Test

1. Identify the provisions in the code that are relevant to the case at hand.
2. Answer the following question: Does your proposed course of action violate any of these provisions?
3. Check for any inconsistencies, i.e., instances where an alternative satisfies some code provision but not others. If there are inconsistencies, look for priority rules. (Example: many codes hold public health, safety, and welfare *paramount*.)

Hint: most codes can be divided into sections organized around relations between professionals and stakeholders of that profession. Four key groups are public, client, peers, and profession. Be sure to check code requirements from the point of view of these stakeholder groups.

Problems with the Code of Ethics Test

Problem: The code says nothing specific about the particular set of actions you are considering.

Solution: This is more a characteristic of codes of ethics than a problem in their application. Codes are not about the answers to specific situations, but more about principles that are valued by the profession. Student will require some moral imagination to connect the principles to specific situations, and even ethicists with lots of moral imagination may not find much in a code that applies specifically. Encourage students to take the stakeholder approach listed in the hint above as a way of opening up their imagination. Encourage students to do the harm/beneficence and reversibility tests before tackling this one. Those tests may produce results that make this one more clear.

Codes of ethics are hard to apply before the students are familiar with the intermediate terms (like intellectual property and privacy). So, if student have trouble with this test early in a class, come back to it towards the end of the term so they can see they have grown in their ability to apply the code.

Feasibility Test:

The *feasibility* test brings in a series of practical constraints by asking whether the selected alternative can be implemented given time, financial, legal, personal, and social constraints. By focusing the decision-maker on these constraints, the feasibility test helps to integrate ethical considerations with other aspects of a decision.

This integration of the ethical and the social is a central point of the ImpactCS approach to computer ethics. It is also an important issue for whether or not we can hold a person responsible for an action. The more an action is infeasible, the less one may have an obligation to do it. There are hard cases where this is not true (where, for instance, one may be required to *try* to do something, knowing it may fail).

Steps in Applying the Feasibility Test

Consider each of the following practical constraints that might bear on the proposed action:

- *Time*: Is there a deadline within which your solution has to be enacted? Is this deadline fixed or is it negotiable?
- *Financial*: Are there cost constraints on your solution? Are these fixed or are they negotiable?
- *Legal*: Does your proposed alternative violate any laws or regulations? Are the legal constraints in line with the results of your ethical evaluation? If not, what can you do to align them?
- *Personal*: Do the personalities of the people involved offer any constraints? For example, would your supervisor be open to persuasion, negotiation, or compromise? Or is he or she a dogmatic, close-minded, and inflexible person?
- *Social, Cultural, or Political*: Consider where your solution is being implemented. How would its impact be viewed through the social, cultural, and political milieu in which it is being enacted? Think of these issues using the several levels of analysis in the ImpactCs framework.

Problems with the Feasibility Test

Problem: Students think that the legal requirements trump ethical ones.

Solution: Often, student fall into this trap because of a lack of moral imagination. That is, they see the legal rule and simply say "Well, there's your answer." This may be used when wanting to follow a course of action that is shady in ethical terms, but "perfectly legal." This is done as a way of ending the search rather than beginning it. There are two things you can try in this case. First, emphasize the other tests and what they say, independent of the legal test. These tests are way to determine if a law is unjust. Second, ask students if they can think of an instance where a legal rule was clearly morally wrong (e.g. slavery in the US).