Lesson Plan

Fundamentals for Strategic Ethical Decision Making

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Ethical Decision Making

Course Description

This course explores the fundamentals of ethical decision making by defining the difference between morals and ethics, identifying moral sources in the context of the Air Force, and comparing and applying three broad ethical frameworks. The course is designed to assist Airmen in thinking critically about everyday ethical dilemmas they may face and inspire them to live, act, and discuss what ethical behavior means to them as Airmen. The course is intended to be interactive with a mix of lecture, discussion, and application.

In the course, participants are challenged to reframe how they typically view ethics in the context of the Air Force by reflecting on the limitations of narrowly conceived notions of ethics as only following rules to avoid punishment. Participants discuss the variety of individual moral beliefs they hold and the sources for these beliefs as constituting their differential worldviews while exploring what it means to enter into a "profession" through discussion of moral sources in the Air Force. Participants are then introduced to the idea of ethics as how individuals weigh competing moral values to justify a course of action in situations where there is no "right" answer, with three broad ethical frameworks presented to help participants think through how to justify the "best" course of action.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Distinguish between ethics and morals
2. Describe three broad ethical frameworks
3. Identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical frameworks
4. Inspired to think ethically in relation to the Air Force's Profession of Arms and Core Values

Time

60 minutes with option for extended discussion and debate.

Suggested Course Materials

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Paper and pencil for participants
- Handouts: 1) Case study example; 2) Comparison of Ethical Frameworks
- Optional: Three different colors of highlighters (blue, green, orange)

General Guidelines and Tips

- When leading a discussion, be sure to affirm, paraphrase, and synthesize comments made by participants. Make sure no one student dominates the conversation and that all participate.
- Avoid sharing your answers to the questions as your role is to facilitate student responses.

- If participants are hesitant to volunteer answers, ask them to write down their answers first before calling on them. You can also have participants think, pair-up, and share their answers first.
- When talking about ethical dilemmas, the goal is to weigh all viewpoints. So, be sure to avoid simple black and white responses. To do so, you may need to play the "devil's advocate," even if you disagree with the positions discussed. You may consider having the participants red team as well.

Overview of Lesson

Content	Time	Slides

1. Introduction
   a. Typical view of ethics: "Stop doing bad things"
   b. Problems with typical view of ethics
   c. Overview of lesson
	~6-8 minutes	# 1-6

2. Part 1: Defining Morals and Ethics
   a. Defining morals and identifying moral sources
   b. Defining ethics and how to engage in ethical thinking
	~15 minutes	# 7-12

3. Part 2: Ethical Frameworks
   a. Description of Agent framework
   b. Description of Act framework
   c. Description of Outcome framework
   d. Ethical frameworks in relation to Air Force Core Values
	~10-15 minutes	# 13-19

4. Part 3: Case Study Application
   a. Locating competing values
   b. Identifying options
   c. Weighing and justifying your decision
	~20 minutes	# 20-23

5. Conclusion
   a. Review of content
   b. Call to action
   c. Optional case studies for further discussion (# 26-31)
	~2-3 minutes	# 24-25

Map of Student Learning Outcomes, Mode of Delivery, and Slides

Learning Outcomes	Slides Addressing LO	Mode of delivery
SLO1: Participants will be able to distinguish between ethics and morals	-Definition of Morality (slide 8) -Definition of Ethics (slide 12)	Lecture Discussion
SLO2: Participants will be able to describe three broad ethical frameworks	-Agent (slide 15) -Action (slide 16) -Outcome (slide 17)	Visual (image) Lecture Illustration
SLO3: Participants will be able to identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical frameworks	-Addressing dilemmas (slide 12) -Case study (slides 21-23)	Lecture Application Discussion
SLO4: Participants will be inspired to think ethically in relation to the Air Force's Profession of Arms and Core Values	-Introduction: (slides 2-5) -Air Force values (slides 10, 20) -Conclusion slides (25-26)	Narrative attention getter Lecture Call to action

Key Terms

Moral failures	Morals/morality	Ethics
Ethical dilemmas	Agent Framework	Action Framework
Outcome Framework	Profession	Air Force Profession of Arms
Air Force Core Values	Ethics of compliance	Ethics of aspiration

Detailed Script and Directions by Slide*

Note: The following script is intended to help first-time instructors hit on all the key content and elements of the interactive discussion. Assuming average speaking speed, there should be approximately 20 minutes of content, 15-20 minutes of discussions, and 20 minutes for the case study. As instructors become more familiar with the content, they are encouraged to adapt the plan to their audience as needed. A likely challenge will be balancing time spent on discussion. Participants are likely to want to debate and discuss the topics beyond what 60 minutes may allow.

Slide 1: Hello all and thanks for attending today's discussion on strategic ethical decision making. Whether you know it or not, we all engage in ethical decision making—albeit some of us doing so in a more deliberate and cognizant manner than others. Indeed, we all face a variety of ethical quandaries in our daily lives, ranging from the more mundane to those with serious implications.

Slide 2: However, when talking about ethics, the topic often gets a bad rep, with discussions or reminders of ethics primarily occurring during times of scandal or moral failing. Thus, in the context of the Air Force, the typical view of ethics we often hear is the idea that we all need to do is follow procedure and just "stop doing bad things".

We can see this in action in the following examples. First, in the spring of 2020, Lt Gen Clark had to remind Airmen why honor is important, when over 200 cadets were caught cheating. In response to the cheating scandal, the Air Force charged the participants with six months of probation and conducted a review of the honor program stipulating new rules and guidelines for Airmen to follow to prevent future misconduct. In line with this typical view of "stop doing bad things," we see the response as 1) punishment for ethical wrong doing; and 2) new rules or policies stipulating unacceptable behavior.

Slide 3: We see this pattern unfolding in this next example as well. Here, an article reports how a command chief pursued inappropriate sexual relations with two Airman under his command and was caught and punished. Not only did the command chief get sentenced to a reduction in rank, a dishonorable discharge, and four months of confinement, but his case also helped lead to new regulations detailing inappropriate relations among Airmen. Again, the message is "stop doing bad things" otherwise you'll be punished, with new regulations detailing what those bad things are.

Slide 4: The question then is whether this typical view is sufficient enough to prevent ethical misconduct by Airmen. Indeed, despite the threat of punishment and litany of rules and regulations detailing the minutia of what Airmen cannot do, numerous reports depict continued ethical abuses. In this sense, the discussion of "ethics" gets hijacked to simply cover instances when Airmen suffer from a lack of judgment—or moral failing—by doing something they already know is wrong.

Indeed, how many of you feel "inspired" to do good from this perspective? If so, raise your hand. [Be sure everyone takes a stand either in affirmation or disaffirmation].

> *[Note: If some participants maintain that they are inspired by this, then, use the moment to go deeper by: first, asking them what happens when the rules are unclear or when there are no regulations on a specific topic; and second, whether just following the rules*

is enough to "achieve excellence" as rules are designed to place only a minimum standard of necessary conduct].

Alright, why don't you feel inspired? In your view, what problems arise from treating ethics as rules to follow with punishment for inappropriate behavior? [Ask for 2 hands to briefly explain].

[Note: Rules generally provide minimum, required standards versus defining what "success" or "excellence" looks like. Furthermore, simple rule-following behavior tends to inhibit individual thought by ignoring what the rule's intent or purpose is. Finally, if one only follows rules in order to avoid punishment, then they fail to acculturate themselves into adopting the underlining values or purpose of the rule].

Slide 5: This brings us to the point of today's conversation. Despite all the ethical failings we read about in the news, Airmen know right from wrong. Thus, this presentation is NOT intended to simply re-hash what rules you must follow to avoid being unethical or guilty of violating some policy. Instead, this discussion is intended to provide you all with the foundation to think through the tougher, grayer issues you all will face, whether small or large; as well as instances where you face competing or contradictory challenges, duties, or orders; and new changing circumstances.

In other words, the goal of this presentation is to move you from an "ethics of compliance"—that of simply following the minimum standards to avoid punishment—to an "ethics of aspiration"— cultivating a sense of doing good and acting upon such beliefs for its own purpose. To do so, you need to practice deliberate and reflective thinking to analyze your situation and weigh your options.

Slide 6: More specifically, by the end of this presentation, we hope you can: 1) define ethics and morals; 2) describe three broad ethical frameworks; 3) identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical frameworks to justify your decision; and 4) inspire you to think ethically in relation to the Air Force's Profession of Arms and Core Values.

Slide 7: So, let's get started by opening a discussion on what ethics means to you. Go ahead and take a minute to write down what first comes to mind when you think of ethics. [Give participants 30 to 60 seconds to write down their answers; be sure to give them a time warning to finish up their thoughts. Let them know there are no "right" or "wrong" answers, but that this question is just to get them starting to think about ethics]. Ok, let's have a few people share what they wrote. [Ask for 2-3 participants to share; be sure to thank them for sharing and paraphrase their answer or write down common themes on a whiteboard. Feel free to ask participants to clarify their answers if they are unclear. Make sure you avoid passing judgement on their answers—remember, there are no "wrong" answers at this point].

Slide 8: Generally speaking, when we think of ethics, people tend to describe morals. Morals are individual sets of beliefs about right and wrong, honorable, and dishonorable, behaviors or values to avoid or pursue. Morals are often specific to the individual—that is we all have our own sets of moral beliefs or values for how to act in a specific situation. As such, our beliefs on right or wrong come to form our world view, or how we see others' actions in relations to our own. Because of this, each of our worldviews are not neutral, but are imbued with value—that is bias stemming from our own beliefs—leading to competing perspectives. Indeed, it would be easier to get along if we all shared the exact same moral values, but because of our different perspectives, we often fall into conflict or debate over what is right in specific moment of time.

Slide 9: Because our morals can come from a variety of contexts, let's briefly share some of those beliefs. Start by writing down the first moral beliefs that come to mind. These may be morals regarding your personal beliefs—like don't steal, tell the truth, or beliefs related to your faith; or professional values—like duty, courage, etc. [Give participants 30 to 60 seconds to write down their morals].

Now, think about where you came to learn those beliefs. This could be from people you respect—like your parents or pastor, or from books, movies, stories, etc. [Give participants 30-60 seconds to write down the source of their morals]. Let's have someone share their moral belief and explain the source of it. [Ask for 2-3 participants to share. Again, thank them for sharing and affirm their response].

Slide 10: Now that we have shared some of our morals and the sources from which we got them, let's turn to moral sources in the Air Force. As we just discussed, morals come from our personal experiences, this includes our friends and family, but also broader societal beliefs as well. When you enter the Air Force, you don't leave these values at the door, but carry them throughout your career.

While your individual beliefs continue, upon taking your oath you all promise to take on additional moral obligations now as Airmen. Some of these values include what actions are permissible under international law when engaging in armed conflict, while others include military standards and customs, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The Air Force's Profession of Arms lays out all these values, including individual virtues such as integrity, honesty, and loyalty, among others. [Optional: ask participants to share if they can think of additional moral values and sources beyond those listed on the slide].

In other words, upon entering the Air Force you become a member of a "profession." In its original meaning, a profession signals a specific type of occupation, one that provides specialized training that contributes towards the common good. Examples of professions include medical doctors or layers; doctors, for instance, commit themselves to "doing no harm" and maintaining patient confidentiality while layers promise to uphold and defend the law.

Similarly, you—as Airmen—contribute to the common good by promising to uphold the U.S. Constitution and provide safety and security for the nation. As such, civilians place into you a significant amount of trust to uphold the values and traditions of the Air Force in protecting their lives and livelihood. As a member of this profession, you, as Airmen, are held to a higher standard of conduct than everyday civilians.

Slide 11: Now that you understand morals and moral sources, let's turn to ethics. Before doing so, however, consider the following dilemma: let's say you were taught as a kid that it is wrong to take another human being's life. However, once you turn 18, you decide to join the Air Force; now, as an Airman, you are expected to be willing to—or at least contribute towards—the taking of life. How then do you justify these two competing beliefs? What moral sources do you draw upon to support your beliefs? [Ask for 1 or 2 participants to share how their answer].

By answering this question, you have just engaged in ethics!

Slide 12: Still unsure what ethics is? Well, first, "the what:" Ethics can be defined as the systematic reflection of our moral beliefs. It requires deliberate thought and evaluation of one's situation. Whether you realize it or not, we all engage in ethics.

Why do we do it? Well, ethics isn't just an academic discussion spoken by a few in their ivory tower; we all engage in ethical thinking when confronted with competing moral values in a given situation. To reconcile this conflict, we place our moral beliefs into a rational system of thought placing some values as more important than others. This allows us to make a decision regarding how we can live and act according to our beliefs.

More specifically, how do we engage in ethics? Ethical thinking occurs when we face a dilemma, which we resolve by locating the conflicting or competing values, identifying what options we have, and weighing the implications of our choices in relation to our beliefs. In other words, morals are individual values we hold whereas ethics is the understanding of which morals we act upon when faced with competing options.

Slide 13: The importance of ethics has long been discussed, from the ancient Greeks up until today. This long tradition of ethical thinking has produced three overarching ethical frameworks that helps guide us to think about how to act in a given situation.

Slide 14: In a moment, we will describe each framework in more detail, but to provide an overview, we can understand the first broad, ethical framework as focusing on the Agent—that is the qualities or character of the person. The second focuses on the Act, or Action that is done, specifically whether the Act is "right," or not, regardless of the person doing it. The final ethical framework focuses solely on the consequences or Outcome of a decision—like the idea of doing the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people. To understand these differences, let's discuss each in greater detail…

Slide 15: Ethical frameworks focusing on the Agent, or person, describes how one should live their life. It asks the individual to answer what type of person they want to be? The goal of the Agent framework is to develop one's personal integrity to become that ideal type of person by avoiding vices and pursing virtue. The assumption is that "good" people do "good" things. The following example illustrates the core of the Agent framework—will someone volunteer to read it for us?

> "*I want to be a person of integrity by having the courage to treat all people with respect. Regardless of policy or procedure, I always call people out for when they discriminate or make disparaging remarks. Rules may change, but my integrity stays constant.*"

In other words, regardless of the situation, maintaining one's virtue is primary goal. How many of you would generally agree with this stance? [It's ok if no one raises their hand; participants may be hesitant to agree given the limitations intuited by the example]. Ok, then, what problems or limitations do you see with this framework? [Ask for 1-2 hands].

Slide 16: The Action framework is all about determining whether specific acts are "right" or "wrong." Under this framework, the key question individuals try to answer is what obligations do I owe, and to whom do I owe them to? As such, the Action framework is often described as synonymous with duty. In this case, the goal is to act according to the proper rules in a specific situation, with the assumption being that rules define what morally appropriate behavior is. If one faces multiple obligations, then the question becomes which take precedent over others.

The following example exemplifies the action framework—will someone volunteer to read it for us?

> "*It is my duty to follow orders and procedure, regardless of the outcome or my intentions. I never sign off on work I haven't personally done. As long as I am following orders, I am doing my duty.*"

How many of you would generally agree with this stance? [It's ok if no one raises their hand; participants may be hesitant to agree given the limitations intuited by the example]. Ok, then, what problems or limitations do you see with this framework? [Ask for 1-2 hands].

Slide 17: Unlike the Agent and Action framework, focusing on Outcome draws our attention to the results of our decisions. As such, the key question it seeks to answer is what impact does my behavior have on the world, with the goal being to behave in a manner that produces the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people. Unlike the other two frameworks, the assumption behind the Outcome framework is that only the consequences of our behavior, or decisions, matter illustrated by the following statement—will someone volunteer to read it for us?

> "*I believe that ensuring the mission is accomplished is most important, no matter how it is done.*"

Again, how many of you would generally agree with this stance? [It's ok if no one raises their hand; participants may be hesitant to agree given the limitations intuited by the example]. Ok, then, what problems or limitations do you see with this framework? [Ask for 1-2 hands].

Slide 18: Taken together, we can see how we might judge a situation in three different ways by focusing on President Harry Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb during WWII. To this date, military professionals and academics debate whether the decision to drop the bomb was ethical or not. Looking at the Agent framework we would look at President Truman's motives and character as the one making the decision. Biographers note that he struggled over the decision, suggesting he was prudent in his decision making. Whereas we might criticize other leaders if they were more rash or impetuous, Truman's character suggests dropping the bomb was necessary and perhaps ethically sound.

However, when turning to the Action framework we wouldn't care about Truman's character, and instead we would be more concerned about whether dropping the bomb was right in and of itself. Here, given the norms of military conflict, we might conclude the action was unethical as it killed tens of thousands, if not more, noncombatants.

Finally, applying the Outcome framework, we would decide whether dropping the bomb produced more positive effects than negative. In this case, it is thought that the bomb forced the Japanese to surrender thereby saving countless US lives given the tenacity of Japanese fighters when defending their positions. This rationale is most used in justifying the decision; nonetheless, military historians question whether there were alternative ways to secure a Japanese surrender without using the bomb.

Slide 19: How does this all relate to back to the Air Force? Well, when reviewing our three ethical frameworks, we see the Agent framework as focusing on the person's character, intentions, and motives; the Action framework concerned with following your duty, chain of

command, procedures, and the law; and the Outcome framework calling attention to the consequences, both immediate and long term, as well as their direct and indirect impacts. Importantly, any one of these frameworks is not sufficient to guide you in your career as an Airman. Instead, you are expected to balance elements from all three, evident by the Air Force's Core Values.

As we can see, the Agent framework relates to the Core Value of "Integrity First," defining who Airmen should be: honest, loyal, accountable, fair, caring, respectful, etc. The Action framework relates to the Core Value "Service before self," defining what Airmen should do: follow orders, procedure, and the law and place those obligations over your own individual interests. Finally, the Outcome framework relates to the Core Value "Excellence in all we do," defining what Airmen should achieve: a culture of excellence and the successful execution of one's mission.

Slide 20: Now that we understand what ethics is and three frameworks to help us evaluate how to weigh competing values, it's time to apply our knowledge.

Slide 21: As we've discussed, ethics helps us make sense of what to do in situations where there are no clear, "correct" answers. When confronted with such situations, the first step is identifying where the conflict or competing values lies.

So, imagine yourself in the following situation:

> *You are an Air Force recruiter stationed in a rural area. You believe excellent Airmen work hard to complete their mission no matter what. You personally set a goal of recruiting ten Airmen a month.*
>
> *Your commanding officer, wanting to instill a culture of respect and prevent burnout, issues an order that all work duties must be over by 18:00 so Airmen can return to their families.*
>
> *However, over half of your potential recruits are high school participants that live 2-3 hours away. They can only meet with your after school, which places you on the road past the 18:00 work deadline.*

[If using the handouts, pass out both at this time, including highlighters if possible. Student engagement will be better if they have both handouts available to them. They will likely want to reference the "Comparison of Ethical Frameworks" handout to help them remember the different components and by giving them the "Application: Case Study" handout they will be able to mark each of the ethical framework elements more easily. Be sure to instruct them to use the appropriate color highlighters to identify elements related to the three ethical frameworks. If you don't have highlighters, you can suggest participants circle, box, and underline the different components]. Before thinking about how you would handle this situation, take five minutes and identify which elements of the situation might relate to the Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks. There may be some overlap. For instance, "instilling a culture of respect" could be an example of "Agent" in that it focuses on the virtue of "respect" but also could reflect an "Outcome" as well. [Walk around the room to casually observe the participants to make sure everyone is participating. Offer help to those who appear to struggle. Be sure to offer a two and one minute warning; as an alternative, you may think about having participants complete this task in pairs instead of individually].

Now that you have sorted which elements of the scenario you believe maps onto each of the frameworks, let's go ahead and share. [Before turning to Slide 22, briefly map which frameworks map onto the scenario as a class].

Slide 22: The following colors highlights some of the competing values. Are there any you disagree with or are there any you see that are missing? [Offer participants 1-2 minutes to disagree, before moving on. Try not to get bogged down with too much debate over which values map onto which frameworks by reminding participants that elements from the prompt could map onto more than one of the ethical frameworks].

If you were to boil the competing values into one or two sentences, how would frame the dilemma presented? [Ask for 1-2 volunteers; if needed, feel free to offer the following as an example: "The orders of your commander, while intending to create a culture respecting and protecting Airmen's time, inhibits you from meeting your personal objectives and completing your mission"].

Now that we know where the dilemma lies, what creative solutions can you think of? Go ahead and partner up with someone. Hold off on trying to determine the best solution right now. What we want to do is think about as many potential solutions as possible, and then we will weigh our options. [Give participants 2-3 minutes to brainstorm options; if time, you can discuss the options as a group—you may need to play devil's advocate here to prevent participants from coming up with quick, easy solutions by pointing out how their responses might unfold].

Slide 23: Now that we have a list of options, you have to decide what the best course of action is. As you will see, there isn't one "correct" answer. Any decision you make will have its ethical implications and draw backs. Thus, each one of you may choose a different course of action, which is perfectly fine. The key takeaway is how do you justify your decision—which ethical framework, in this circumstance, do you believe is most important and why? [Depending on time, go around and have each student state what they think is the best course of action and why—make sure their reason includes reference to the ethical frameworks. It's perfectly fine, and encouraged, for participants draw upon more than one framework].

Slide 24: In conclusion, today we have challenged you all to reorient how you think of ethics, specifically inspiring you to think of ethics as something more than just "don't do bad things" but something to inspire you to think about critically and in relation to your own beliefs.

Our hope is that the concepts and frameworks shared with you all today will help you in your future when you face tough decisions with unclear answers.

To do so, we started by defining what ethics and morals are, described three broad ethical frameworks, practiced identifying ethical dilemmas and applying the ethical frameworks to justify the "best" course of action, and hopefully, inspired you to think ethically in relation to the Air Force's Profession of Arms and Core Values.

Slide 25: In sum, let me leave you all with the following call to action. Learning about ethics isn't enough. The real question comes down to how will you live up to your oath? In other words, what type of person do you want to be and how will you make the tough choices that enable you to be that person? What will you do when confronted with intolerance in the workplace? Or are asked to sign off or cover for work you haven't done? Will you have the moral courage to fend off pressures to skirt what's right to advance your career? At the end of the day, we need to

practice balancing all three of the ethical frameworks we talked about today. We as Airmen must have integrity, while following the law, and make sure our mission succeeds.

Slides 26-31 are optional if you want to proceed with an extended discussion and practice strategic ethical decision making through additional scenarios. See page 13 for additional details.

Suggested Readings and Resources

Myers, C. R. (1997). The core values: Framing and resolving ethical issues for the Air Force. *Air and Space Power Journal, Spring, 11*(1), 38-53. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA529801.pdf

Bonde, S., & Firenze, P. (2013, May). Making choices: A framework for making ethical decisions. *Brown University.* https://www.brown.edu/academics/science-and-technology-studies/framework-making-ethical-decisions
Hursthouse, R., & Glen P. (2016, December 8). *Virtue Ethics.* Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/

PACE. (n.d.). *What Now, Airmen?* Air Force. https://www.airman.af.mil/Products-and-Services/PACE-LI-Presentations/What-Now-Airman/#:~:text=Current%20ethical%20topics%20include%3A%20unprofessional,unacceptable%20use%20of%20racial%20titles

Robertson, E. (2019, February 20). Ethics & Arguments Crash Course [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18L5S7LlTUM

Visser, M. (2016, September 20). Ethics from The Good Place [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut0ai4s4mjU&list=PLProIJ0CdtJvmXjl07kAfiGMC9euCSpQP

Powers, T. (1995, July). Was it Right? *The Atlantic.* https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/07/was-it-right/376364/

Application: Case Study

Directions: Begin by reading the following scenario. Next, locate the competing/conflicting values by identifying which parts of the scenario relate to Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks using three different colors of highlighters or by underlining, circling, and boxing them. Use an orange highlighter or an underline to mark Agent values; a blue highlighter or circle for Action; a green highlighter or box for Outcome.

Step 1.1 Scenario: Locating the conflict/competing values

> You are an Air Force recruiter stationed in a rural area. You believe excellent Airmen work hard to complete their mission no matter what. You personally set a goal of recruiting ten Airmen a month.
>
> Your commanding officer, wanting to instill a culture of respect and prevent burnout, issues an order that all work duties must be over by 18:00 so Airmen can return to their families.
>
> However, over half of your potential recruits are high school participants that live 2-3 hours away. They can only meet with your after school, which places you on the road past the 18:00 work deadline.

Step 1.2 Identify the dilemma: After locating the competing values, summarize the dilemma in one or two sentences.

Step 2 Identify your options: Brainstorm three to five different options you could pursue in light of the dilemma.

Step 3.1 Weigh your choices: Evaluate the pros and cons as well the immediate and long-term consequences of your options. Be sure to link your evaluation to the three ethical frameworks (Agent, Action, Outcome).
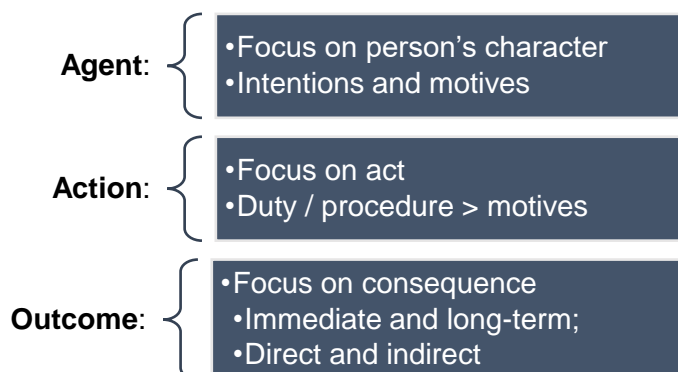
Step 3.2 Justify your course of action: Finally, justify which course of action you think is best by stating which ethical frameworks you hold to be more important in this situation.
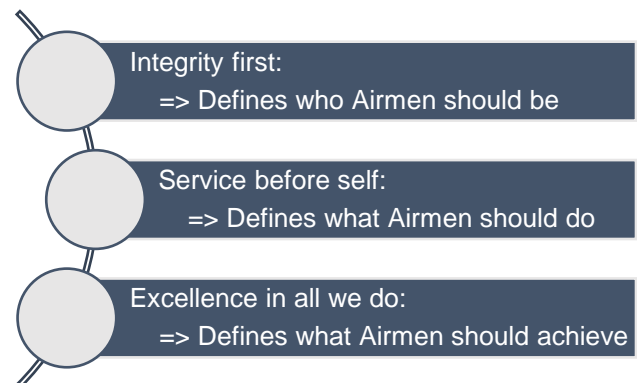
Comparison of Ethical Frameworks

	Agent "How to live your life"	**Action** "Is it right?"	**Outcome** "Are the results good?"
Key question to ask:	What kind of person do I want to be?	What obligations do I owe and to whom?	What impact does my behavior have on the world?
Goals:	Develop personal integrity, avoid vices	Act according to the proper rules in a situation	Greatest good for greatest number of people
Assumption:	Good people do good things	Rules define good behavior	Consequences determine what is good
Example:	*I want to be a person of integrity by having the courage to treat all people with respect.* *Regardless of policy or procedure, I always call people out for when they discriminate or make disparaging remarks. Rules may change, but my integrity stays constant.*	*It is my duty to follow orders and procedure, regardless of the outcome or my intentions.* *I never sign off on work I haven't personally done. As long as I am following orders, I am doing my duty.*	*I believe that ensuring the mission is accomplished is most important, no matter how it is done.*

Ethical Frameworks

Agent:
- Focus on person's character
- Intentions and motives

Action:
- Focus on act
- Duty / procedure > motives

Outcome:
- Focus on consequence
- Immediate and long-term;
- Direct and indirect

Air Force Core Values

Integrity first:
=> Defines who Airmen should be

Service before self:
=> Defines what Airmen should do

Excellence in all we do:
=> Defines what Airmen should achieve

Optional Extended Discussion Scenarios*

Note: Although case studies are excellent means to apply concepts and develop skills, participants often claim that more information is needed to evaluate them. Be sure to recognize this constraint while challenging participants to do their best; indeed, in real life, we don't have complete information about any given situation and yet we manage to muddle through anyways.

Purpose: Regardless of how you elect to break out and discuss the scenarios, it's important to remember that the goal is to provide participants with additional reps practicing the content covered in the presentation, specifically the locating of competing values, identifying options, and weighing and justifying choices. In each scenario, you may need to remind participants to connect their evaluations to the three overarching ethical frameworks (Agent, Action, Outcome). Remember, the goal is not to suggest that there is one clear answer, but to highlight the gray areas. As such, you may need to play devil's advocate at times. You may also need to challenge participants to "game out" what options they have to prevent easy answers like, "I'll just go talk to my supervisor." In this case, help them walk through "what if's" and or pose additional hypotheticals to make sure they think through the scenarios.

Directions: Four additional scenarios are provided for participants to further practice their strategic ethical decision making skills. The PowerPoint slides are set up so that, if you want, you can have participants select which topic (slide 27) they want to discuss without having to go into the details of each one. However, it is suggested that you print out each scenario to pass out to participants so that the class is not reliant solely on the PowerPoint, especially given that different groups may need to see each scenario at the same time. Depending on how much time you'd like to spend, you might consider four different modes for discussion:

1. Have your class break into four groups and have each group evaluate the case and then present their conclusions to the class.
2. Have the entire class walk through each case with participants evaluating each case individually before having a group discussion.
3. Break the class into eight groups and red team the scenarios. Here you would have to assign each group a position, responsible for either arguing in support or against a specific decision in each scenario.
4. Finally you may select to only discuss one or two of the scenarios, based upon your time constraints. You could have the class vote on which scenarios they want to discuss by looking at slide 27 which provides a brief description without going into the details of each case. Again, you may consider either breaking participants into groups, red team the scenarios, or discuss them as an entire class.

Teaching Notes for Each Scenario

Each of the four scenarios provides numerous teaching moments highlighting the difficulties of making ethical decisions. Below are some key talking points instructors should be familiar with in order to facilitate the discussion, although it is not intended to be exhausted.

Scenario 1: Mission First or People Always?

The first scenario is designed to place each of three overarching ethical frameworks into conflict with one another, thereby challenging participants to resolve the competing values in order to make the best decision. The first bullet highlights the Action framework, specifically following the mandatory safety rules. The second bullet touches upon the Outcome framework, specifically the fact that no

harm was done. The third bullet stresses the Agent framework by asking one to consider the motives, intent, and virtue of helping another Airman in need. The third bullet can also be connected to the Outcome framework if one assumes that by helping the Airman with suicidal intentions the life may have been saved.

Scenario 2: Paper Pushing Problems?

The second scenario presents a more banal, but still important ethical dilemma. Here the focus is on how one resolves the primary tensions between the Agent and Act framework—specifically, upholding the virtues of Integrity and Honesty in contrast to following orders. However, one's decision also impacts the Outcome framework in that, if one chooses to simply follow orders then the mission may be compromised as not all the required work is being done.

You may also want to highlight the repercussions of one's decision related to their career—specifically their professional evaluation and promotion. Here, confronting the commander could have an impact, even if in theory it should not—given that the expectation of completing more than 40 hours of work is improper. Similarly, if one chooses not to complete all their work, this decision could impact their evaluations as they are unable to execute all of their work duties—however unfair that expectation may be—especially if others are willing to work more than their 40 hours.

The additional "But what if" portion of the scenario is intended to further push participants to weigh the consequences of their decision. Whereas some participants may think that simply "sucking it up" and pushing through one 60 hour work week is manageable, multiple overworked weeks is probably less acceptable. Here you may want to challenge participants to explain why, at some point, their judgment or decision changes, and how that shift relates back to the three ethical frameworks. For instance, repeatedly overworking someone could have long-term consequences of worker burnout, hindering future performance.

Scenario 3: Excellent Airman, Bad Comments?

The third scenario is intended to address one's obligation to prevent workplace harassment (Action framework) while recognizing that we often ignore comments we perceive to be small, unimportant, or of little consequence to ourselves. Moreover, it tries to complicate the situation by highlighting the Outcome framework, specifically how addressing the Airman making inappropriate comments may impact one's personal relationship with them as well as the larger team dynamics. In this case, the Airman could feel threatened or insecure resulting in them no longer helping others or doing their job at a high level. However, leaving the comment unaddressed could also hinder the team as female coworkers feel unsupported and harassed.

The additional, "But what if" portion of the scenario is intended to elevate the consequences of leaving one comment unaddressed by asking participants whether the frequency of such comments or whether those present to hear them changes participants' evaluation of the situation. The most interesting ethical element of this is whether the nature of the action changes our evaluation of it; in other words, do we find making a sexist comment, regardless of to whom it is said, wrong enough in and of itself to demand a response? Or are we only judging the ethics of the comment by its Outcome or consequence; that is, if it directly hurts or makes someone uncomfortable? Theoretically, the consequence in this situation should not matter—Airmen have a duty to prevent workplace harassment; however we tend to rationalize our inaction by focusing on the perceived impact of inappropriate statements. To emphasize this point, this scenario may also be a good moment to discuss ethical erosion, or the gradual acceptance of inappropriate actions. In this case, allowing one comment to go un-confronted may slowly lead to a cultural of acceptance.

Scenario 4: Competing Values?

Scenario 4 is not intended as a quick and easy case whereby participants unanimously admonish the commander's decision. Firstly, it highlights the limits of the Action framework in that, although no regulations or rules prevent the commander from making their decision, we might still view it as unethical. In this sense, strictly following procedures might not be enough to live up to the values or goals of the Air Force in promoting inclusivity, especially if we consider the unintended consequences of the commander's decision as tacitly supporting discrimination against LGBTQ+ members of the Air Force, as the commander is treating the individual differently from others. Thus, it's important to tease out the consequences of leaders' decisions in promoting a specific type of culture where some action is permissible when otherwise it should not be.

Nonetheless, and secondly, it's important to challenge participants to see the situation from the commander's perspective as well, specifically highlighting the Agent framework emphasizing one's personal virtues. Although we can argue that the commander is not living up to the virtues of a leader as described by the Air Force's Profession of Arms, they are holding steadfast to their Christian beliefs. Thus, a key point of discussion is asking the participants whether they have any personal beliefs (Agent) that they would be unwilling to compromise, and if so, what implications does that have on their ability to enact their duty (Action) as Airmen.

Mission First or People Always?

Directions: Read the following scenario and—using the three ethical frameworks—locate the competing values to identify the ethical dilemma, identify what options there may be, and weigh what you believe to be the best decision. Be sure to justify your decision by incorporating the Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks. Be sure to answer the discussion questions listed after the scenario.

Note: You may believe that more information is needed for you to make an informed decision. Nonetheless, do your best with the information provided. Indeed, like in real life, we often don't have all the information to make a perfect a decision; nonetheless, we do what we can with what we have.

Scenario 1

An Airman...
- Failed to complete an item on a safety checklist, violating mandatory safety protocols.
- Luckily, it was caught before any harm occurred.
- But, the Airman skipped the item in order to counsel a fellow Airman with suicidal intentions.

Discussion Questions to answer:

1. Where is the dilemma?

2. Should the Airman be reprimanded?

3. Why or why not?

Paper Pushing Problems?

Directions: Read the following scenario and—using the three ethical frameworks—locate the competing values to identify the ethical dilemma, identify what options there may be, and weigh what you believe to be the best decision. Be sure to justify your decision by incorporating the Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks. Be sure to answer the discussion questions listed after the scenario.

Note: You may believe that more information is needed for you to make an informed decision. Nonetheless, do your best with the information provided. Indeed, like in real life, we often don't have all of the information to make a perfect a decision; nonetheless, we do what we can with what we have.

Scenario 2

You are expected to fill out your timecard completely and accurately. Furthermore, you are not supposed to work more than 40 hours a week and your commander has made it clear that no one is to report more than 40 hours. However, last week you had to work 60 hours to complete all your work…

But what if…

This was your third 60-hour week in a row, but you've heard other Airmen receive negative performance appraisals when they take the issue up with their commander?

Discussion Questions to answer:

1. Do you maintain your personally integrity and report all your hours?

2. Do you only complete the work that can be done within your 40-hour work week?

3. Does your decision change if this is a recurring problem?

4. Why or why not?

Excellent Airman, Bad Comments?

Directions: Read the following scenario and—using the three ethical frameworks—locate the competing values to identify the ethical dilemma, identify what options there may be, and weigh what you believe to be the best decision. Be sure to justify your decision by incorporating the Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks. Be sure to answer the discussion questions listed after the scenario.

> *Note: You may believe that more information is needed for you to make an informed decision. Nonetheless, do your best with the information provided. Indeed, like in real life, we often don't have all of the information to make a perfect a decision; nonetheless, we do what we can with what we have.*

Scenario 3

You know an excellent Airman who gets all of their work done on time, volunteers to help out others when needed, and is always courteous to their commanding officer. However, one day you overhear them making a sexist joke about another Airman on your team…

But what if…

The comment was heard by everyone on your team, including all the female Airmen?
Or, what if this was the third time he has made a sexiest comment?

Discussion Questions to answer:

1. What obligations do you have to report the comment?

2. What personal consequences might you face if you report him?

3. What consequences might the team face if you do or don't report him?

4. Does your decision change depending on who is present? Or whether this is a repeated issue? Why or why not?

Competing Values?

Directions: Read the following scenario and—using the three ethical frameworks—locate the competing values to identify the ethical dilemma, identify what options there may be, and weigh what you believe to be the best decision. Be sure to justify your decision by incorporating the Agent, Action, and Outcome frameworks. Be sure to answer the discussion questions listed after the scenario.

> *Note: You may believe that more information is needed for you to make an informed decision. Nonetheless, do your best with the information provided. Indeed, like in real life, we often don't have all of the information to make a perfect a decision; nonetheless, we do what we can with what we have.*

Scenario 4

A commander grew up in a conservative, Christian town and is a devout Christian himself. An Airman, who is openly LGBTQ+, asks them to officiate their retirement ceremony. The commander declines, stating that they personally cannot condone same-sex relations.

No regulations state that the commander must officiate. So, they have their deputy do so instead.

Discussion Questions to answer:

1. Was the commander's decision ethically sound? Why or why not?

2. What are the consequences of the commander's decision?

3. How might your personal values be different in this situation from the commander's?

4. What issues of personal integrity are you not willing to compromise on?