



THE AIR UNIVERSITY



Strategic Ethical Decision-Making Fundamentals

The Air University
Profession of Arms Center of Excellence
Ira C. Eaker Center for Leadership Development
Maxwell AFB, Alabama
<http://www.airman.af.mil/>

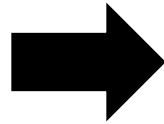


AF Cheating Scandal



Typical view of ethics: “Stop doing bad things”

Spring 2020 class = 249 cadets engaged in variety of cheating



- Charged with 6 months probation, remediation
- Review of Honor Program

Punishment + New Policy



Lt. Gen. Clark

- “The Honor Code is not only foundational to the Air Force Academy, but it serves as a guide for cadets to live an honorable life, whether serving in uniform or not.”
- “Honor serves as one of my fundamental institutional priorities for developing Leaders of Character.”



Typical view of ethics: “Stop doing bad things”



NEWS | May 5, 2017

Private messages don't always remain private

By Airman 1st Class Christopher R. Morales 673d Air Base Wing / Public Affairs

In 2011, a command chief was accused and sentenced to a reduction in rank to E-1, dishonorable discharge and confinement for four months for maltreatment.

In this case, the command chief was pursuing sexual relations with two E-4s to include exchanging lewd and nude images with him. One E-4 sent a nude image of herself to the chief. When asked why in court, she replied, 'Chief told me, if I helped him, he could help me.'

Punishment + New Policy

BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 36-2909

14 NOVEMBER 2019

Personnel

AIR FORCE PROFESSIONAL
RELATIONSHIPS AND CONDUCT



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This Air Force Instruction implements Air Force Policy Directive 36-29, *Military Standards*, and Air Force Policy Directive 51-5, *Administrative Law, Gifts, and Command Relationships*. This instruction applies to civilian employees and uniformed members of the Regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. **Failure to observe the mandatory provisions of paragraphs 2.3.7, 3.2, 4.2.1, 5.1, and 5.2.2 is punishable under article 92, 93, 93a, 132, and 134, Uniform Code of Military Justice, for Regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard members in Title 10 status; and punishable in accordance with applicable state military codes for Air National Guard members in Title 32 status.** Civilian employees are held accountable in accordance with Air Force Instruction 36-704, *Discipline and Adverse Actions of Civilian Employees*. Nonappropriated Fund Employees are held accountable in accordance with Air Force Manual 34-301, *Nonappropriated Funds Personnel Program Management and Administration Procedures*. Prior to publication, this instruction was provided to applicable national labor organizations for consultation in accordance with Title 5 United States Code Section 7113.

Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in



Typical view of ethics: “Stop doing bad things”



Is this view adequate?

- Numerous reports depict continued ethical issues
- Are these ethical dilemmas or moral failures?

Ask yourself:

- Who feels inspired to “do good” from this perspective?
- What problems or issues do you see from this perspective?

Encyclopedia of Ethical Failure

Department of Defense
Office of General Counsel
Standards of Conduct Office
Updated October 2014



From “wrong” to “right”



Airmen know right from wrong, but...

- Face ethical dilemmas (small & large) with risks of “ethical erosion”
- Deal with competing and, at times, contradictory orders, challenges, and duties
- Confronted by changing social, technological, and global circumstances

Our goal:

- Begin moving from “ethics of compliance” to “ethics of aspiration”
- By practicing deliberate, reflective, and thoughtful ethical decision making



By the end of this presentation,
we hope you are able to:



1. Define ethics and morals
2. Describe three broad ethical frameworks
3. Identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical frameworks
4. Inspire you to think ethically in relation to the AF's Profession of Arms and AF Core Values



Part 1: Ethics vs Morals



What does “ethics” mean to you?



Defining Morality



1. Set of beliefs about right and wrong

2. Creates a vision of how we see the world

3. Our worldviews are not neutral, but imbued with value, leading to competing perspectives



Morals: Where do they come from?



What are some personal or professional morals you believe important?

Where did you learn these values or beliefs?



Moral Sources in the Air Force



Your personal values & experiences

- Family, Friends
- Laws and social norms
- Cultural, Religious, Societal Values



The Profession of Arms & Ethics

- Law of Armed Conflict
- Code of Conduct
- Everyday Conduct and Ethical Values



What is a profession?

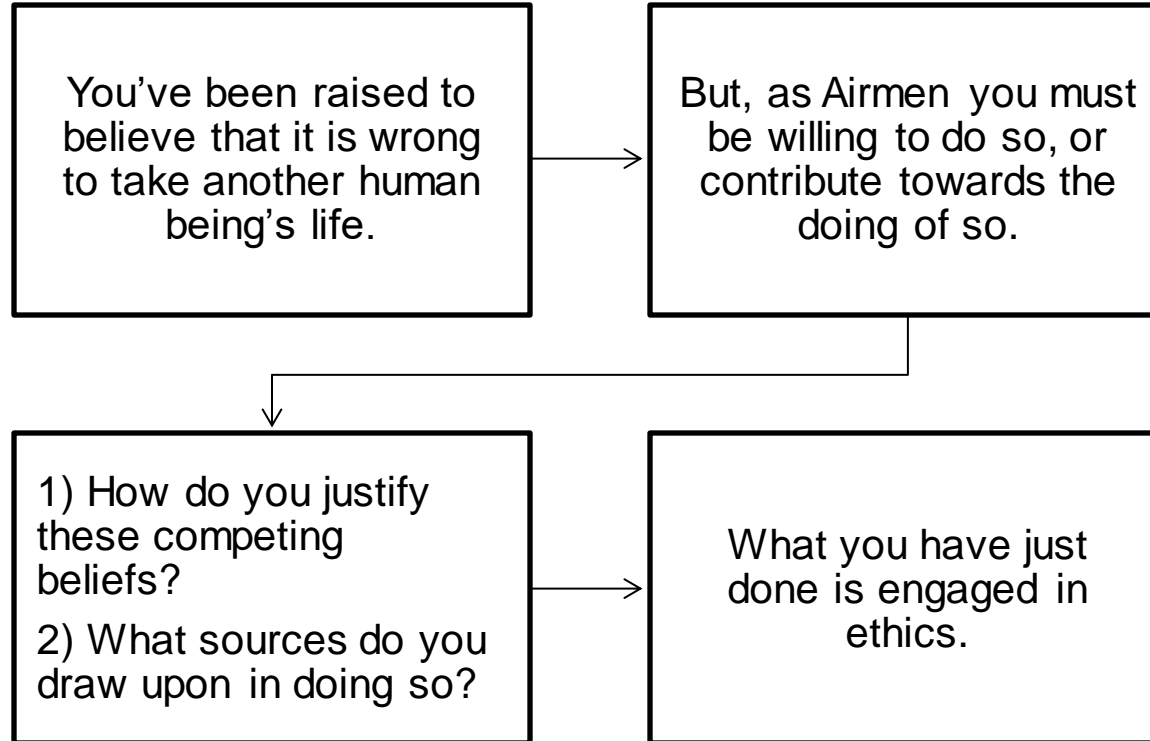
- Occupation with specialized training contributing towards common good

Obligations: Air Force > Civilian?

- Air Force is a profession defending the United States and US Constitution



Competing Values: Morals to Ethics





Understanding Ethics



The “What”

Ethics defined:

- Systematic reflection upon our moral beliefs
- Requires deliberate thought & evaluation of situation

The “Why”

Purpose of Ethics:

- Places beliefs into a rational system
- Allows us to live and act according to those beliefs

The “How”

Identifying dilemmas:

- Locate the conflict / competing values
- Identify your options
- Weigh your choices



Part 2: Ethical Frameworks



What frameworks guide our decisions?



Ethics: Three Schools of Thought



Agent



Action



Outcome



Agent: How to live your life



Key Question to ask

What kind of person do I want to be?



Goals

Develop personal integrity, avoid vices



Assumption

Good people do good things



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.



Action: Is it right?



Key Question to ask

What obligations do I owe and to whom?



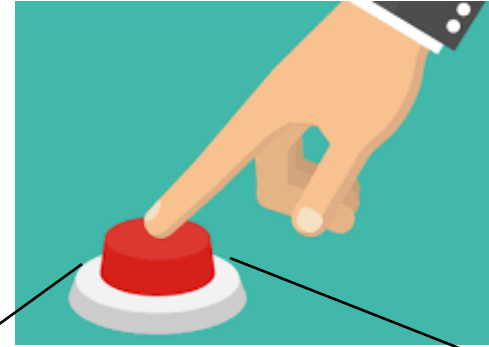
Goals

Act according to the proper rules in a situation



Assumption

Rules define good behavior



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.



Outcome: Are the results good?



Key Question to ask

What impact does my behavior have on the world?



Goals

Greatest good for greatest number of people



Assumption

Consequences determine what is good



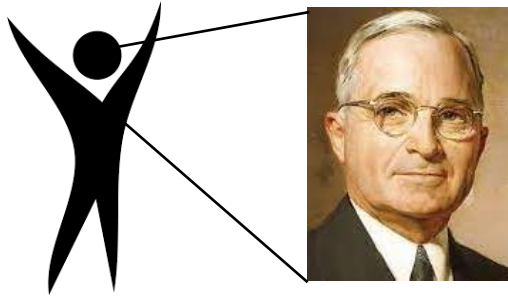
I believe that ensuring the mission is accomplished is most important, no matter how it is done.



Example: Truman Dropping the Bomb



Agent



Truman's character?

- Prudence, courage, honesty?
- Struggled over the decision
- Experienced the horrors of war in WWI

Action



Was it right to Bomb?

- Killed tens of thousands of civilians: primarily the old, young, and women
- Violation of laws of war and values of humanity

Outcome

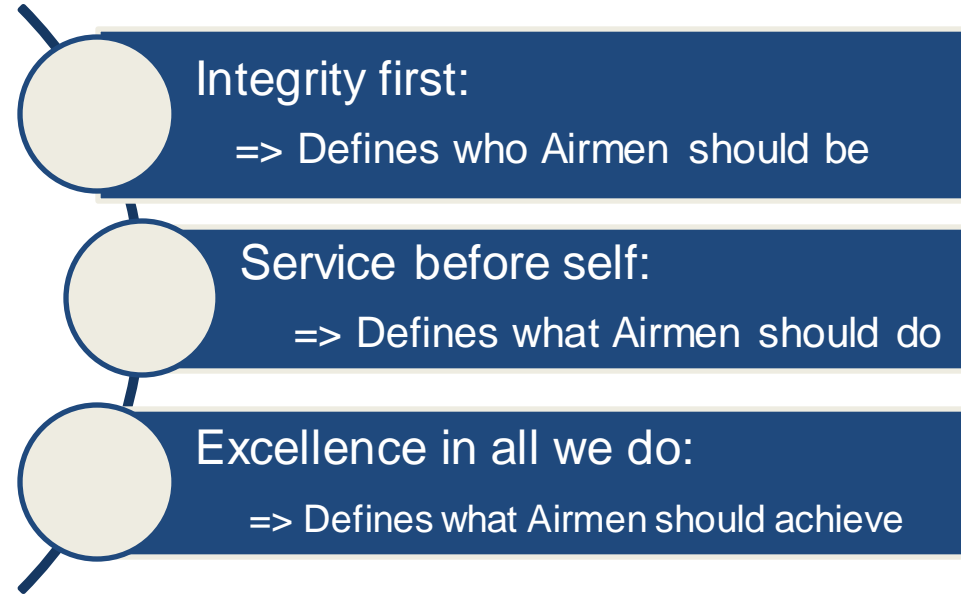
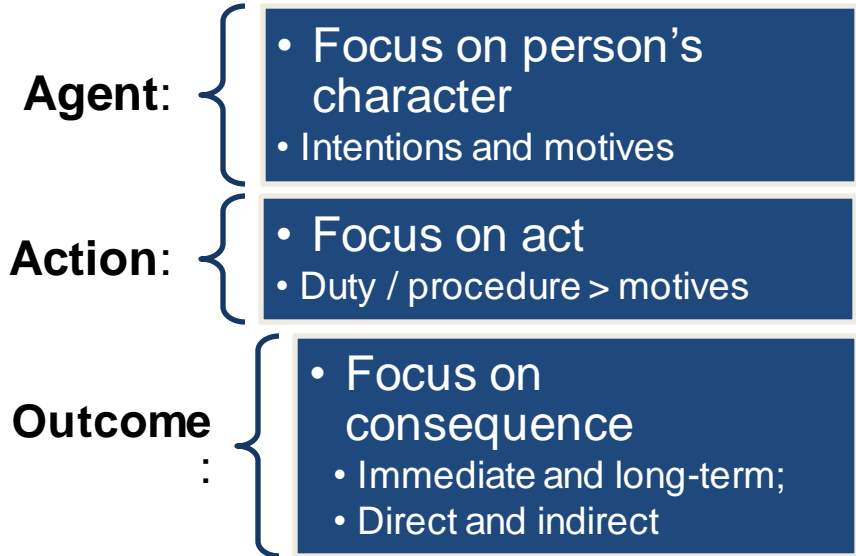


The Result of the Bomb?

- Japanese surrendered - after second bomb - but would they have otherwise?
- Potential prevention of significant US casualties



Ethical Frameworks and the AF



Ethical Framework & Criteria ➔ **Core Values**



Part 3: Application



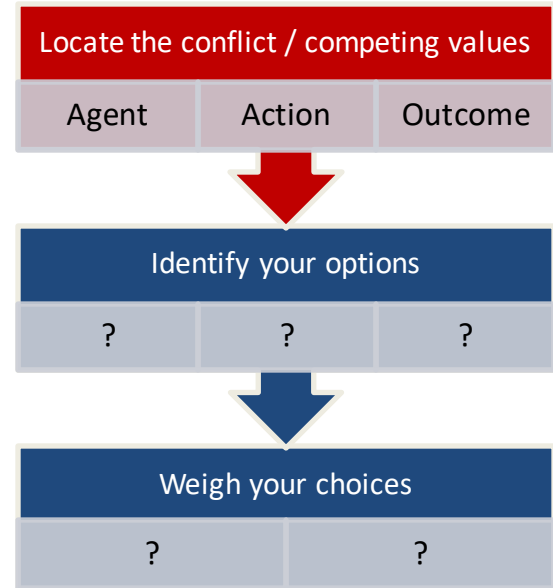


Part 3: Application



- You are an AF 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 students that live 2-3 hours away. They can only meet with you after school, which places you on the road past the 18:00 work deadline.

Identify the dilemma



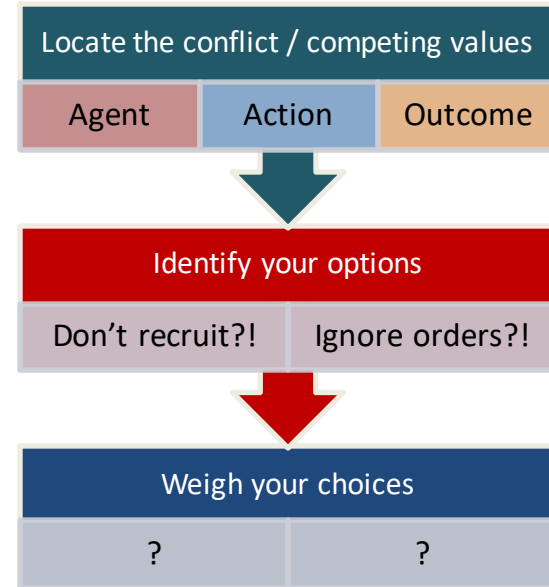


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Conclusion

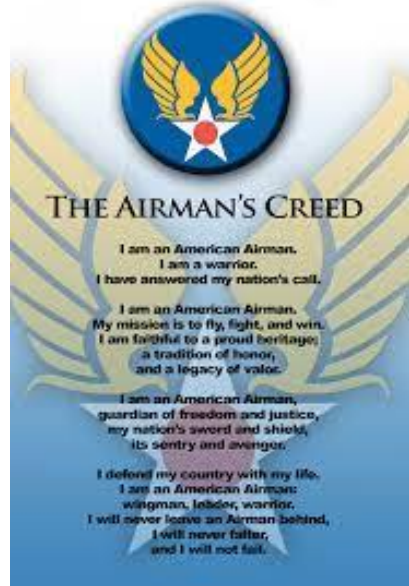


Ethics is more than just “stop doing bad things”

1. Define ethics and morals
2. Describe three broad ethical frameworks
3. Identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical frameworks
4. Inspire you to think ethically in relation to the AF’s Profession of Arms and AF Core Values

Airmen will face tough decisions requiring weighing of competing values

Final thought



How will **you** live up to **your** oath?

- What type of person do you want to be?
- How will you balance the challenges and conflicting needs of your job?



What will **you** do when confronted with:

- Intolerance in the workplace?
- Signing off on work you didn't do?
- Careerism and pressure to get the job done at any cost?



Bottom Line: We must have integrity (**Agent**), we have to follow the law (**Act**), and we can't lose the war (**Outcome**).



Examples for Further Discussion



- **Mission First or People Always?**

Paper Pushing Problems?

Excellent Airman, bad Comments?

Competing Values?



Mission First or People Always?



Scenario

- **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.

Questions

- Where is the dilemma?
- Should the Airman be reprimanded?
- Why or why not?



Paper Pushing Problems?



Scenario

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?

Questions

- Do you maintain your personally integrity and report all of your hours?
- Do you only complete the work that can be done within your 40 hour work week?
- Does your decision change if this is a recurring problem?
- Why or why not?



Excellent Airman, Bad Comments?



Scenario

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 sexist comment?

Questions

- What obligations do you have to report the comment?
 - What personal consequences might you face if you report him?
 - What consequences might the team face if you do or don't report him?
-
- Does your decision change depending on who is present?
 - Or whether this is a repeated issue?
 - Why or why not?



Competing Values?



Scenario

- 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 has to officiate. So, they have their deputy do so instead.

Questions

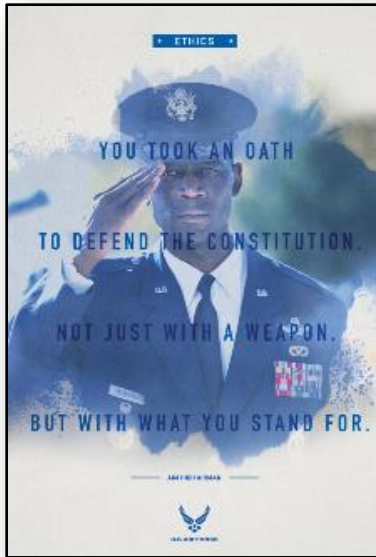
- Was the commander's decision ethically sound? Why or why not?
- What are the consequences of the commander's decision?
- How might your personal values be different in this situation from the commander's?
- What issues of personal integrity are you not willing to compromise on?



Profession of Arms Center of Excellence (PACE)



Mission: Deliver leader development to the Force that educates, motivates and inspires Airmen and Guardians in the profession of arms and core values

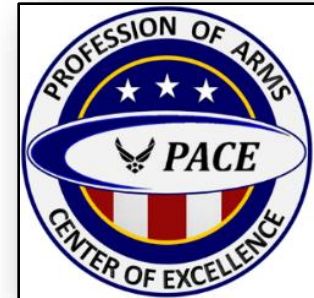


PACE Goal Areas:

- Leader development unique to service in the profession of arms
- Innovation, and use of new methods to reach our customers
- Enhancing organizational culture
- Achieving affective outcomes

PACE Director: (334) 953-5845 (DSN: 493)

Website: www.airman.af.mil





Your Path to PACE



Opportunities exist for those Airmen interested in coming to PACE to support our growing mission of leader development



Lt Col Matthew Bagg:(334) 953-4976 (DSN: 493)
matthew.bagg@us.af.mil

CMSgt Hamp Lee III:(334) 953-1973 (DSN: 493)
hamp.lee@us.af.mil

Officer (6 billets; O4/5):

- Submit for consideration for Officer Instructor and Recruiting (OI&R) special duty board
- If you make the candidate list, bid for PACE positions in Talent Marketplace
- You may contact the Billet Owner; if desired the Billet Owner will bid on you in Talent Marketplace
- Assignment teams have final say on which OI&R position you receive

* Search for OI&R PSDMs on myPers for more information

Enlisted (2 billets; E8/9):

- E8
 - Apply for the position in the Assignment Management System (AMS)
 - If chosen, the member will be interviewed by the PACE Senior Enlisted Leader or designee prior to selection by the hiring official
- E9
 - Apply for the job advertisement in the Senior Level Career Management System (SLCMS)
 - If chosen, the member will be interviewed by the PACE Director or designee prior to selection by the hiring official