

Ethical Leadership – C206 Task 1

Joette Damo

Western Governors University

Table of Contents

Introduction.....page 3

A. Select a nonfictional leader who you feel has exhibited exemplary ethical conduct and do the following: Discuss two ethical traits.....page 3

.....

B. Compare the deontological and consequentialist perspectives and how *each* perspective would approach the dilemma from the scenario.....page 5

.....

C. Identify and explain which level of cognitive moral development (i.e., preconventional, conventional, or postconventional) is represented in the scenario for *each* of the five questions:.....page 7

.....

D. Reflect on your Ethical Lens Inventory (ELI) by doing the following:.....page 10

1. Explain your preferred ethical lens, relevant to the ELI.

a. Analyze whether you have the same preferred lens in different settings (e.g., work, personal, social).

2. Explain **one** of your primary values and **one** classical virtue from the ELI.

a. Compare your primary value from part D2 with **one** of your own self-identified or personal values. Then compare your classical virtue from part D2 with a different self-identified or personal value.

3. Describe **one** of the following from your ELI: (blind spot)

a. Discuss **two** steps you can take to mitigate the blind spot, risk, double standard, or vice described in part D3 in order to make better ethical decisions in the future.

.....

4. Discuss how the information from your ELI could be applied to an ethical situation in the workplace.

.....

.....

References 7

Ethical Leadership – C206 Task 1

Introduction

In this paper Ethical Leadership is addressed in several diverse ways. First, discussions were made on two ethical traits of a nonfictional leader who exhibited exemplary ethical conduct. Then in Section B the deontological and consequentialist perspectives were addressed for the dilemma in a scenario. In Section C discussions were made to identify which level of cognitive moral development applied to a list of questions such as preconventional, conventional, and post conventional scenarios. In the final Section D analysis of personal Ethical Lens Inventory reflected the following: preferred ethical lens analysis as same preferred lens to different settings, contrast of primary values versus classical value, contrast primary value and classical values to self-identified personal values, discussion of personal blind spot, two steps to mitigate blind spot, and final discussion on how personal ELI could be applied to an ethical situation at the workplace.

A. Select a nonfictional leader who you feel has exhibited exemplary ethical conduct.

In this section discussions will be made on two descriptions of ethical leadership practices of the manager for Data Asset Management division of Seattle City Light. The leader manager's name is James. James is a Manager of the Data Asset Management division of Seattle City Light for the past two years. Overall, James has worked for Seattle City Light for a total of thirteen years.

James's first ethical leadership practice is providing project controls oversight for the Data Asset Management division of Seattle City Light. The ethical leadership practice includes the implementation and enforcement of policy and procedures for budget development and

reporting procurement, and contracts execution, and project controls reporting. James would provide spreadsheet to the director of the division in the form of Budget Summary and Contract Management Summary for project controls for budgets, contracts, and project controls reporting. In reference to the reading “Managing Business Ethics: Straight talk about “How to do it right” the author states the following: “Some deontological theories focus on rights rather than duties, values, or principles. The concept of rights goes back to classical Greek notions of “natural rights” that emerge from “natural law.” Rights can be thought of as “negative rights,” such as the limits on government interference with citizens’ right to privacy or the pursuit of happiness. Or rights can be thought of in more positive terms, such as the individual’s rights to health and safety. The rights of one party can conflict with the rights of another party, as when the rights of a company to seek profits for its shareholders conflict with the rights of a community to clean air or water or the rights of a consumer to buy a safe product. Furthermore, the rights of one party are generally related to the duties of another. So, if we agreed that communities have the right to clean water, businesses would have the duty to protect that right.” (Trevino, 2017, p. 42) In James’ first ethical leadership duty referred to the rights of the company division fulfilled by James’ duties of providing project control reporting to maximize benefits to society and minimizing harms in relationship to Seattle City Light which is an electrical power company.

James in the second ethical leadership practice would attend employee development workshops. The workshops entailed conversations about roles and responsibilities, accountability, adaptive skills, and growth opportunities. James is encouraged to talk to his team members about personal 5-year plans. In another workshop James attended entailed the difference of a coach/mentor versus the traditional management. James was encouraged in ethical leadership practice on how he can affect work morale by understanding the power

differential exerted in teams. Then James learned how to recognize coaching opportunities with support of team members' 5-year personal plans. James' second ethical leadership practice would be integrity. (Trevino, 2017, p. 47) "A virtue ethics perspective considers the actor's character, motivations, and intentions (something we did not discuss at all under the other two perspectives). According to virtue ethics, it is important that the individual intends to be a good person and exerts effort to develop him- or herself as a moral agent, to associate with others who do the same, and to contribute to creating an organizational context that supports ethical behavior.¹⁰ This doesn't mean that principles, rules, or consequences aren't considered, just that they're considered in the context of assessing the actor's character and integrity."

B. Compare the deontological and consequentialist perspective and how each perspective would approach the dilemma from the scenario.

In brief description of the scenario as follows: "You are a sales representative for a medical device company that manufactures artificial joints. Your company has developed an artificial knee joint that is less expensive than the competition and will dramatically reduce healing time for patients. However, it is also known to produce a serious and potentially lethal infection in a small percentage of patients. The company refuses to disclose this potential side effect. You feel you have a duty to divulge this issue, but you signed a nondisclosure agreement when you were hired and worry about repercussions."

According to a consequentialist perspective managing the dilemma a person in the scenario would focus on the consequences of societal harms and benefits: therefore, maximizing benefits to society thus minimizing the harms in addressing the issue of the artificial knee producing serious and potentially lethal infection in a small percentage of patients. The main question to ask oneself would be, "How difficult is it to obtain the information needed to

evaluate information on the consequences of nondisclosure to the public?” The aspects that are important would be the rights of the minority group that is sacrificed for the benefit of the majority. In decision making the consequentialist approach would consider two aspects: first, the long term versus short term consequences of nondisclosure, and second the consequences of secrecy in terms of transparency in the medical dilemma with major conflict with consequentialist reasoning.

On the other hand, according to the deontological perspective in handling of the dilemma in the scenario would be the person’s focus on duties, obligations, and principles. Questions to ask: “What is right?” “What is my ethical duty?” The aspects that are important to the deontologist would be one’s moral values according to fairness. Therefore, another question for a deontologist to ask: “What role, principle, or right to follow?” in deciding ethically. The major challenge of the deontological approach in decision making considering which duty, obligation, right, or principle takes precedence in the ethical dilemma.

(Trevino, 2017, p. 59) In decision making the author of the book states the following which I personally find interesting. “The emphasis in these steps has been on using a highly rational fact-gathering and evaluation process once you know that you are faced with an ethical dilemma. But do not forget your gut (this could also be step one). We are all hardwired to be empathetic and to desire fairness. Empathy is an important emotion that can signal awareness that someone might be harmed, and intuition is gaining credibility as a source for good business decision making. We cannot always say exactly why we are uncomfortable in a situation, but years of socialization have made us sensitive to situations where something just does not feel quite right. So, if your gut is sending up red flags, give the situation more thought. In fact, this may be your only clue that you are facing an ethical dilemma to begin with. Pay attention to your

gut, but do not let it make your decision for you. Once you recognize that you are facing an ethical dilemma, use the rational decision-making tools...”

C. Identify and explain which level of cognitive moral development (i.e., preconventional, conventional, or postconventional) is represented in the scenario for *each* of the following questions:

- *Which action would most likely serve the greater good in society?*

The action which would serve the “greater good in society” is **post conventional** in “principled reasoning – principles of justice and rights of individuals.” In conjunction rules and laws focused to make decisions more autonomously focused to ethical principles of justice and right also in reference to deontological principles. Therefore, emphasis placed on rules and laws because these represent so called social contract in which ethical individuals are willing to question the law with consideration of changing such law for society benefit. (Trevino, 2017, p.80) “At stage 5, the emphasis is still on rules and laws because these represent the recognized social contract, but stage 5 thinkers are willing to question the law and to consider changing the law for socially useful purposes. A stage 5 individual would take into account moral laws above society’s laws, such as considering what decision would create the greatest societal good. A stage 5 Evelyn might reason that she should contradict her boss because doing so would be consistent with the ethical principle of the greatest societal good, particularly if she considered the safety of the automobiles to be a potential problem. Her responsibility goes beyond that of a good law-abiding member of society and certainly beyond doing what her boss thinks is right. A stage 5 Evelyn is also responsible to principles of justice and rights. So, even if no law requires her to report what she knows, a stage 5 Evelyn would consider the automobile consumers’ rights to safety as an important reason for her to tell. When deciding what to do, a stage 5 person would

likely ask, “What does the law say?” and then “Is the law consistent with principles of justice and rights?” and “What is best for society?””

- *If I reveal this information, will I get into trouble and possibly even lose my job?*

In this action an individual would ask: “What’s in it for me?” This action would refer to Kohlberg’s level of cognitive moral development of **preconventional**. Preconventional moral development of an individual demonstrates a very self-centered viewing ethical rules as imposed from other than oneself. (Trevino, 2017, p.79) “Stage 1 – Individuals are limited to thinking about obedience to authority for its own sake. Stage 2 – Concern for personal reward and satisfaction become consideration in addition to a kind of market reciprocity... A stage 2 response in the Evelyn situation might argue that Evelyn should support her boss because he is responsible for her performance appraisals; and, if she lets this one go, he might overlook some of her past problems. Also, if her boss has been kind or helpful to her in the past, she may consider her obligation to repay the favor.”

- *Which action best aligns with my long-held belief in the principle of justice?*

In this action an individual would ask: “What would my peers do?” Action like this would be in alignment with the **conventional** level of cognitive moral development. The individual is still externally focused with other individuals yet less self-centered like the preconventional individual with shared moral norms of society with regards to fulfilling his/her duties and obligations per se. (Trevino, 2017, p.80) “or example, a stage 3 response to the Evelyn dilemma might say that Evelyn shouldn’t contradict her boss because he would perceive her as disloyal, and she might lose the social approval and trust of her boss and peers. On the other hand, what if Evelyn shares her dilemma with close family members whose opinions are important to her, and

they feel strongly that she must contradict her boss? In this case, she would likely reason that she should contradict her boss because the people she trusts and whose approval she values say that it's the right thing to do... At stage 4, the perspective broadens to consider society. The individual is concerned about fulfilling agreed-upon duties and following rules or laws that are designed to promote the common good. A stage 4 person recognizes that rules and laws often exist for good reason, and she follows them because the social system works better when everyone does that. Therefore, a stage 4 response might say that Evelyn should contradict her boss because of her duty to society. What if the noises do represent a safety problem? She has a responsibility as a good member of society to report it. She would feel particularly strongly about this if she were aware of product safety laws that required her to report the problem.

So, a level II person is looking outside the self for guidance when deciding what to do.”

- ***What do the laws say, and what would a law-abiding citizen do?***

This action would clearly refer to the **post conventional** cognitive moral development according to Kohlberg for a law-abiding citizen. (Trevino, 2017, p.80) “Her responsibility goes beyond that of a good law-abiding member of society and certainly beyond doing what her boss thinks is right. A stage 5 Evelyn is also responsible to principles of justice and rights. So, even if no law requires her to report what she knows, a stage 5 Evelyn would consider the automobile consumers’ rights to safety as an important reason for her to tell. When deciding what to do, a stage 5 person would likely ask, “What does the law say?” and then “Is the law consistent with principles of justice and rights?” and “What’s best for society?”

- ***If I keep quiet, will I get some sort of reward?***

This action would refer to the **preconventional** self-centered individual wanting a reward for what she/he has or has not done according to an ethical decision. (Trevino, 2017, p.80) “In

general, a level I person can be expected to consider questions like “What’s in it for me?” At stage 1, the questions might be “Can I get away with it?” or “Will I get caught, punished?” At stage 2, the questions might be “How will I benefit or what will I get in return if I do this?” (Trevino, 2017, p.81) “To understand Kohlberg’s theory, you must also remember that it is a cognitive theory. What matters are the reasoning processes and considerations involved in a decision. Although these considerations are likely to affect the decision made, it is the reasoning process that counts.”

.....
D. Reflect on your Ethical Lens Inventory (ELI) by doing the following:

1. *Explain your preferred ethical lens, relevant to the ELI reflection of results.*

My preferred ethical lens is “Result Lens” which states CSMA reasoning or considered sensibility and mild autonomy. In sensibility I would trust my intuition; therefore, as to autonomy justify the greatest good for myself and everyone. I would say in my life the Result Lens is pretty accurate because I do use my intuition and feeling in ethical decision-making.

a. *Then analyze whether you have the same preferred lens in different settings (e.g., work, personal, social).*

I have used the same preferred lens in different settings such as social, personal, and work environments. For example, in my social life when I meet a potential friend I would use my intuition whether this person would be acceptable or compatible in my life according to their values or norms which usually my instincts are right. In another example in the work situation when I meet someone at work my intuition in the “Results Lens” results are the same as the potential friend situation intuition plays again in the role.

2. Explain **one** of your primary values and **one** classical virtue from the ELI in your life.

- My primary values show how I prioritize the tension between rationality and sensibility as well as autonomy and equality. My primary values play out in me in sensibility in following my heart using my heart's desires as to autonomy where I intend to choose my own path and life goals. I have always used my instincts and intuition to make decisions about career choice, buying a house, or else purchasing a big-ticket item like a car.

My classical virtue is temperance of which being moderate and self-restrained. I would control temperance to control any or all desires through discipline and self-control. I have learned through maturity temperance is important when making hasty decisions such as over-spending on luxury items or using self-control in getting angry about something I cannot control.

a. Compare your primary value from part D2 with **one** of your own self-identified or personal values. Then compare your classical virtue from part D2 with a different self-identified or personal value.

My primary value of using my heart's desire sensibility to my personal value of compassion would be justified when I am compassionate about spending the evening alone watching old movies would be my heart's desire. On the other hand, in contrast to my classical virtue of temperance to my personal value of self-discipline of being self-restrained in temperance. In self-discipline I would not get angry about trivial things that other people try to make me irritable.

3. Describe **one** of the following from your ELI: blind spot

My strength of the Results Lens would be my gift of free will. In my free will about doing some important aspects in my life I would have a blind spot in which I am not ethically aware to unintentionally making an ethical misstep. My blind spot happened when I was trying to help a friend at work giving him some personal advice. This friend wanted to become intimate in which I told him I was uncomfortable with that. My blind spot in this situation would be my intentions of giving advice were good, yet the relationship may a form of sexual harassing at the workplace which is unethical.

- a. *Discuss two steps you can take to mitigate the blind spot, risk, double standard, or vice described in part D3 in order to make better ethical decisions in the future.*
-

There are two things that help keep the blind spot from negatively impacting my ethical decision making in the future. First, in blind spot I need to pay attention of being mindful of giving advice in the workplace which should only be work related. Second, I would try to be sensitive to other people in the workplace, yet maintain a professional atmosphere avoid unethical relationship which may lead to sexual harassment.

.....

.....

4. *Discuss how the information from your ELI could be applied to an ethical situation in the workplace.*

Ethical lenses approach ethical situations in the workplace. In the workplace I need to pay attention to my beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors in relationship to blind spots. Also, in the workplace I want to follow my intuition to determine what ethical ideal goals in the workplace as to being the compassionate team member sensibility. Plus, in the workplace I want to use the key phrase “I make wise choices that support a good life.” In wanting to make other team members

to thrive in shared goals for the workplace thus valuing team members' opinions in use of the ethical lenses approach in the workplace.

References

Trevino, L.K, & Nelson, K.A. (2017). *Managing business ethics: Straight talk about how to do it right* (7th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

9 Examples of Ethical Leadership in the Workplace https://www.score.org/blog/9-examples-ethical-leadership-workplace?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIl6v-3PX—AIVnCCtBh3SUAiNEAAYASAAEgLER_D_BwE

Joette Damo, 2022, Ethical Lens Inventory

(Author, date of publication, title of resource, and source or retrieval location).