



Module 4: Ethical reasoning & Data ethics from a business perspective

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Utilitarianism

Kantian Ethics

Virtue Ethics

An action is right if and only if the action brings about the greatest happiness for the greatest number (focus on consequences of actions).

Utilitarianism

Kantian Ethics

Virtue Ethics



An action is right if and only if it is done for reasons that everyone could accept as a universal law (focus on the reasons for action and the underlying action principle: 'maxim').

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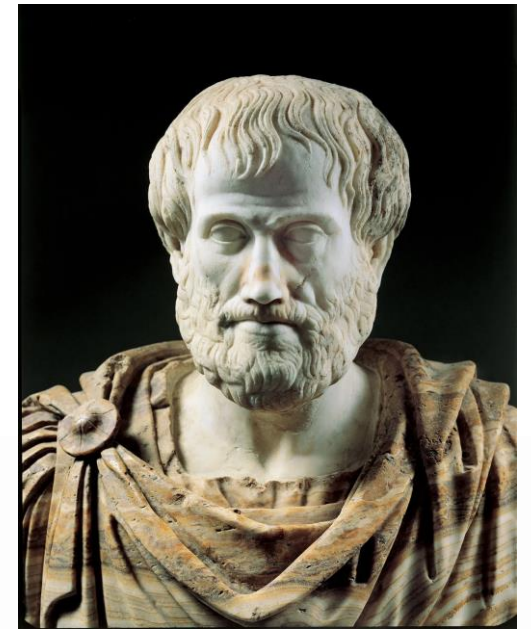


An action is right if and only if the action is
what a virtuous person would do (focus on character)

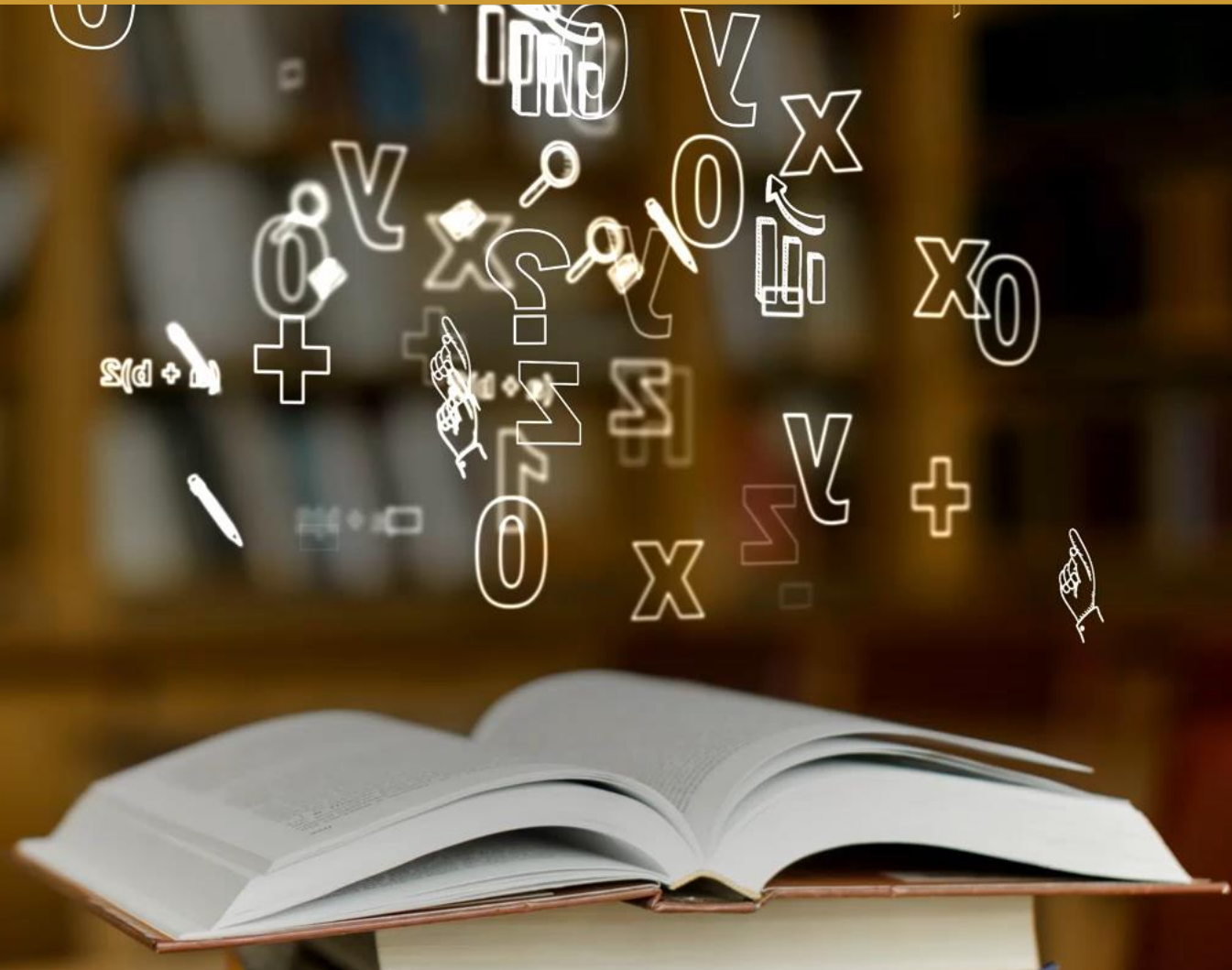
Utilitarianism

Kantian Ethics

Virtue Ethics



Questions?



Today

- Ethical reasoning
 - Ethical cycle
 - Guidance ethics
- Data ethics from a business perspective

Engaging with ill-structured problems

- Ill-structured problem
 - No definitive formulation
 - may embody inconsistent problem formulations
 - and can only be defined during the process of solving the problem.
- What is the problem?
- Who has to act?
- What is the moral nature of the problem?



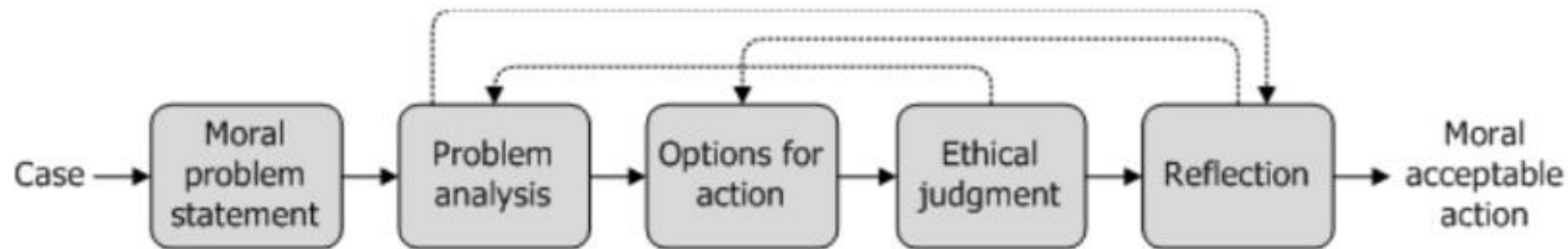
Engaging with ill-structured problems

- Two forms of engaging with ethical problems in practices
 - Ethical Cycle
 - Guidance Ethics



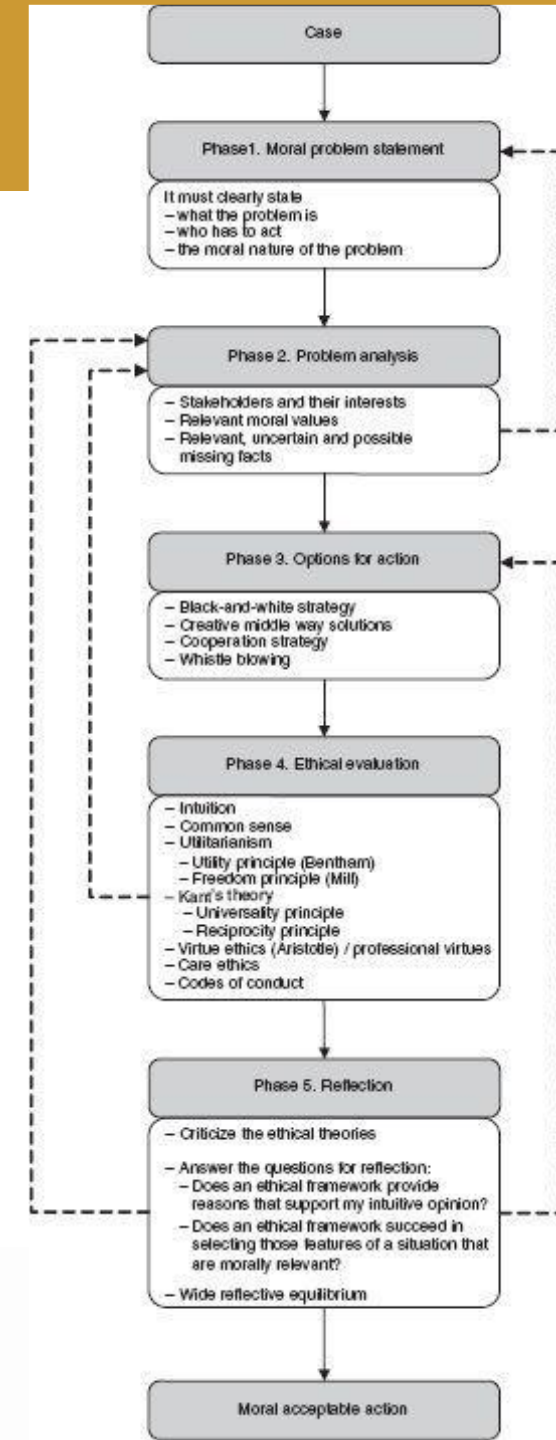
Ethical Cycle

- Goal: structuring and improving moral decision making in order to come to finding the morally best or at least a morally acceptable action.
- 5 steps/phase
 - (cycle/iterative process)



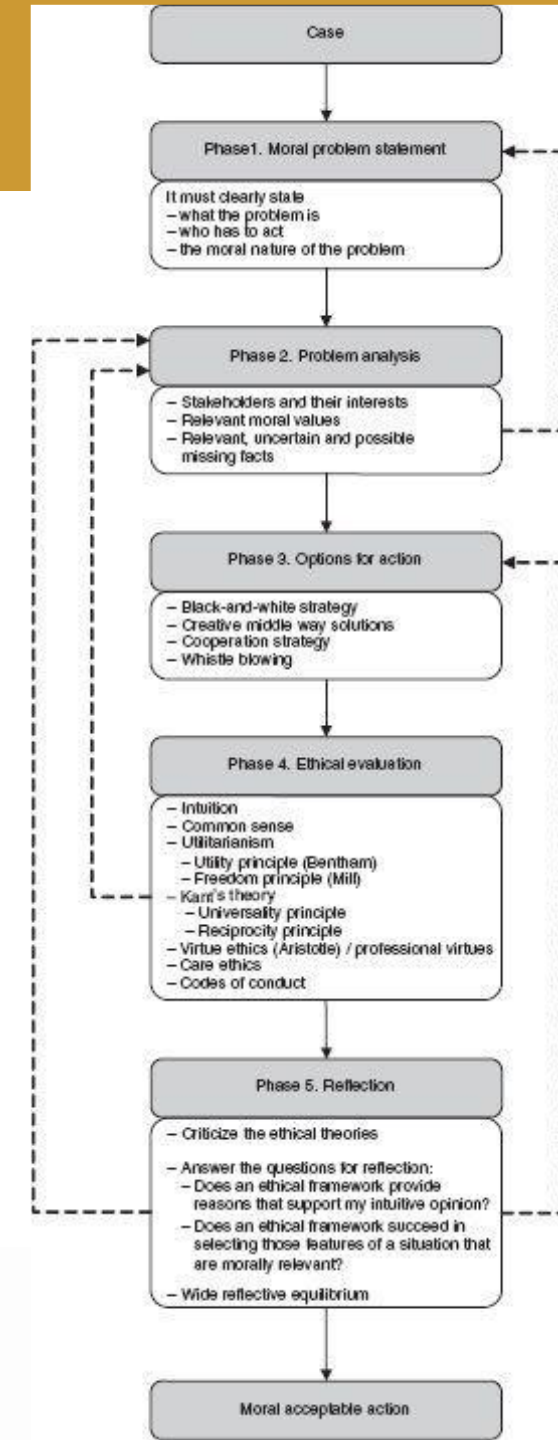
Moral problem statement

- Two or more conflicting positive values
 - ‘two or more positive moral values or norms that cannot be fully realized at the same time.’
- A good moral question often meets three conditions
 - What is the problem
 - For whom? Who has to act?
 - What is the moral nature of the problem



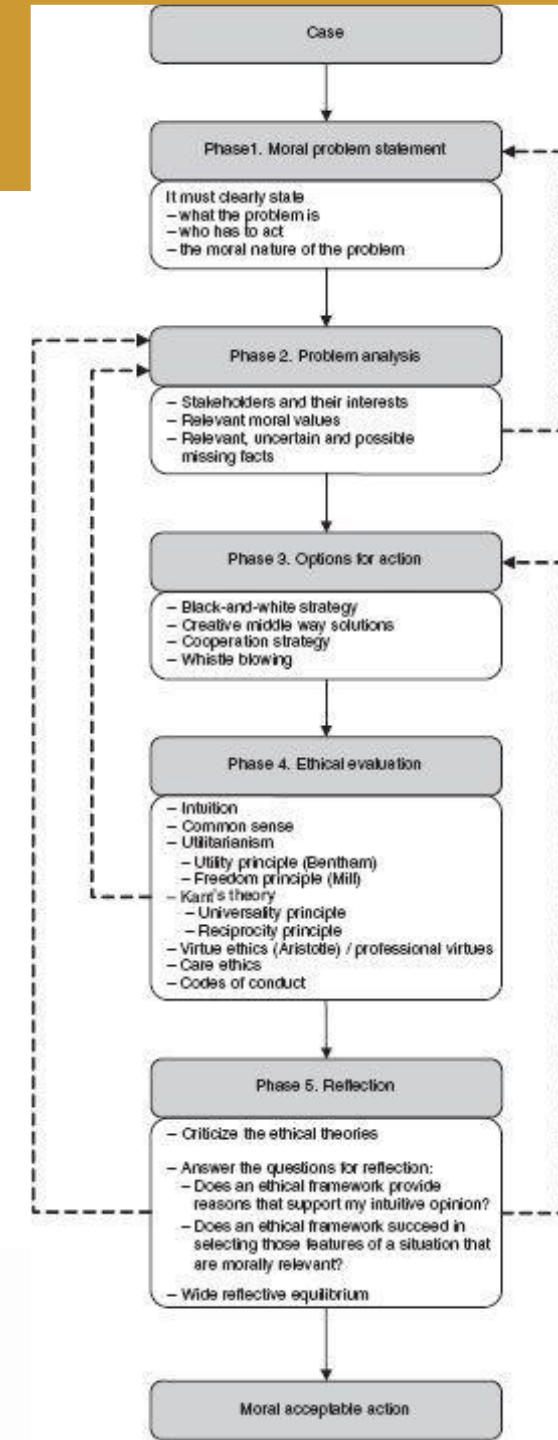
Problem analysis

- Stakeholders and their interests
 - actors that have an interest (a stake) in the development of a data practice.
- Relevant moral values
- Relevant facts
 - Stakeholders might disagree
 - “If x is the case, then option for action A is morally acceptable; but if it turns out that y is the case then option B is morally acceptable”.



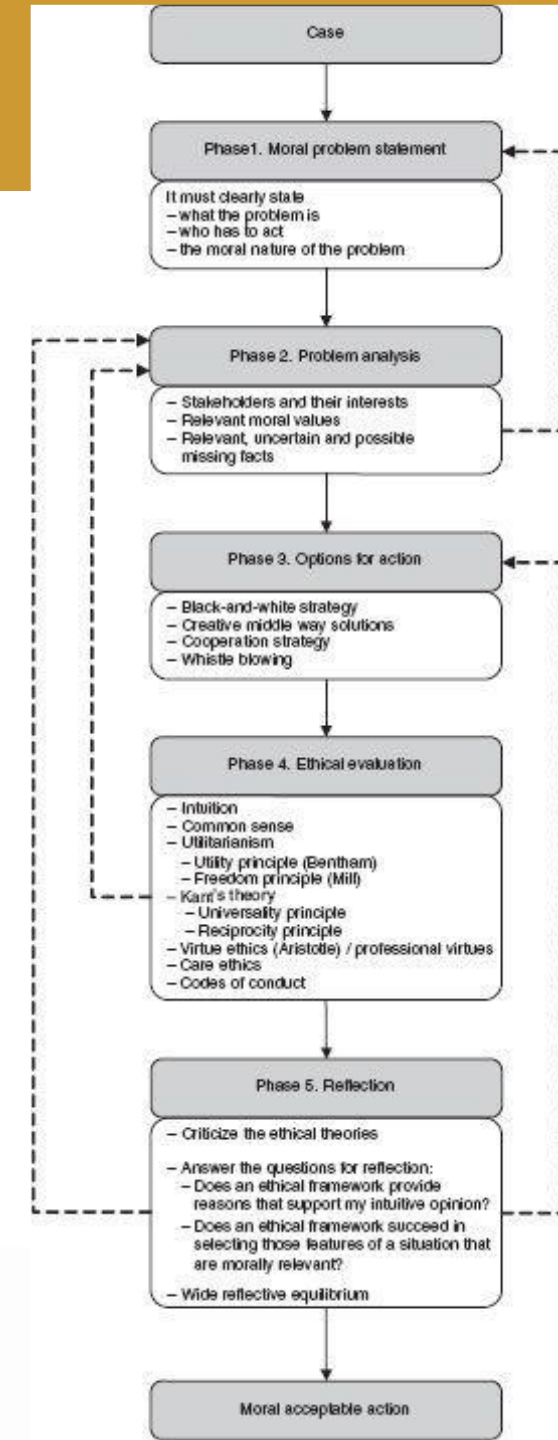
Options for action

- ‘During this stage creativity is of major importance.’
- Different strategies
 - Black-and-white-strategy
 - Strategy of cooperation: looking for win-win situations
 - More radical approaches
 - Whistle-blowing



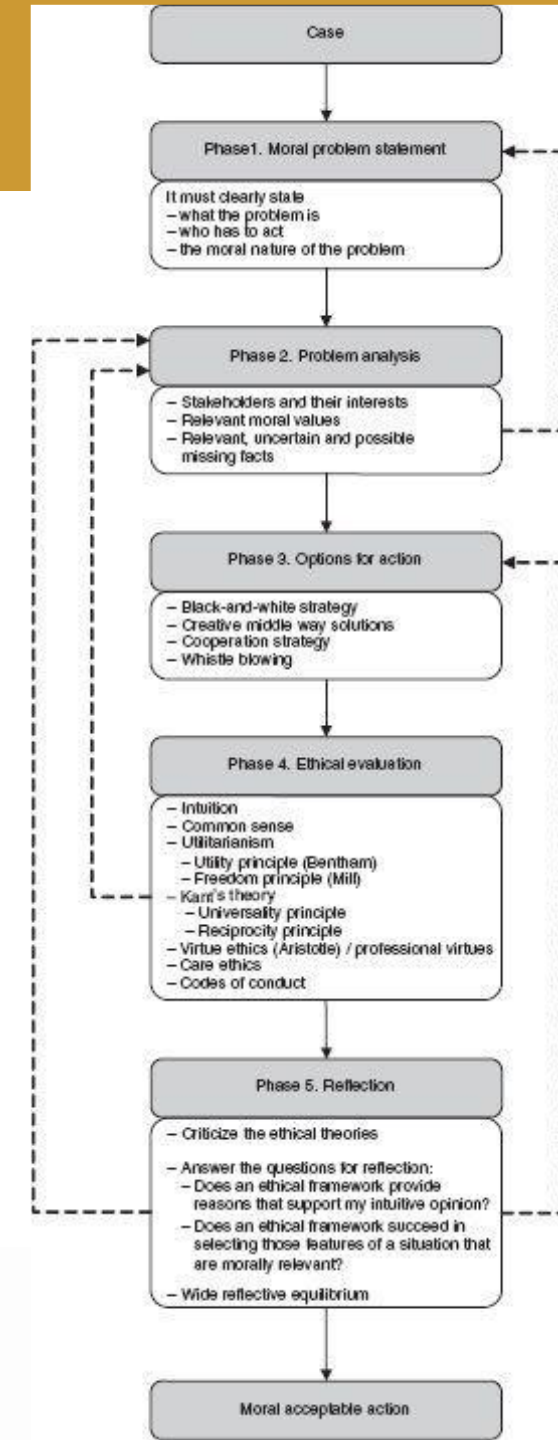
Judgment/evaluation

- Formal frameworks:
 - Moral theories (Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, Virtue Ethics)
- Informal frameworks:
 - Intuitivist: based on one's view about what is intuitively most acceptable, formulating arguments for this statement.
 - Dominant-value method: the method that weighs the available options for actions in the light of the relevant values.



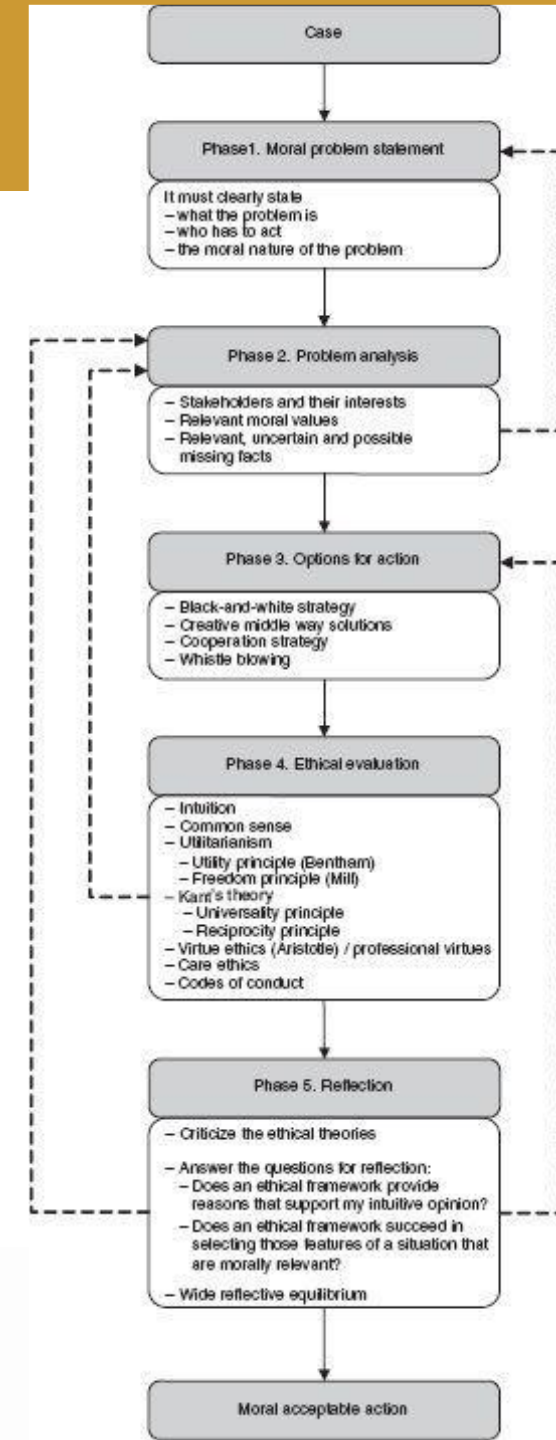
Reflection

- The goals of this reflection is to come to a well-argued choice among the various options for action, using the outcomes of the earlier phases.
- Different ethical judgments on a case are weighed against each other and brought into equilibrium
- Wide reflective equilibrium: making three types of moral beliefs coherent: 1) considered judgments, 2) moral principles, 3) background theories.
- Background theories:
 - General objections
 - Specific case objections

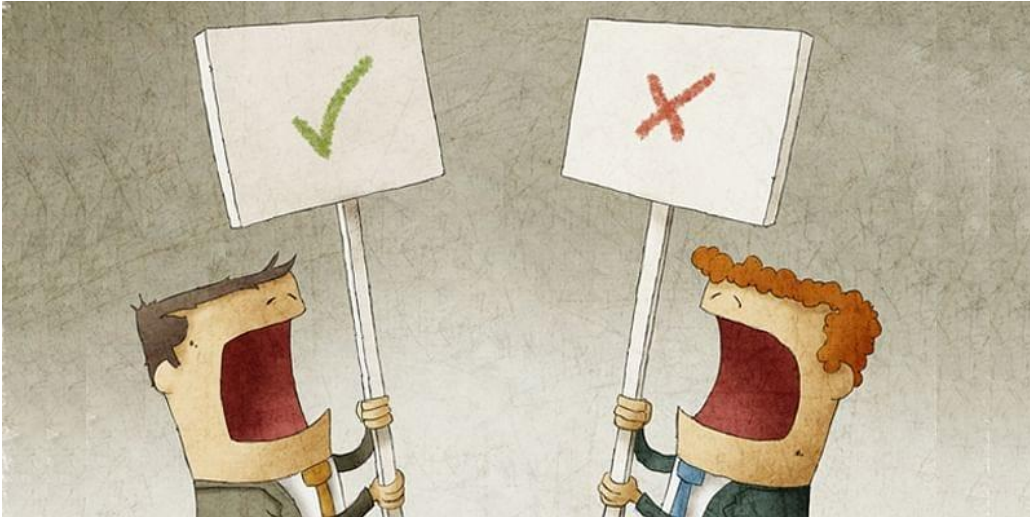


Reflection (2)

- Specific case objections:
 - Does an ethical framework provide reasons that support my intuitive opinion? If not, do I have other reasons that support my opinion? If I have other reasons are they strong enough to override the reasons within the ethical framework or should I revise my opinion?
 - Does an ethical framework select the morally relevant features of the case? Are there any relevant aspects missing?



Engaging in moral deliberation



- With the ethical cycle different people may end up with different conclusions. Why would your one be the best?
- Creating support for the moral decision.
- Reflection phase (leading to a well-argued choice) can also be a starting point for a discussion. Be open to criticism by others. This can lead to revision.
- Moral deliberation: a moral deliberation that meets certain standards (arguments not power, honesty, sincerity) = outcome is sound (Habermas).
- Overlapping consensus: consensus on the outcome, even if the justification for the moral judgment differs. (disagreement on the level of moral principles and background theories).
 - Moral acceptable solution

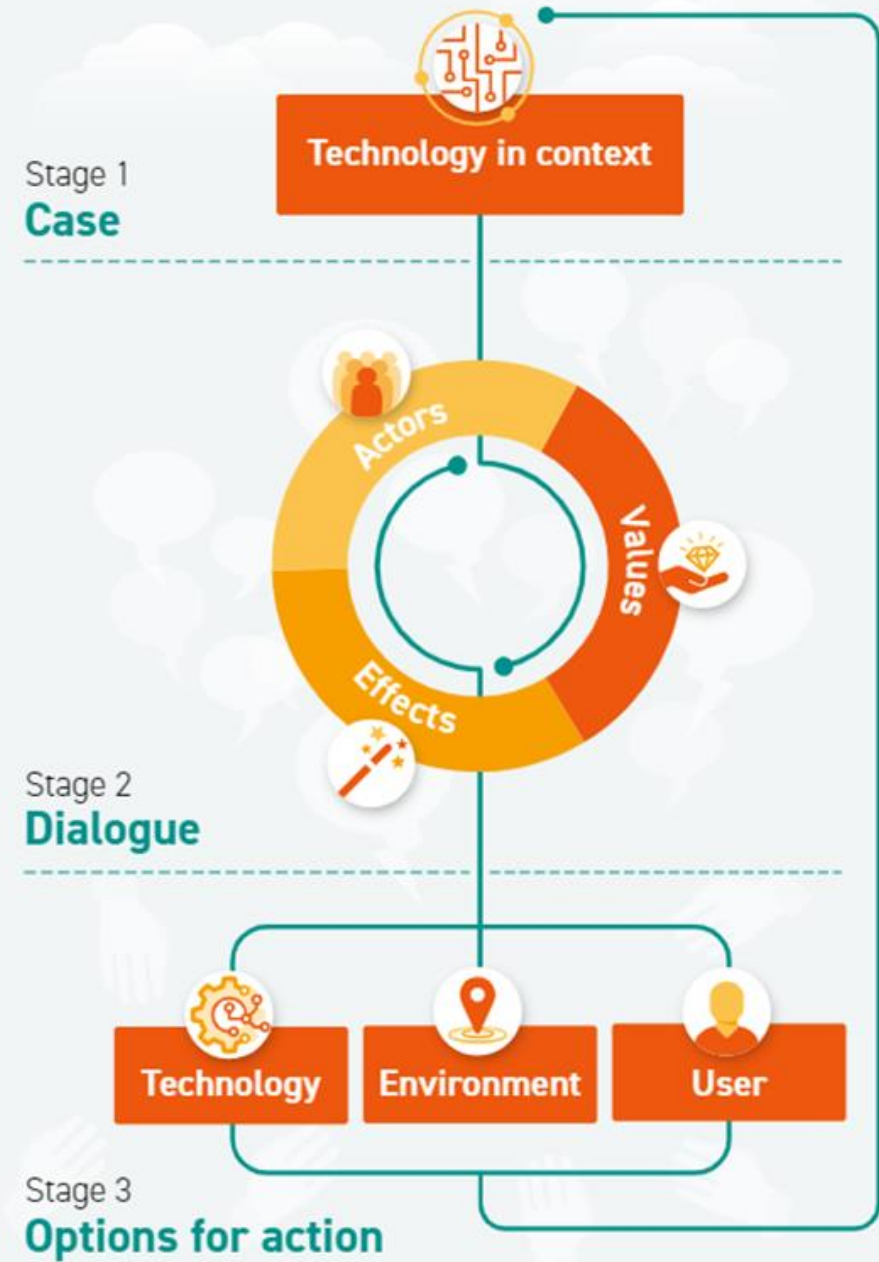
Guidance Ethics

- Based in theory of mediation: man and technology are inherently intertwined. The focus should be on a specific context.
- Ethics: not “yes or no” but “how”? Guidance instead of assessment.
- Deliberative process:
- Social impact
 - Individual
 - Society
- Central values



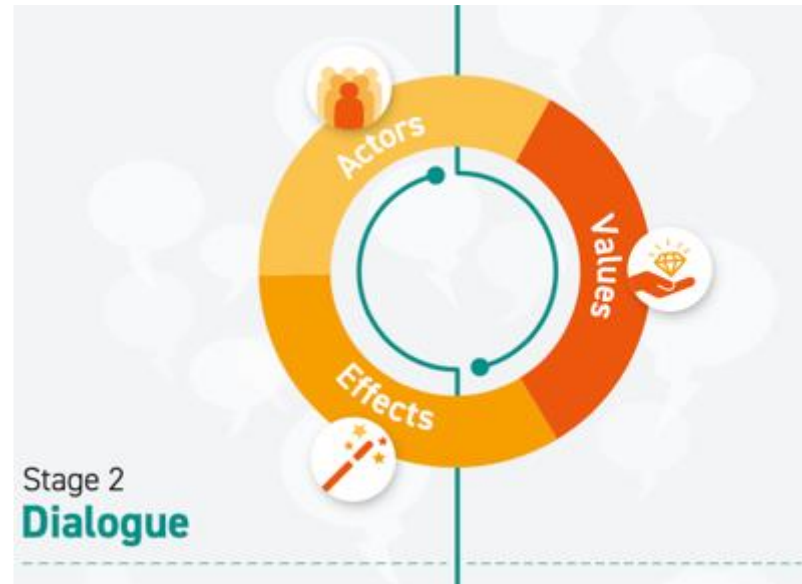
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- Sharp definition of the technology and the environment.
- Focus on the specific context.
- Avoid jargon.



- Who are involved?
- Possible effects?
- What are the key values?.

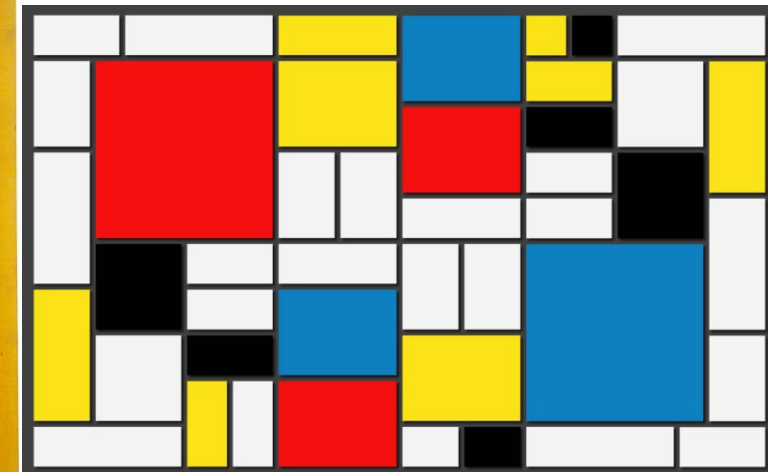


- **Options for action**

- Ethics by design
- Ethics in context
- Ethics by user

Summary

- Ethical Cycle and Guidance Ethics: Two approaches to systematically engage in ethical decision-making.
- EC: focused on combining theory and specific cases. Options for Action are general. Pre-dominantly individual reflection.
- GE: focused on organizing stakeholder engagement. Less integration of moral theories. Options for Action are focused on the design, embedding, and use of the technology.
- None of these methods provide you with “the single best” solution.



Three levels of ethics in data science



What is data ethics?

- **Academic research field:** focus on moral problems related to data practices.
- **Business strategy:** proactively managing risks brought forth by the data-driven economy.



What is data ethics? A movement

- Increasingly citizens/consumers demand companies treat their data in a more responsible and sustainable way.
 - Data leaks, hacks, and scandals raise awareness
 - New data protection regimes (e.g. GDPR)
- Similar to the **environmental awareness**, starting two decades ago.
- **Data ethics awareness** of companies is not only crucial for survival in the market but for society as a whole too.

What is data ethics? A movement (2)

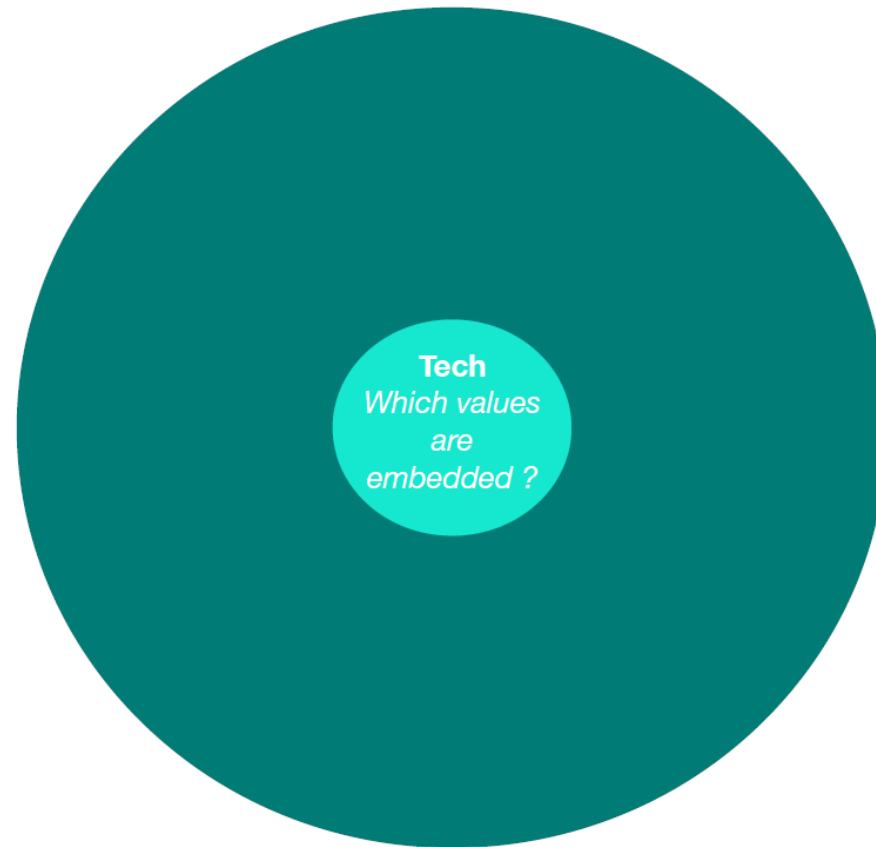
- Hasselbach and Tranberg: “...a social movement, a cultural shift and a technological and legal development that increasingly places the human at the centre”.
- **Social**: consumer awareness (e.g. adblockers, VPN connections,...)
- **Legal**: more strict data protection frameworks
- **Technological**: new types of data-driven
- **Human centric**: shifting power relations

What is data ethics as Business approach?

- Pro-actively managing risks brought forth by data-driven business practices: e.g. reputation, loss of trust.
- Go beyond what the law requires to protect customers/clients and the business itself.
 - A business practice may be perfectly legal, yet still not be a good, ethical business decision.
- **Motivation** for companies:
 - Demand from customers (both citizens and organisations!)
 - Demand from shareholders
 - Idealistic motives: e.g. corporate values , positive impact on society
 - Avoiding of regulation (**ethics-washing**)

What is data ethics as Business approach? (2)

- **B2B:** security and compliance are key values
 - Design principles
 - Codes of conduct
 - Auditable data-driven practices
- **Consumer-facing:** privacy and responsible data-use
 - Third party trust
 - Standards (in line with Fair Trade products)
 - Education



Responsible AI principles Microsoft

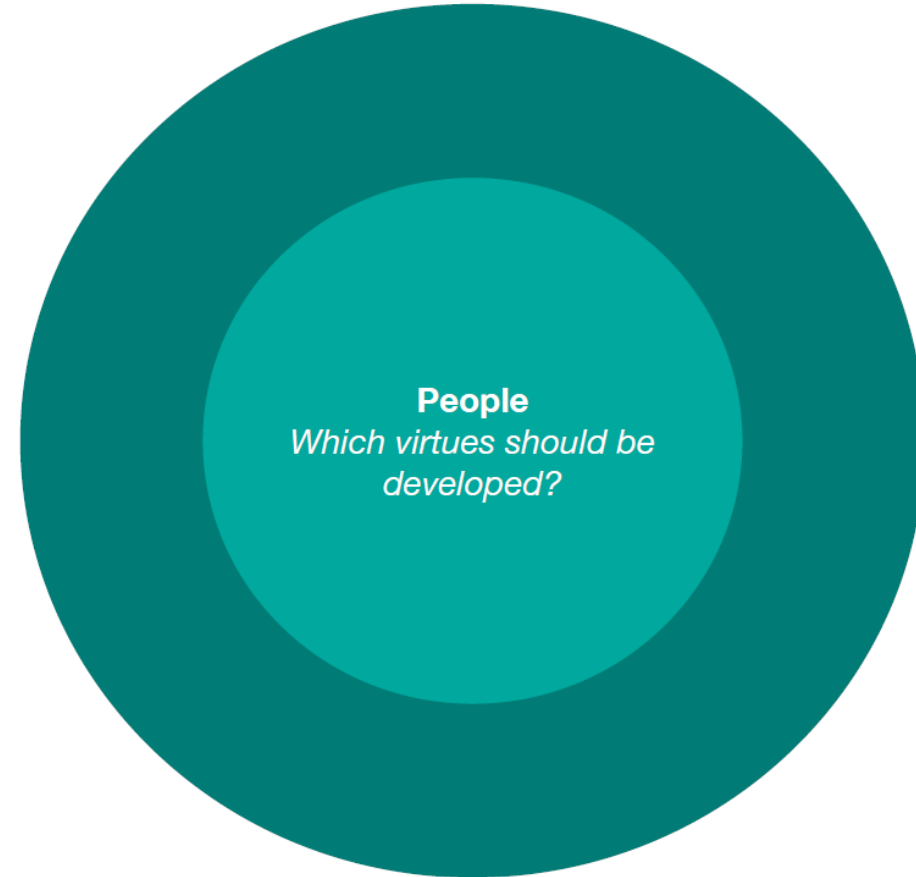
- Fairness
- Inclusiveness
- Reliability & safety
- Privacy & security
- Transparency
- Accountability

Data ethics ING

- Based on the ING values:
 - We are honest about the use of data
 - We are prudent when using data
 - We are responsible when using data

Data ethics: technical approaches

- What if tool (Google): checking different fairness approaches
- AI Fairness 360 and AI explainability 360 (IBM)



Codes of conduct

- **What is a code of conduct?** A code in which organisations (like companies or professional associations) lay down guidelines for responsible behaviour.
- **Goal?** Increasing moral awareness and stimulating ethical discussions; identification and interpretation of the moral norms and values of a profession or a company; increase accountability; improve the image of the professional or company.

Codes of conduct (2)

- **Aspirational code:** expressing the moral value of a company or profession
- **Advisory code:** helping professionals to exercise moral judgments in concrete situations
- **Disciplinary code:** achieving that the behaviour of all professionals or employees meets certain standards
- **Professional codes:** guidelines for the exercising of a profession, formulated by a professional society.
- **Corporate codes:** voluntarily commitments made by individual companies or associations of companies setting certain values, standards and principles for the conduct of corporations.

Professional codes

- What is a profession?
 - The use of specialised knowledge.
 - A monopoly on the carrying out of the occupation.
 - Assessment only possible by peers.
- Should data science be seen as a profession?

Professional codes (2)

- Core values: integrity, honesty and competence.
- Obligations towards clients and employers.
- Social responsibility and obligations towards the public.

Enforcement of codes of conduct

- Professional codes:
 - Advisory in nature → enforcing is not an objective
 - No legal status
 - No sanctions (perhaps revoke membership)

Organisation

How to structure the working environment?

Data (ethics) governance

- How to embed data ethics in your organisation?
 - Oversight board Facebook
 - Ethics council ING
 - IBM AI Ethics Board

Ethics Washing

- Don't become a privacy charlatan!
 - A privacy charlatan is: “a company that promises its customers a certain degree of privacy and data protection which it cannot actually deliver due to its technology, business model or policy”.
- A strategy to avoid regulation
- Data ethics as branding activity
- What happens after acquisition?

Next week:

- Technomoral change
- Q&A
 - first modules
 - Blogpost assignment
 - Debating sessions

Questions on Module?

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