Phase 1: Moral Problem Statement

- What's at stake?

- Ralph has used previously written code from his previous company-a now-defunct startup-in the product of SDX Alliance. This reused code has been copyrighted by his former employer, making the situation quite legally and ethically binding.

- Who must act?

This needs to be ironed out by Ralph, who would brief SDX Alliance with proposing a solution.

- It is a situation that needs a decision on the way forward by the SDX Alliance.

- Moral standing

The ethical dilemma here is that he has unwittingly infringed on the copyright, hence affecting the business operation of the SDX Alliance.

Phase 2: Problem Analysis

1. Stakeholders and Interests:

 - SDX Alliance: Fastest time to market with zero legal risk.

- Ralph: To correct the mistake without losing either his self-respect or his job.

 - Previous Employer: Owns the copyright of the code; not exactly easy to contact.

- The customer could expect a robust and legally correct product.

2. Moral values at stake:

- Integrity; responsibility and respect for intellectual property.

3. Salient, questionable, and probably omitted facts

Whether that allows SDX Alliance to contact the owner of the by-now-defunct startup.

- Permission by the abandoned company is unknown if it would be given or sue over code usage.

Stage 3: Alternatives of Action

1. Black-and-white choices/decisions:

- Rewrite of the code; Publish Later.

- Publish the work, risking potential legal consequences.

2. Feasible Alternative Options:

Try to find out who owns this dead startup's IP and try to negotiate a license for the code.

Change only the duplicated segments of code with new ones but leave the rest of the functionality intact.

- Hire lawyers to evaluate the risk involved in using the code for which the owner cannot be located.

Phase 4: Ethical Evaluation

- Theories and principles:

- Maximize benefits to all constituents. For example, a settlement can eliminate legal risks and delays.

- Kant's Duty Ethics: One would underscore compliance with copyright laws and respect for intellectual property.

- Virtue Ethics: Was applied here based on Ralph's integrity and accountability regarding his mistake.

- Code of Conduct: Observe the industrial and organizational norms regarding intellectual property and software development.

Phase 5: Reflection

- Critically assess chosen alternatives: - Is the action consistent with the ethical framework? In yielding to seek permission to use the code, he would meet both legal and ethical standards. Does the solution take into account the major concerns of its stakeholders? For instance, refactoring the code is compliant, but definitely delays product release.

- Is the decision morally justifiable? Yes, provided the decision shall not go against the intellectual property laws and the legal risks are clear.

Conclusion: In such a case, it will be wise to try to reach the previous employer for permission to use the code, and if that is not possible, then SDX Alliance has to rewrite those parts of code falling under such cases in order to meet the criteria of copyright laws. This takes into account all legal, ethical, and pragmatic perspectives.