

Assignment 1

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Problem 1

(a) In the flashlight case, the main ethical issue is the conflict between the engineer's responsibility to make a good product and the company's plan for "planned obsolescence" to make more money. This creates a moral dilemma between profit and social duty.

(b) In the medical accelerator case, patient safety is the most important value. The manufacturer's refusal to admit a possible flaw creates a serious moral dilemma, forcing a choice between protecting their reputation and protecting human lives.

Problem 2

LeMessurier should have told everyone who might be in danger as soon as he knew about the problem. When people's lives are at risk, their right to know and make their own choices is more important than avoiding public worry or financial loss. Having an evacuation plan was necessary, but it was not a substitute for the moral duty to warn people immediately and be honest about the danger.

Problem 3

I mostly agree with Michael Davis. What makes a group a "profession" is that its members organize around a shared moral goal and follow a code of ethics that goes beyond just following the law or making money. So, if carpenters or barbers have a strong shared commitment to quality, honesty, and serving their customers' best interests, they should be considered professionals. This challenges the traditional, narrower view of what counts as a profession.