

IS350 Ethical Analysis Final Report

# **Ethical Analysis Final Report - T04**

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## **I. Ethical Dilemma - T04**

Being involved in developing weapons to be used in war

*Scenario:* Ann has been offered an opportunity to move to a section in her company where her new position would be to help develop anti-personnel bombs, (e.g., land mines, Cluster bombs). Currently Ann is in a section that does not develop anti-personnel bombs. This offer is a big promotion and recognition of her talent. Ann is torn as she does not think that helping to make anti-personnel bombs is a good thing to do but if she does not accept the assignment, she most likely will not be offered another promotion opportunity at the company.

*Dilemma:* Is it ethical for Ann to accept the new position?

## **II. Moral Agent**

In our given scenario, Ann is our moral agent. Within the scenario Ann is faced with a moral dilemma: will it be ethical for Ann to accept her new position in developing anti-personnel bombs. Ann will have to depict right from wrong, choose whether to accept or decline the promotion even though the consequences of her decision may affect her future career opportunities. Depending on the choice Ann decides she will be accountable for her action, whether she accepts the promotion and develops morally troubling weapons or declines the opportunity sacrificing potential career advancements. Ultimately Ann will have to weigh her values and principles to make a decision she can stand by.

### III. Values at Stake

Within Ann moral dilemma has to consider several values, reflecting a conflict between personal gains and ethical principles. There are plenty of values Ann could take into consideration to potentially help her make a decision from Ethical, Professional, Social and Relational, and even Personal values. First talking about ethical values, Ann would have to consider human life overall. Taking the job opportunity Ann is concerned about the harmful effects that anti-personnel bombs will have on people. These effects aren't a simple cut and bruise but are life threatening. These anti-personnel bombs are known to cause significant suffering, especially to civilians that are caught between wars and often remain dangerous long after battles end.

Next diving into Ann professional values, due to Ann's working ability she was given a promotion that reflects on Ann's talents which is a significant career milestone and potentially improves her professional future career. Ann's talent is being acknowledged, and accepting the role will show her capabilities and dedication, though if she doesn't Ann is conflicted with potentially not being given the opportunity of a promotion again which can derail her professional career goals.

Closely relating to Ann professional values, she will have to take into consideration her social relations values within her work environment. Ann's decision will impact how she is viewed by her colleagues or within her professional network positively or negatively. Within her work environment depending on her decision other colleagues might stray away from her due to the fact that Ann is working with weapons, or higher management thinking negatively of her for turning down an opportunity they have provided her.

### **III. Values at Stake**

The main core conflict that Ann will have to decide on will be between personal career growth and ethical/moral responsibility. Ann will need to decide which values she prioritizes in achieving her professional goals or staying true to her moral principles and deal with the consequences of her action.

#### IV. Stakeholders

Due to the setting of the moral dilemma Ann isn't the only party at stake. There are other people that could potentially be indirectly affected based on Ann's decision. Taking a look at our scenario we can see that Ann is the main stakeholder whose career, ethical values, and professional future is at stake. Besides Ann, the company and Ann's supervisors and managers are at stake. Ann's employer will benefit from her talent if she decides to accept the promotion and work on anti-personnel bombs. With Ann's supervisors and managers they are the ones that offered Ann the promotion and depending on her decision in taking the job or not will reflect management depending on her decision.

Moving aside the primary stakeholders there are secondary stakeholders that will be affected within the decision of Ann's moral dilemma. The main party would be the people and civilians in conflict zones that are affected because of the use of anti-personnel bombs. Vulnerable populations such as women and children could be harmed by the weapons Ann's work might contribute to developing. Secondly, Ann's peers might be affected by the team dynamics if Ann joins or declines the new position, and who might have their own ethical perspective about the company's work. Lastly will be people that are close to Ann, such as family and friends. Those close to Ann who may be impacted by her career decision can have an emotional, and most importantly a financial outcome through her decision.

Ann's decision will have a domino effect that will affect personal, professional, and humanitarian implications due to her decision within her moral dilemma. Taking into consideration other stakeholders will allow Ann to make a decision based on what she considers of more importance.

## **V. Moral Agent Taking Action**

If Ann were to decide to take the job promotion despite her ethical concerns, her course of action would involve navigating both her responsibilities of the new role and the conflict with her personal values. Accepting the job opportunity Ann will have to fulfill the demands of the jobs such as having a contribution to the development of anti-personnel bombs. While carrying out her company demands of her new job and its responsibility Ann has to uphold professional standards even if her ethical morals are conflicted. With Ann having her ethical morals conflicted, Ann could address ethical concerns Ann will have to superiors and peers into potentially adding implications to the company's work or push towards less controversial and harmful impacts development of anti-personnel bombs. Alongside this Ann could use her promotion as an opportunity to increase her skills within her professional career and later transfer to a different job promotion that is more aligned with her ethical views.

With Ann taking the job promotion she will have to undergo many explanations and discussions with the people that are close to her such as family and friends and even peers on why she chose the job promotion and support her process her ethical conflict and reassuring her of her choices. Ann will have to deal with moral discomfort and guilt with her role in developing anti-personnel bombs. Alongside how people will view Ann in her decision in making these weapons. By accepting the promotion, Ann is prioritizing her career advancement and recognition but will have to atone to her moral beliefs to avoid regret and burnouts.



## **V. Moral Agent Taking Action**

After being given the job promotion and Ann declines the offer, Ann's course of action will involve maintaining her ethical integrity. Communicating her decision should be the first step in Ann should respectfully decline the promotion, explaining her decision based on ethical concerns. Ann should express her gratitude for the recognition and her commitment to the company in roles that may align better with her values.

Declining the job promotion opportunity might limit her future opportunities within the company, specifically if it's viewed as a lack of ambition or alignment with the company's direction. Some colleagues and superiors might even see her decision negatively, potentially affecting her relationships with peers. With declining the job opportunity Ann might have made experience regret over missing a promotion, especially if financial implications are involved.

For Ann to guarantee that she is being considered for more promotion opportunities, Ann could proactively communicate to supervisors and managers that she is willing to work for a job promotion. Ann could invest in her professional development to make herself more competitive for future promotions. Maintaining a good relationship with her supervisors and managers express a willingness to take on challenging roles within their company. This will help preserve her reputation and keep doors open for future job promotion opportunities.

All though Ann could miss out on this job promotion Ann stays true to her ethical beliefs, which will lead to long-term personal satisfaction and peace of mind. Her decision might enhance her reputation to people who prioritizes values over career advancement. By declining the promotion, Ann affirms her commitment to her values, though she must proactively address the career implications to ensure continued growth and satisfaction in her professional life.

## **VI. Ethical Theory Analyzation**

Ethical Analysis using Kantianism:

Following Kantianism Ann would have if everyone accepted the role to develop weapons designed to harm people, even when they felt it was morally wrong? If so, society would normalize prioritizing personal gain over moral consideration. The development of anti-personnel bombs, designed to kill, will develop cycles of violence and suffering. According to Kantianism Ann has a duty to act ethically, even if declining the offer results in negative personal consequences, such as staggering her career. Her moral responsibility is to ensure that her actions align with universal principles of respect for human dignity and the preservation of life.

Ethical Analysis using Act Utilitarianism:

According to Act Utilitarianism the morality of an action is based on the specific consequences of that action, aiming to maximize overall happiness and minimize harm. Ann receiving a promotion will potentially lead to higher pay and involve job security and career advancement improving her quality of life. Though weighing the harms, Anti-personnel bombs are known for harming civilians through aspects such as death and injuries, trauma for survivors and affected communities, and lastly has economic harm. Through Act Utilitarian, Ann should reject the promotion, as the harm caused by accepting the role far exceeds the personal benefits.

## **VI. Ethical Theory Analyzation**

Ethical Analysis using Rule Utilitarianism:

Using Rule Utilitarianism aligns the same as Act Utilitarianism but considers the consequences that follow. According to Rule Utilitarianism employees should accept promotion if it advances their careers and contributes to organizational success. On the other hand employees should not contribute to the development of products that cause harm. With this in mind we have to weigh the consequences depending on the decisions. If Ann were to accept the promotion she will increase overall productivity and satisfaction for employees. Though Employees may prioritize personal gain over ethical considerations creating normalized unethical industries increasing harm to society. For if Ann were to decline the promotion she discourages industries to practice widespread harm such as the production of anti-personnel bombs. But some individuals may face career stagnation or lose opportunities while companies fill these roles that are willing to work. The ethical course of action the principles that promote societal well-being even at the cost of personal career advancement.

Ethical Analysis using Social Contract Theory:

Social Contract theory evaluates actions based on the agreement among individuals in a society. In Ann's situation, the agreement not to harm others unjustly. Individuals agree to rules that promote safety and minimize harm for all parties. Accepting the position will pose to society by prioritizing personal and organizational gain over societal well being and justice. Where rejecting the position upholds the core values of society prioritizing well-being over individual benefit. While rejecting the position may come at a personal cost, it allows sight for an ethical society.

## **VI. Ethical Theory Analyzation**

Ethical Analysis using Virtue Theory:

Looking at Virtue theory, it evaluates actions focusing on the character traits that the action reflects. Asking whether actions align with the kind of people one should strive to be. In Ann's the decision to accept or reject the promotion can be evaluated based on her virtues. If Ann accepts the position, it compromises her ethical beliefs for personal gain. Acceptance could reflect the focus on career growth but goes against ethical boundaries. If Ann were to decline the promotion she upholds her ethical principles and shows her moral character. Facing potential career setbacks demonstrates moral bravery. Refusing to participate in the production of harmful weapons aligns with fairness and respect for human rights. While rejecting the promotion may present challenges, it allows Ann to live a life following virtues.

## **VII. Ethical Code Analyzation**

Ethical Analysis using ACM Code of Ethics:

1.1 Contribute to society and human-well being, Anti-personnel bombs are designed to harm individuals during warfare which has casualties of civilians. Rejecting the promotion aligns with the commitment to societal well-being.

2.7 Improve public understanding of computing and its consequences, Ann's position as a professional gives her the opportunity to advocate for ethical practices and educate others of consequences of developing harmful weapons such as anti-personnel mines.

3.4 Adhere to ethical design and development, the ACM Code itself emphasizes that technologies should be designed to promote well-being and avoid harm, the development of anti-personnel bombs doesn't align with these theories.

Ethical Analysis using Software Engineering Code of Ethics:

1.1 Acting with the public interest, developing anti-personnel bombs, are harmful to civilians violating the public interest.

1.7 Be fair to supportive of your colleagues, Ann's decision could influence her peers to perform more ethical decisions within the company.

1.8 Participate in lifelong learning and promote an ethical approach to the practice of profession, Ann has the opportunity to contribute to an ethical culture awareness in her workplace.

## VIII. Conclusion

Analyzing through ethical analysis using different ethical theories such as Kantianism, Act Utilitarianism, Rule Utilitarianism, Social Contract Theory, and Virtue Theory. While following the ACM Code of Ethics and Software Engineering Code of Ethics. With these in mind for Ann to follow her ethical values and the sake of bettering society she should decline the promotion. Ann's ethical concern about developing anti-personnel bombs which can cause harm to the public. Declining a promotion allows her to maintain her moral integrity and avoid performing actions that go against her values. Ann avoids contributing to warfare technologies showing that she prioritizes societal well-being. With Ann virtues, Ann can set an example to her peers within her company to promote ethical awareness and responsibility. Lastly, both the ACM Code of Ethics and Software Engineering Code of Ethics shows the importance of making decisions and developing technology that act against the public interest and uphold an ethical professionalism. In declining a promotion, Ann demonstrates moral courage and a commitment to ethical principles, prioritizing societal well-being over personal gain.

## IX. Citation

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