

Kant's Categorical Imperative and Workplace Ethics

CASE STUDY: FALSIFYING INFORMATION
AT WORK

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Overview of Deontology



“Deontology judges actions by duty, not by consequences”
(Matthews & Hendricks, 2019, p. 103).



Kant:
morality =
rational
autonomy +
universal law.



Duty =
respect for
moral law.

Duty → **~~Consequences~~**



Scenario Defined

- Employee hides safety flaw to meet deadline
- Examples: altering reports, hiding errors, misreporting compliance.
- Violates trust, integrity, rational cooperation.

Trust Integrity Cooperation



Formula of Universal Law

Principle: “Act only on
maxim universalizable”
(Matthews & Hendricks,
2019, p. 106).

Application:
Falsification →
trust collapses

Contradiction:
dishonesty destroys
the system it
depends on.



Formula of Humanity

Principle: “Treat humanity always as an end” (Matthews & Hendricks, 2019, p. 108).

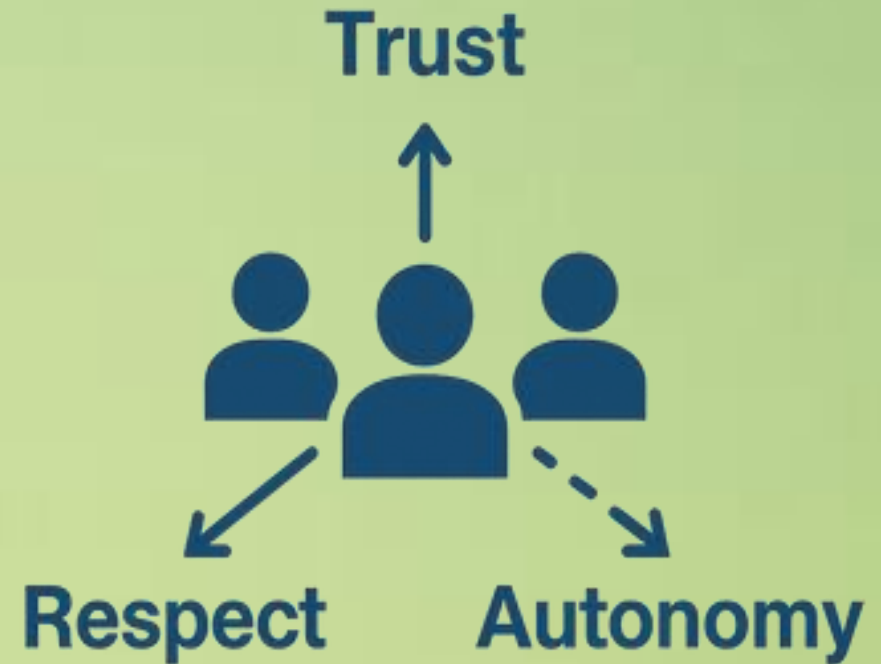
Application: Falsification manipulates colleagues, clients, employers.

Violation: Disrespects dignity + autonomy.



Formula of the Kingdom of Ends

- Principle: “Act as if law-making in a kingdom of ends” (Matthews & Hendricks, 2019, p. 110).
- Rational community requires honesty + cooperation.
- Falsification undermines shared moral law + trust.





Conflicting Duties

Perfect duty:
truth-telling

Imperfect duty:
benevolence
(helping
colleague)

Kant: perfect
duties take
precedence

✓ Ethical Implications

- Morally impermissible under all three formulations.
- Duty of honesty + integrity in professional life.
- Rational autonomy demands truthfulness.





Golden Rule Connection



GOLDEN RULE:
“DO UNTO
OTHERS....”
(MÁHRIK, 2018,
P. 6)



SIMILARITY:
RECIPROCITY +
UNIVERSALITY.



DIFFERENCE:
KANT =
RATIONAL
AUTONOMY,
NOT EMPATHY.

Conclusion



FALSIFICATION FAILS
KANT'S TESTS:
UNIVERSALITY,
RESPECT, COMMUNITY.



ETHICAL WORKPLACES
REQUIRE HONESTY +
INTEGRITY.



KANTIAN ETHICS =
RATIONAL GUIDANCE
FOR CONDUCT.



Reference(s):

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