

Instructions: Break up into groups of two or three. Through consensus, resolve the following moral dilemmas in the workplace. Write a response. After present to the class. Use feedback to improve on your initial work.

Deontology and Utilitarianism are two ethical frameworks that offer different approaches to resolving moral dilemmas. Deontology is a moral theory that emphasizes following universal moral principles and rules, regardless of the consequences, while Utilitarianism is a moral theory that focuses on maximizing overall happiness or pleasure for the greatest number of people.

Here are three workplace dilemmas. Analyze them and identify the decision that aligns best with the (1) Deontology and (2) Utilitarianism perspective.

1. **Layoffs:** Suppose a company is facing financial difficulties and needs to lay off a significant portion of its workforce to stay afloat. The CEO must decide whether to lay off employees based on their seniority or performance.
2. **Whistleblowing:** Suppose an employee discovers that their company is engaging in illegal or unethical behavior, such as tax evasion or discrimination. The employee must decide whether to report the behavior to the authorities or keep quiet to avoid retaliation or negative consequences.
3. **Safety regulations:** Suppose a company is considering cutting corners on safety regulations to save costs and increase profits. The CEO must decide whether to prioritize the safety of their employees or the financial success of the company.

Overall, these dilemmas illustrate the contrasting perspectives of Deontology and Utilitarianism when it comes to moral decision-making in the workplace. While Deontologists prioritize universal moral principles, Utilitarians prioritize the overall good and happiness of society.

- Layoffs:

Deontological approach:

According to deontology, the right decision should adhere to universal moral principles such as justice and equality. When making a decision about who to terminate, factors such as personal circumstances and family obligations of the employee should be considered, not just their performance and length of employment.

Utilitarian approach:

According to utilitarianism, the right decision should maximize the overall happiness or satisfaction of the greatest number of people. In this case, the CEO should decide to terminate those employees whose skills and knowledge are least important to the company and whose termination will have the least negative impact on the remaining employees.

- Whistleblowing:

Deontological approach:

According to deontology, an employee should report any illegal or unethical behavior of the company to authorities. This is right because justice and legality are universal moral principles, and violations of these principles should be punished.

Utilitarian approach:

According to utilitarianism, an employee should decide what will bring more good: reporting a violation or not reporting it. In this case, if reporting the violation will lead to the company correcting its behavior and becoming more law-abiding and ethical, it may lead to an increase in overall welfare and happiness.

- Safety regulations:

Deontological approach:

According to deontology, the CEO should prioritize the safety of their employees even if it may decrease the company's profit. Safety and protection of employees' lives are universal moral principles that cannot be sacrificed for financial success.

Utilitarian approach:

In the case of safety rules, the company should abide by the rules as it guarantees the protection of employees' lives and health, as well as avoiding potential legal and financial consequences associated with violating the rules and possible accidents.