



ETHICISMS AND THEIR RISKS: 150 new cartoons about ethics at work

Muel Kaptein



Serious preface

Ethics with a smile

Ethics is a critical reflection on moral values, norms, and behavior. Cartoons can be a powerful tool for this reflection: they can be used to describe and challenge morality in a visual and humoristic way. In this manner, cartoons function as ethics with a smile.

Ethicisms

This book contains 150 cartoons. Each cartoon refers to a distinctive and fundamental view about ethics in the workplace. I call these *ethicisms* because they are all nouns that end with the suffix *-ism*. Words that end in *-ism* describe how we think and how we perceive things. Ethicisms relate to the moral theories, doctrines, and ideologies that we follow.

The importance of ethicisms

The ethicisms that we follow are important for what ethics means to us, how we apply ethics, and how we expect others to behave. We cannot understand or change morality without understanding ethicisms.

A catalogue of ethicisms

This book is a catalogue of ethicisms, presented alphabetically. I present a short definition and a typical risk of each ethicism. The risk is reflected in the cartoon. I would like to thank John Körver for, based on my sketches, drawing the cartoons.

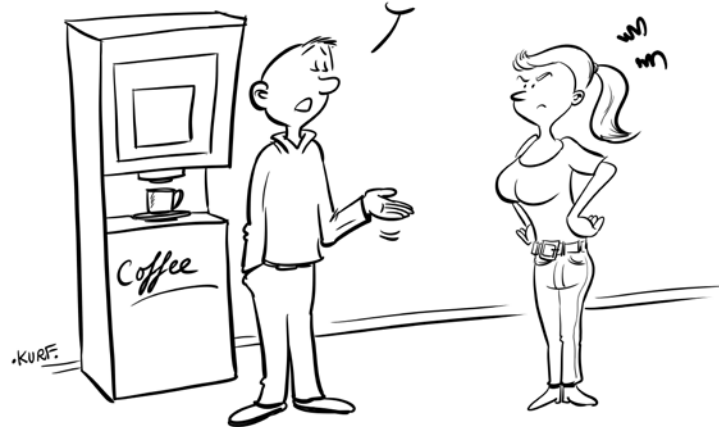
Share with others

The purpose of this book is to help one discover, hopefully with a smile, one's own ethicisms and the risks they bring. You may also share the cartoons with others to address ethical issues in a disarming manner.

Enjoy and happy reflections!

Muel

SEXUAL HARASSMENT?
I'M JUST BEING VERY HONEST SAYING
THAT I DREAMED ABOUT YOU LAST NIGHT
LAYING IN MY BED IN MY ARMS!



1. Moral absolutism

The view that particular actions are always either right or wrong. A risk is that ethical norms are taken to the point of absurdity such that other norms are violated.

WE HAVE CREATED A CODE OF ETHICS THAT IS VERY EASY FOR YOU TO LEARN AND REMEMBER. IT CONTAINS ONLY THREE WORDS : ALWAYS ACT ETHICALLY!



2. Moral abstractionism (also called idealism)

The view that ethics is about highly ideal prescriptions that cannot be actually realized or operationalized. A risk is that ethics cannot give practical guidance.



3. Moral absurdism

The view that we live in an irrational universe where there is no absolute morality so that people are free to construct their own morality. A risk is that this is used as a reason to behave irrationally and unethically.



4. Moral accidentalism

The view that some events just simply do not have any cause.

A risk is the denial of moral responsibility.

BECAUSE A GOOD REPUTATION
IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR OUR ORGANIZATION,
EVERY EMPLOYEE SHOULD PREVENT
THE APPEARANCE OF UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR.
SO IF YOU WILL BEHAVE UNETHICALLY,
PLEASE MAKE SURE NO ONE WILL SEE
OR KNOW ABOUT IT!



5. Moral aestheticism

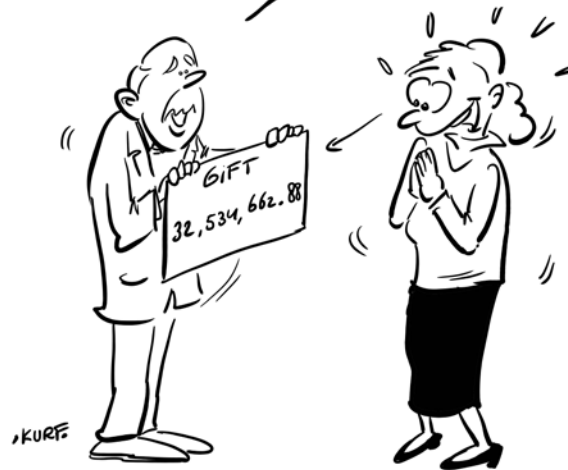
The view that to be perceived as beautiful is the highest moral value. A risk is that unethical behavior is permissible as long as others do not witness or observe it.



6. Moral agathism

The view that the good will ultimately triumph even though morally evil things happen. A risk is that every evil is tolerated and accepted.

WE LOVE YOUR CHARITY SO MUCH
THAT WE HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE
YOU A GIFT OF OUR COMPANY'S ENTIRE
ASSETS AND RESOURCES!



7. Moral altruism

The view that the regard for the interests of others is the sole moral value and that concern for one's own interests does not count. A risk is that one's own rights are violated.



8. Amoralism

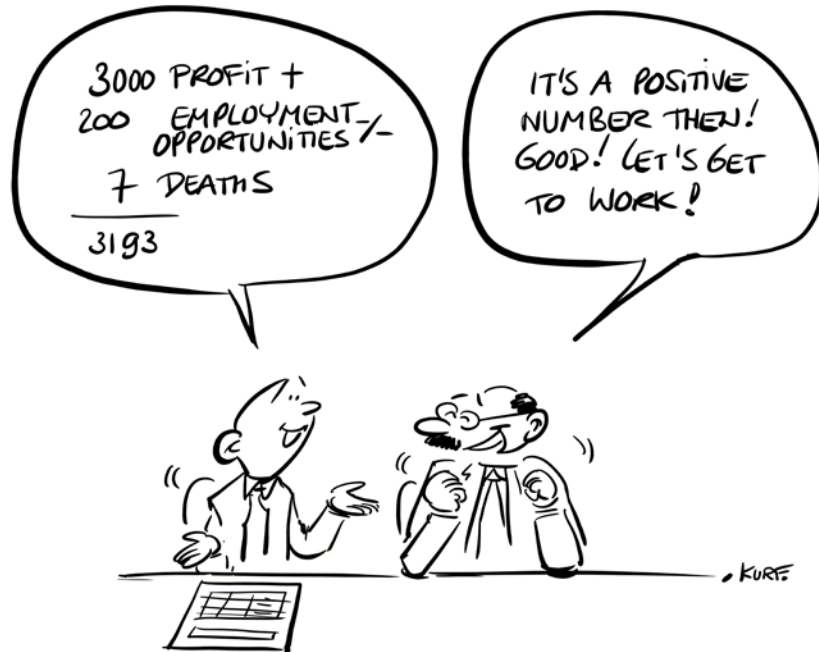
The view that ethical norms do not have a separate objective reality or basis. A risk is that every ethical norm can be negotiated and destroyed (or undermined).

SHALL WE GIVE PRIORITY
TO THE INTEREST OF
OUR SHAREHOLDERS
OR OUR CLIENTS?



9. Moral anarchism

The view that employees should determine the ethics of their organization and not management, who have no moral authority. A risk is that employees will set (or choose or pick out) norms that are only in their own interest.



10. Moral arithmeticism

The view that what is morally good and bad can be calculated
A risk is that what cannot be calculated is ignored.

11. Moral asceticism

The view that people and organizations should live as a hermit or a monk: pursuing a life characterized by self-discipline and self-denial through solitude, toil, fasting, and frugality. A risk is that pettiness, narrow-mindedness, and fastidiousness might arise.





12. Moral ascriptivism

The view that human beings are to be held morally responsible for their behavior even if it is the result of having been influenced by someone or something. A risk is that people are blamed for things that are beyond their control.



13. Moral authoritarianism

The view that those who have authority possess moral supremacy and the right to command subordinates without the latter's consent. A risk is that subordinates are ordered to behave unethically.

YOU 'VE NOW REACHED THE LIMIT
OF 3 COMPLAINT CALLS PER YEAR.
SORRY, WE CAN NO LONGER ENTERTAIN
YOUR CALL. TRY AGAIN NEXT YEAR!



14. Moral autism

The view that one should seclude oneself from the moral expectations of others because these are distracting and demotivating. A risk is that important (new) ethical issues and norms are missed.

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IS VERY IMPORTANT.
THEREFORE, AS A LEADER, I HAVE DEFINED
WHAT'S ETHICAL FOR YOU.

SO WHEN YOU SIGN HERE TO INDICATE
YOUR CONSENT, YOU THEN BECOME
A GOOD FOLLOWER!



15. Moral autocracism

The view that one person has the absolute power (i.e., without any constraints or control) to define what is ethical. A risk is that the opinions of others are not taken into account.



16. Moral autocueism

The view that (as reading from an autocue) one should do and say exactly what others have determined, planned, or laid out in advance. A risk is a lack of authenticity.



17. Moral autonomy

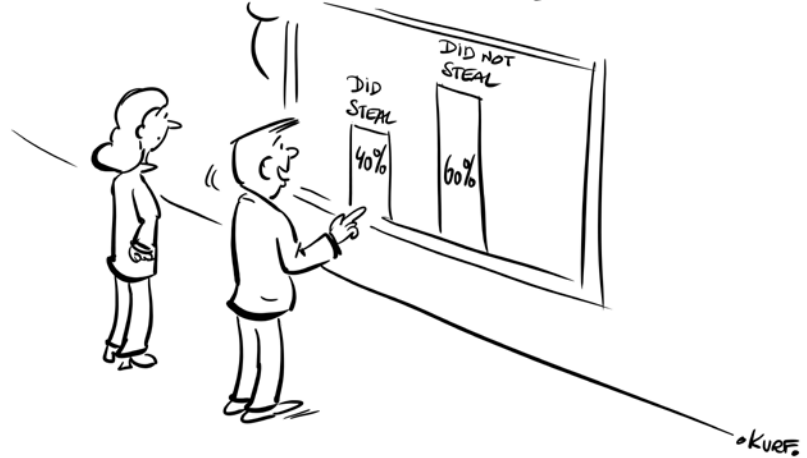
The view that one should strive for autonomy to determine what is right and wrong. A risk is the neglect of context and society.



18. Moral bacteriophobiaism

The view that to keep intact one's own integrity one should not take any risks that may compromise it. A risk is passivity.

I AM VERY SATISFIED
WITH THE RESULTS OF
OUR EMPLOYEE AUDIT.
IT SHOWS THAT LAST YEAR
60% OF OUR EMPLOYEES
DID NOT STEAL FROM
OUR COMPANY!



19. Moral bonism (also optimism)

The view that the world and human beings are generally or fundamentally good but not perfect. A risk is that evil is ignored.

COULD YOU KINDLY PUT YOUR INITIAL
ON BOX 12 TO APPROVE MY TRAVEL COSTS?
AS YOU CAN SEE, THE OTHER 11 SUPERVISORS
HAVE ALREADY APPROVED!



20. Moral bureaucratism

The view that ethical behavior is produced by an administrative system of rules and procedures devised by some remote person behind a desk. A risk is the undermining of self-regulation.

• KURF

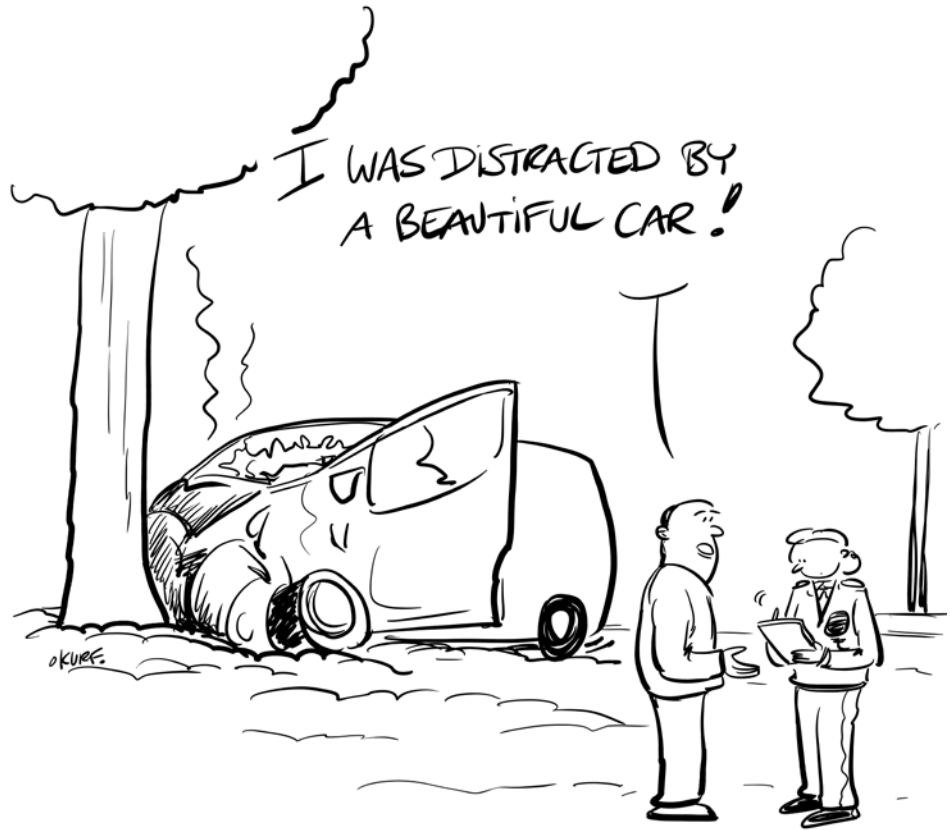
I'VE INCLUDED A FOOTNOTE
IN SMALL LETTERS ON PAGE 69
OF THE CONDITIONS OF SALE
THAT THE CUSTOMER IS
RESPONSIBLE IF WE
DELIVER A POOR PRODUCT!



21. Moral caveat emptoris

The view that buyers (= empor) and other stakeholders should be aware of the information asymmetry between them and the organization and that they should bear their responsibility.

A risk is that the organization uses this as a justification for its own unethical behavior.



22. Moral circumstancism

The view that circumstances should be perfect for one to be able to take responsibility for one's behavior. A risk is there will always be an excuse for why one cannot be responsible.

IN THE OLDEN DAYS
EVERYTHING WAS BETTER!
ONE COULD TAKE CLIENTS
TO THE BROTHEL

INDEED! YOU
COULD FIX PRICES
WITH THE
COMPETITORS!



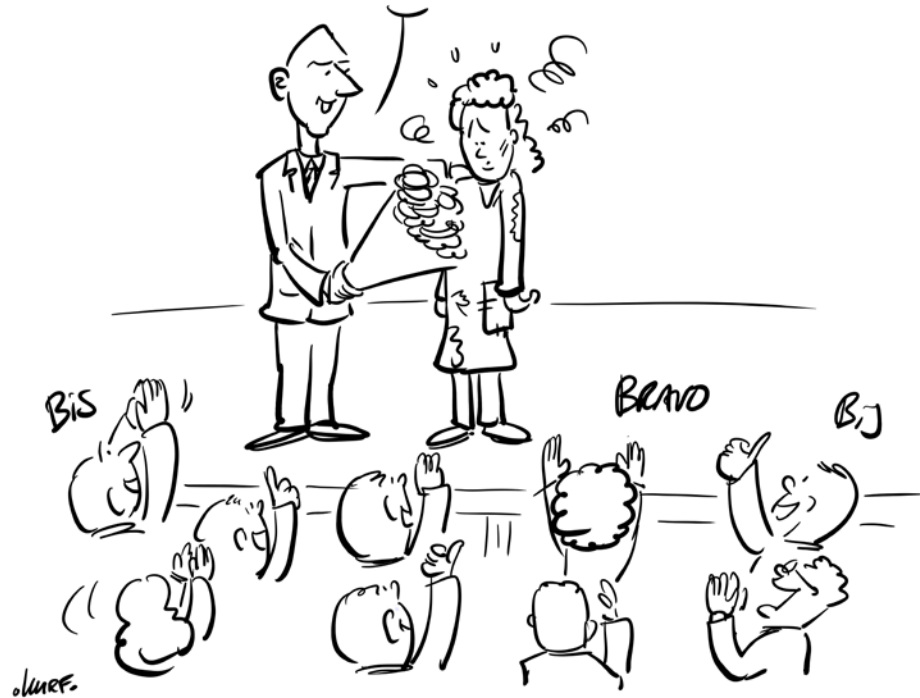
IT WAS STANDARD
THAT OVERTIME WORK
WAS PAID OFF THE RECORD

AND A
SMOKING CHIMNEY
WAS A SIGN OF
PROSPERITY!

23. Moral classicism

The view that ethical norms were better in the bygone days. A risk is the ignorance of changing circumstances that require new norms.

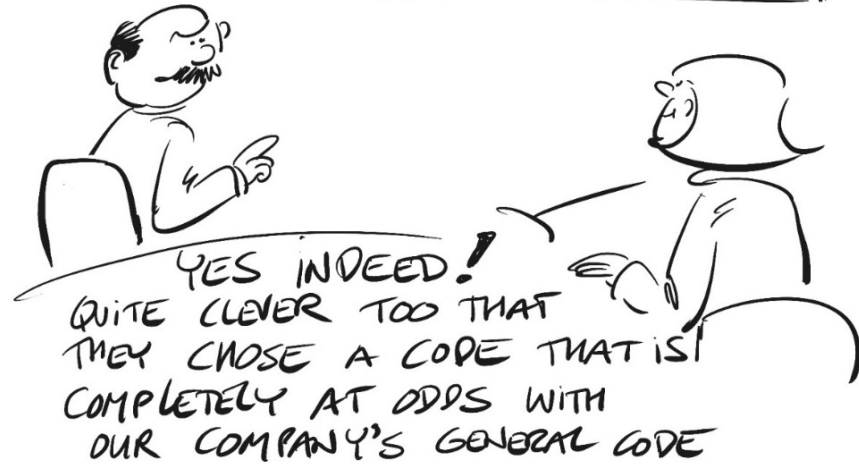
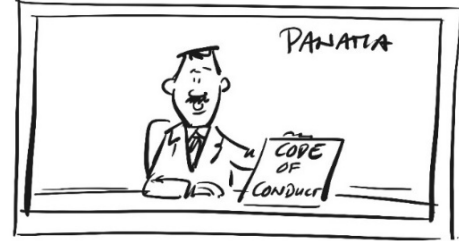
WE ALL THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR ALL YOUR GOOD EFFORTS
DURING SO MANY YEARS
TO SACRIFICE YOUR INTEGRITY
FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR COMPANY!



24. Moral collectivism

The view that an individual's moral beliefs and actions should benefit the collective (such as the company, profession, or community). A risk is that the individual's interests and integrity are neglected.

I LIKE THE DECISIVENESS
OF OUR COMPANY
IN PANAMA TO
QUICKLY COME WITH
AN OWN CODE
OF CONDUCT!



25. Moral communalism
(also **sovereignism**)

The view that each unit of an organization should autonomously and independently decide what is moral for them. A risk is that the morality of the organization becomes inconsistent.

okuef.

26. Moral compartmentalism

The view that a person or organization may have different and unrelated sets of morality for different roles and functions. A risk is becoming disintegrated and limited, with no comprehensive morality.



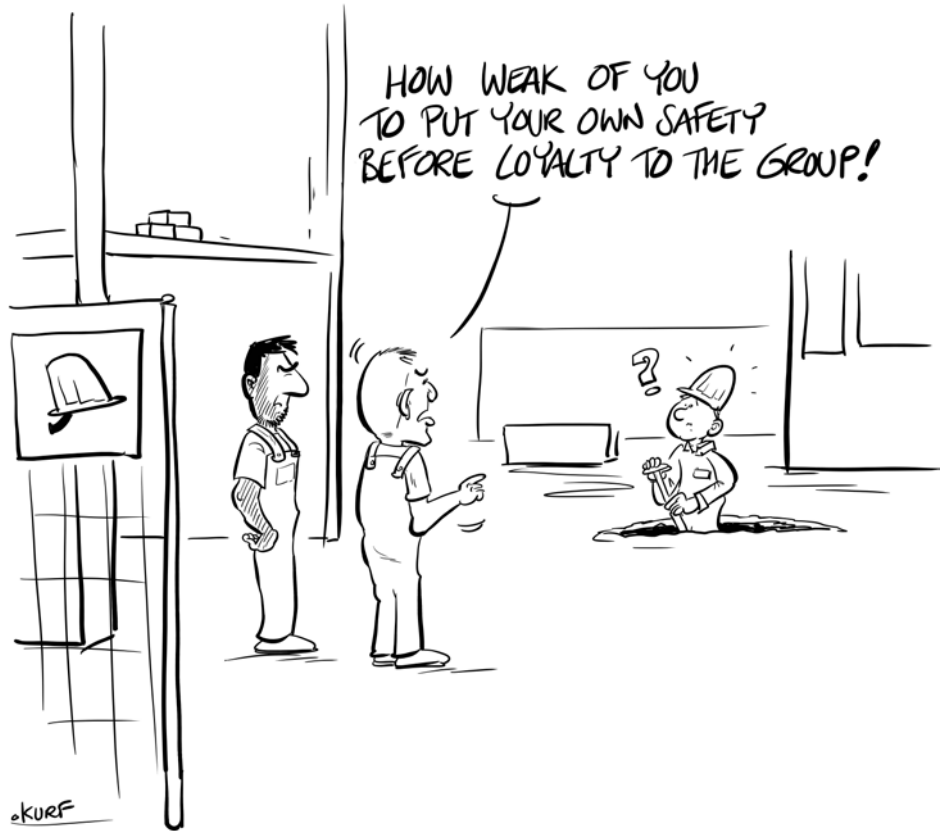


27. Moral concretism (also **hypostatizationism**, **reificationism**, and **reism**)

The view that morality should be represented through concrete things. A risk is that norms that are not made concrete are neglected.

**AS LONG AS THEY DON'T MAKE IT CONCRETE,
WE ARE NOT OBLIGED TO HELP THEM**

•kurt.



28. Moral conformism
(also tribalism)

The view that one should adopt the morality of the group to which one belongs. A risk is one's morality is sacrificed.

FORTUNATELY, IT IS BETTER
FOR THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY
AND HEALTH CARE IF WE
CONTINUE TO SELL OUR
CANCER-CAUSING PRODUCT



29. Moral consequentialism

The view that only the consequences and results of an action count in determining its rightness or wrongness.

A risk is that bad intentions and bad behavior are not taken into account.

30. Moral conservatism (also ritualism)

The view in maintaining traditions that seek to preserve established moral practices or that resist change in morality.

A risk is that unethical behavior remains unchanged.



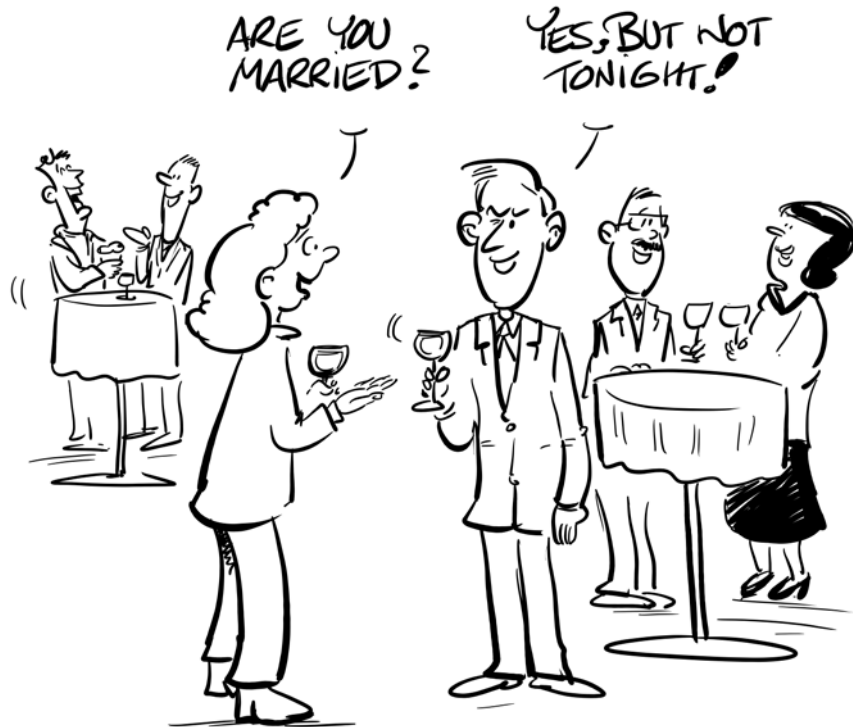
YOU'VE SHOWN THIS YEAR
THAT YOU ALL CAN ADHERE VERY
WELL TO THE CODE OF ETHICS.
WELL DONE! HENCE YOU MAY
SHOW IN THE COMING YEAR
THAT YOU CAN ALSO DO WITHOUT
SUCH A CODE!



31. Moral constructivism

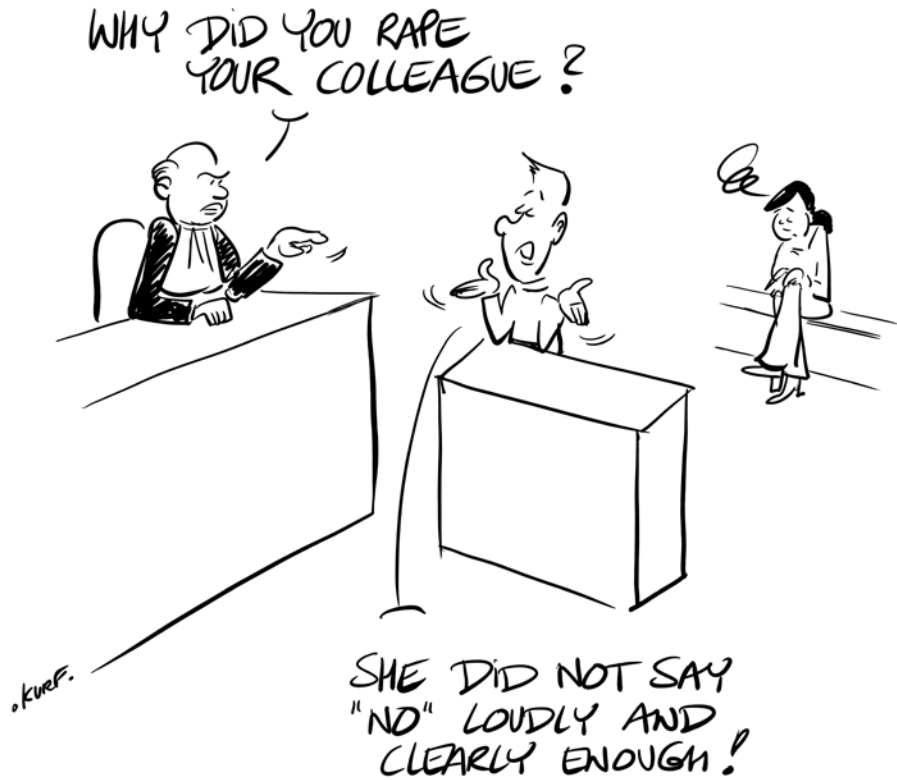
The view that morality is constructed rather than received and has an objective value. A risk is that morality is destroyed.

Wurf.



32. Moral contextualism

The view that ethical norms are not absolute but are dependent on the specific context. A risk is that the context fully determines what is ethical.



33. Moral contractualism

The view that what is right and wrong is based on an explicit or implicit agreement between people. A risk is that everything that has not been agreed in advance is supposed to be allowed.



34. Moral controlism

The view that people will only do the right thing when they are being controlled through monitoring, checks, and inspections. A risk is that people feel that they are not trusted.

oKURF

CHILD LABOUR
IS COMMONLY
ACCEPTED IN THIS COUNTRY.
SO IT IS OUR MORAL
DUTY TO ALSO
EMPLOY CHILDREN!



35. Moral conventionalism (also normalism)

The view that people should behave in accordance with accepted moral norms that have been either arbitrarily or artificially determined. A risk is that people follow norms that are not ethical.



36. Moral corporatism

The view that the interests of a corporation are most important and should always be served. A risk is that other legitimate interests are violated.

I ALWAYS FOLLOW THE ADVICE
OF OUR ETHICS OFFICER.
WHEN HE SAID I SHOULD TAKE
IMMEDIATE ACTION, I DID:
I FIRED HIM!



37. Moral creativitism

The view that it is acceptable to interpret the situation and norms to one's own advantage while still complying with the norms.

A risk is that the spirit of the norm is violated.

LOOK AT THIS CARTOON.
BUSINESS HAS ETHICS!



38. Moral cynicism

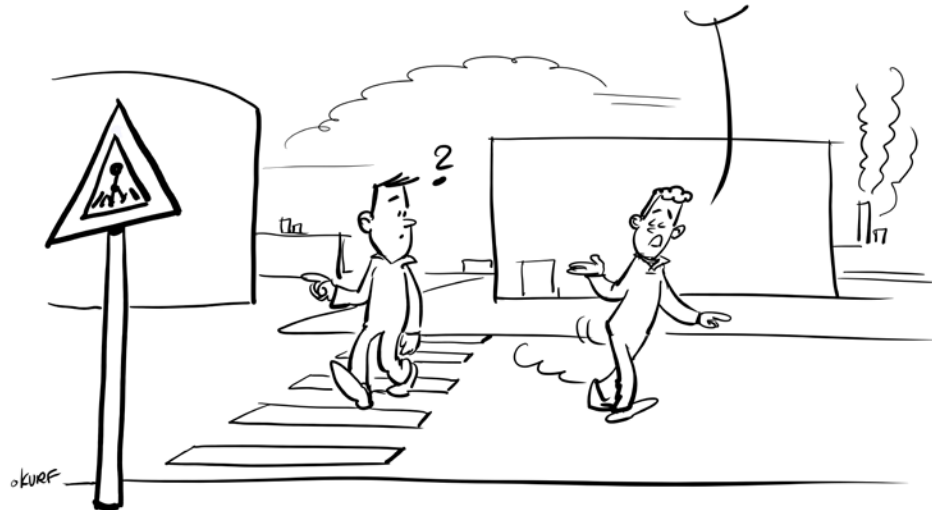
The view that one has to approach conventional morality in a critical way. A risk is that there is disdain for good moral norms.



39. Moral darwinism

The view that only the best ethics will survive. A risk is that ethics is seen as a competition of who has the better ethics.

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT STATES THAT I SHOULD BEHAVE IN A SAFE AND EFFICIENT WAY. BECAUSE I CANNOT ALWAYS DO BOTH AT THE SAME TIME, THE CODE IS BAD AND SO I DON'T HAVE TO STICK TO IT EVER!



40. Moral deconstructionism

The view that concentrates on finding ruptures or inconsistencies among moral norms in order to break it down (= deconstruct). A risk is that dilemmas, as the conflict of norms, are seen as the failure of ethics and thus a reason for not behaving ethically.

WE LIVE IN A
DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY
WHERE THE MAJORITY
DECIDES!

SO, DESPITE
YOUR RIGHT TO GET
A NEW PRODUCT,
2 AGAINST 1 DECIDE:
YOU DON'T!



41. Moral democratism

The view that the majority defines what is ethical and unethical. A risk is that the moral opinions and interests of the minority are neglected.



42. Deontologism
(also **imperativism**)

The view that emphasizes universal imperatives such as moral laws, duties, obligations, and prohibitions. A risk is that no exemptions are possible even if the situation calls for it.

TO CONCLUDE,
WE ALL APPRECIATE THE QUALITY
OF THIS REPORT THAT ESTABLISHED
THAT ANNUALLY 30% OF OUR CLIENTS
ARE BEING MISTREATED BY OUR EMPLOYEES.
A BIG THANKS TO THE AUTHORS OF
THIS CRYSTAL CLEAR REPORT.
NOW LET'S GO TO THE NEXT ITEM IN
OUR AGENDA: OUR REMUNERATION.



43. Moral descriptivism

The view that ethics merely represents or describes how people and organizations act in real life and that ethics cannot prescribe normative behavior. A risk is that ethics does not guide behavior.

MY THEFT IS A BLOODY SHAME.
BUT I CANNOT BE BLAMED FOR IT.
IT'S MY PARENTS' FAULT:
THEY BEGOT ME!



44. Moral determinism (also necessitarianism)

The view that all human actions are fixed or pre-ordained by external forces before they happen, thereby denying the existence of free will and human choice. A risk is that people deny responsibility for their actions because they are just a product of external forces.

EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE IN OUR COMPANY.
SO TELL ME, HOW MUCH BRIBE ARE YOU
OFFERING ME ?



45. Moral discussabilism (also **communicationism** and **talkism**)

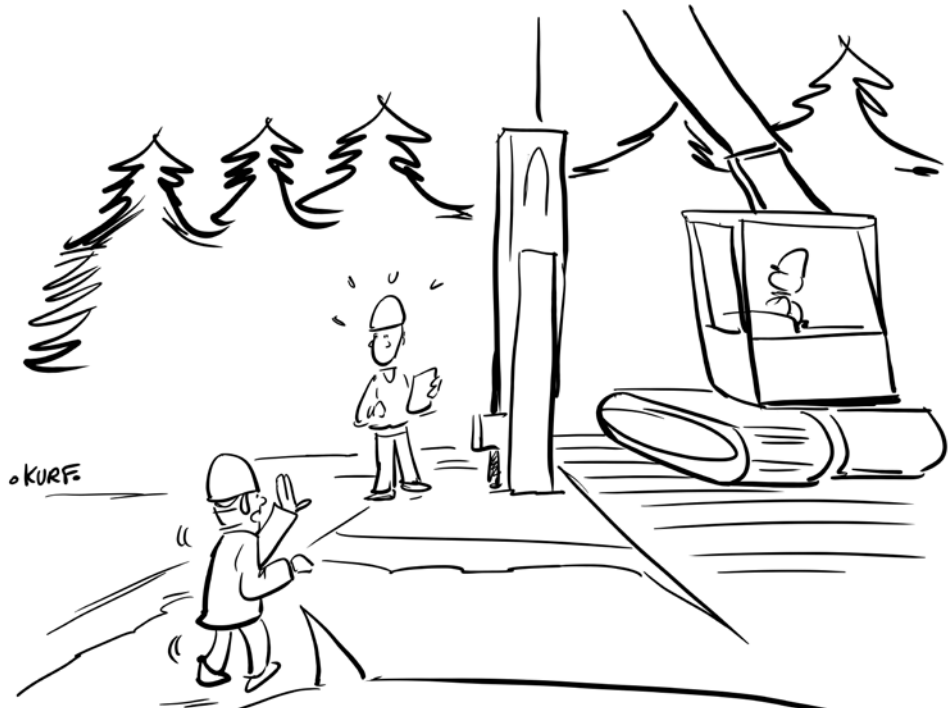
The view that the basis of ethics is to discuss things and that as long as things can be discussed openly, then they are ethical. A risk is that the wrong things are discussed.

Wurf

46. Moral distancing
(also **bufferism**)

The view that ethics should not become too close but kept at arm's length because on the one hand, ethics is useful, but on the other hand, it is dangerous, risky, and a threat. A risk is that ethics has marginal impact.





WE SHOULD RESPECT ANIMALS.
OUR CONSTRUCTION WORK IS DISTURBING
THE BIRDS' BREEDING. SO WE'LL STOP
WORK AND RESUME IN SIX WEEKS.

47. Moral dogmatism

The view that emphasizes the rigid adherence to doctrine over rational and enlightened inquiry. A risk is the lack of flexibility and openness toward other opinions.

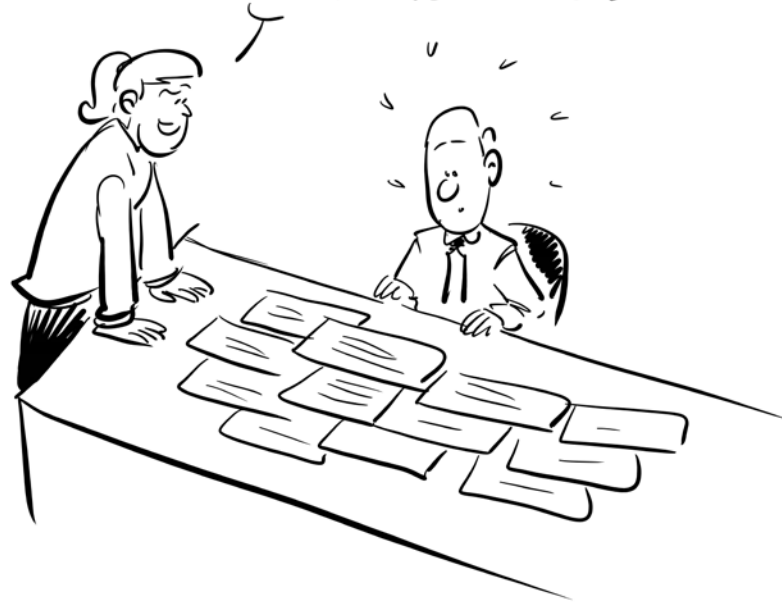
WELCOME TO OUR MONTHLY MEETING.
THERE ARE MERELY TEN DILEMMAS
IN OUR AGENDA



48. Moral dualism
(also **dilemmaism**)

The view that the universe is controlled by two opposing forces. A risk is that everything is seen as a dilemma.

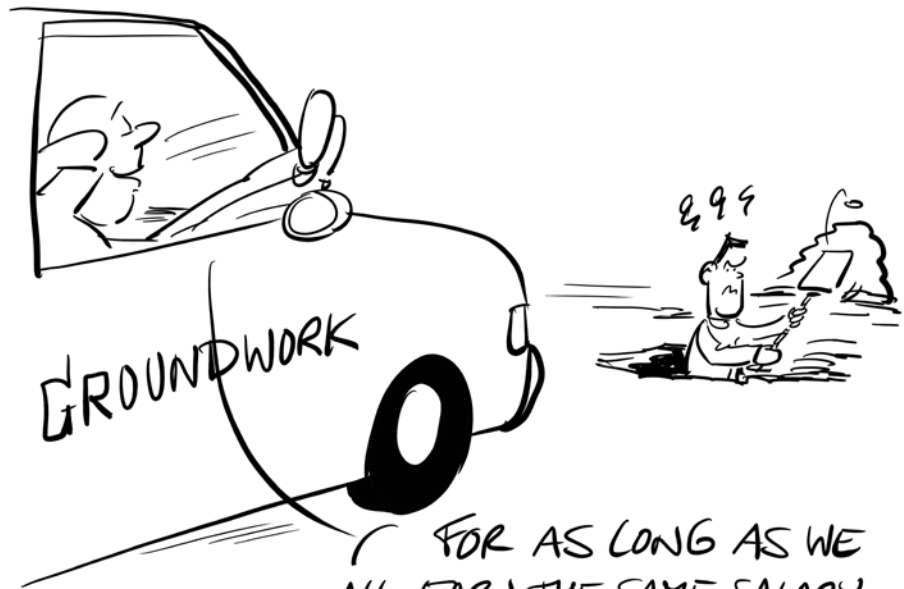
THESE ARE ALL THE EXTERNAL CODES
THAT APPLY TO OUR COMPANY.
PLEASE SELECT FROM EACH CODE
THE PARTS THAT ARE ADVANTAGEOUS
FOR US AND MAKE FROM THOSE
OUR NEW CODE!



49. Moral eclecticism

The view that does not respect the boundaries of existing moral beliefs but instead selects ideas from each. A risk is arbitrariness in beliefs and ethical norms.

© KMF



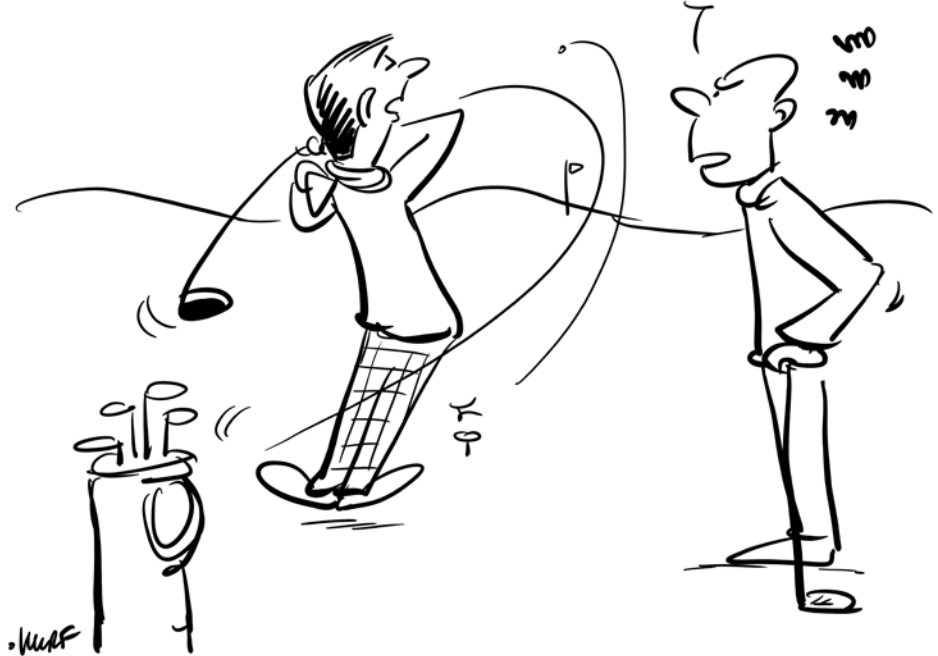
FOR AS LONG AS WE
ALL EARN THE SAME SALARY,
I WILL EARN AS
MUCH REST AS
I CAN!

50. Moral egalitarianism

The view that equality for all humans is the most important ethical value. A risk is that effort and output are not stimulated.

© KURF.

I WANT TO EARN 30 % MORE!
BUT YOU ALREADY EARN 30 TIMES MORE THAN THE EMPLOYEES AT THE BOTTOM OF OUR FIRM!



51. Moral egoism (also egocentrism and egotism)

The view that right and wrong is determined by the maximization of self-interest. A risk is the violation of the interests of others.



52. Moral elitism

The view that individuals who form an elite are above morality and have the right to privileges. A risk is that elites misuse their position (and become too big for their boots).

AND WHY ARE YOU DOING BUSINESS
WITH THAT CORRUPT REGIME ?

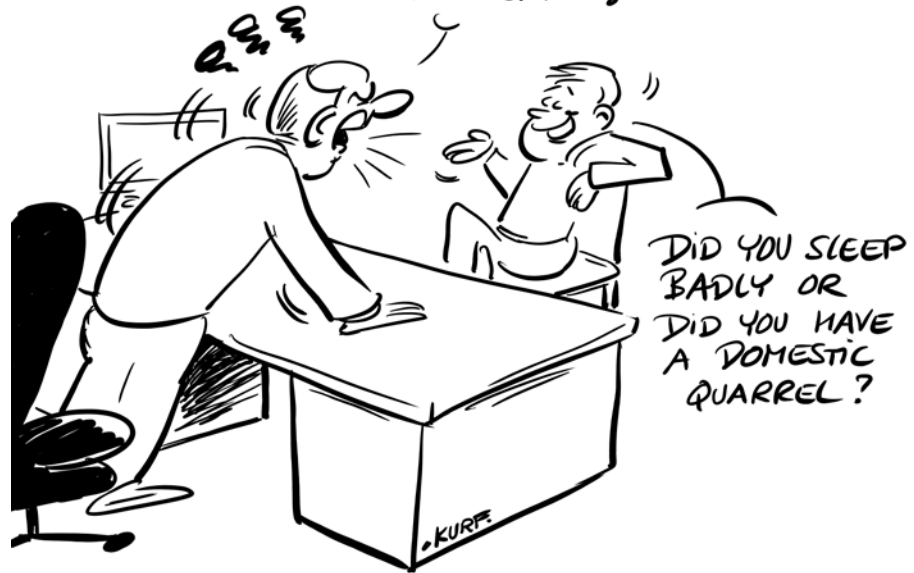
BECAUSE WE HAVE
POSITIVE FEELINGS
ABOUT IT!



53. Moral emotionalism

The view that determining right and wrong is based on feeling. A risk is that reason is ignored.

WHAT YOU DID IS
DISHONEST, DISRESPECTFUL
AND A FLAGRANT VIOLATION
OF THE LAW!



54. Moral emotivism

The view that moral statements are inherently biased and nothing more than expressions of emotions. A risk is that moral judgements are dismissed as emotional outbursts.

THEN LET US DECIDE TO BRING
OUR NEW PRODUCT TO THE MARKET.
AND IF AFTERWARDS IT WILL LEAD
TO FATALITIES, THEN WE'LL REVOKE
OUR DECISIONS!



55. Moral empiricism

The view that the experience of the senses is the most reliable or even the only source of knowledge for moral concerns.

A risk is that people ignore potential moral issues.



56. Moral ethnocentrism

The view that judging the morality of another culture should solely be done on the basis of the morality of one's own culture. A risk is the ignorance of the specific nature of other cultures.

WE HAVE CANCELLED OUR ANNUAL
FINANCIAL REPORT. FROM NOW ON
WE WILL PUBLISH OUR ANNUAL HAPPINESS REPORT.
HAPPINESS IS OUR NEW BOTTOMLINE
AND GOLDEN STANDARD!



57. Moral eudaimonism

The view that puts personal happiness at the center of ethical concerns. A risk is the ignorance about any other concerns.

DUE TO MY CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION
TO THIS FIRM, THE BOARD HAS
CONFIRMED THAT THE COMPANY RULES
DO NOT APPLY TO ME !



58. Moral exceptionalism (also antinomianism and grandeurism)

The view that moral norms do not apply to those who are special and extraordinary. A risk is that such people think they are permitted every unethical behavior.



59. Moral exemplarism

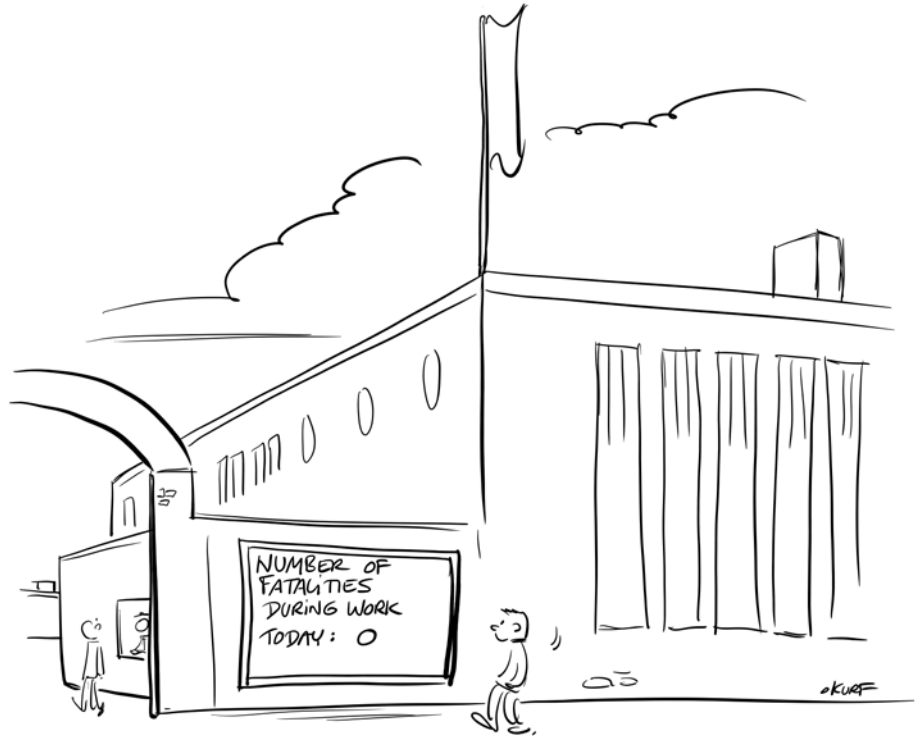
The view that right and wrong is determined by the values and behavior of role models.

A risk is the selection of the wrong role model.

60. Moral exhibitionism (also demonstrativism)

The view that people should make their ethical behavior publicly known because otherwise it cannot exist and be acknowledged.

A risk is that even normal behavior is exaggerated or blown out of proportion.



ALTHOUGH THE PROPOSED DECISION OF
THE BOARD IS VERY UNETHICAL,
WE AS THE ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVE
IT BECAUSE OTHERWISE OUR COMPANY
WILL GO BANKRUPT AND THEN THERE WILL
BE NO ROOM AT ALL TO DO ETHICAL THINGS!



61. Moral existentialism

The view that each person, as a result of living, must create his or her own values. A risk is that one denies common universal values.

I ADMIT THAT I VIOLATED THE LAW.
HOWEVER, YOU CANNOT BLAME ME.
IT IS MY FIRST YEAR AS CEO AND
I AM NOT YET EXPERIENCED AT
HIDING ALL MY LEGAL VIOLATIONS !



62. Moral experientialism

The view that moral knowledge comes from experience.

A risk is that a lack of experience could be used to rationalize unethical behavior.



63. Moral extremism
(also **vandalism**)

The view that it is desirable to carry out to the extreme a particular morality using extreme means. A risk is that evil means are employed.

BECAUSE OUR CODE OF ETHICS WILL
BE RENEWED EVERY TWO YEARS.
WE DO NOT HAVE TO TAKE
THE CURRENT VERSION SERIOUSLY!



64. Moral fallibilism

The view that moral norms may exist objectively but that humans cannot reliably or conclusively establish this because empirical knowledge can always be revised with further observation. A risk is that moral norms are not taken seriously because they may be reformulated at any time.

ALL OF THIS YEAR'S PROFIT
WILL BE INVESTED IN OUR
NEW ETHICS PROGRAM!



65. Moral fanaticism

The view that an unrestricted critical zealotry is necessary for ethics to advance. A risk is that people become obsessive.

66. Moral fatalism

The view that the fortunes of human beings are predetermined, thereby stressing the negative or tragic nature of human life and the inability to modify one's fate.

A risk is that people become negative about ethics in practice.



PLEASE EXECUTE TOMORROW AT 12 PM
ETHICS INTERVENTION 3, 37, 62 AND 89



67. Moral fixism

The view that when ethics is damaged, it should and could be repaired as quickly as possible. A risk is that the complexity of improving ethics is denied.

ACCORDING TO CHAPTER 13,
ARTICLE 15, SECTION 3, PARAGRAPH 2,
LINE 4 OF OUR ETHICS CODE,
YOUR BEHAVIOR IS IMPERMISSIBLE!



68. Moral formalism (also codism, legalism, and nomism)

The view that emphasizes the strict adherence to formal rules and regulations. A risk is the failure to think through what one finds ethical.

WHEN WE SAY THAT WE PUT
ETHICS BEFORE PROFITMAKING,
IT MEANS THAT WE CAN
CONTINUE MAKING MORE PROFITS!



69. Moral functionalism (also instrumentalism)

The view that ethics should merely be a useful instrument for other purposes. A risk is that ethics is not seen as a value in and of itself.

IT'S MY PLEASURE TO OFFER YOU
THIS SYMBOL OF PLEASURE



70. Moral hedonism (with
epicureanism as the
enlightened version)

The view that pleasure is the
highest good and that the
fundamental standard of ethical
judgment should be pleasure.
A risk is the violation of other
interests and principles.

SORRY, I CANNOT CONTROL MY HAND!



71. Moral hybridism

The view that the psyche of a person consists of multiple parts: the id (the basic, instinctual drives, like needs, wants, and desires), the super-ego (plays the critical and moralizing role, like the conscience), and the ego (the organized, realistic part that mediates between the id and super-ego). A risk is that people use their own id as an excuse for their unethical behavior.

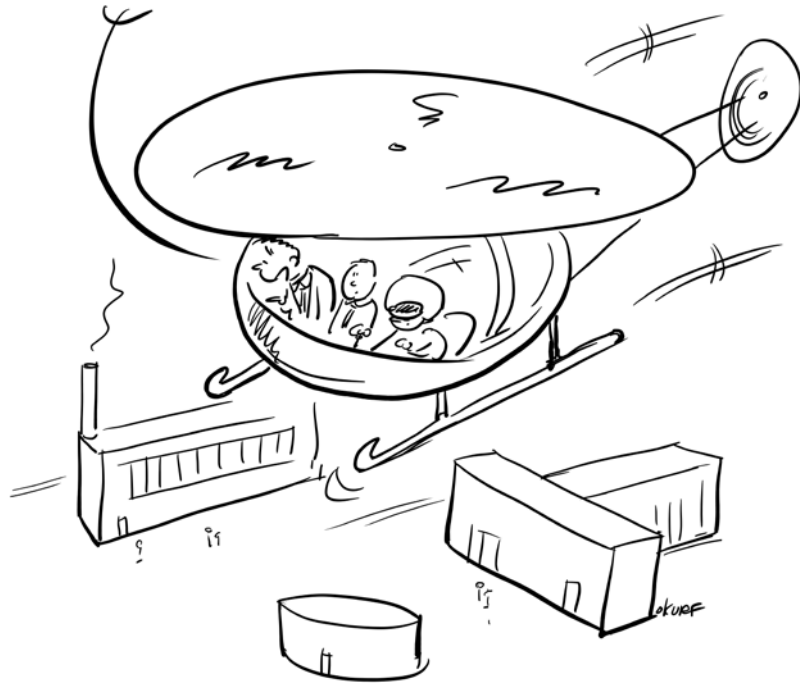
I SWEAR THAT THE CLIENT'S
INTEREST IS ALWAYS PARAMOUNT



72. Moral hypocrisy

The view that it is permissible for one to act contrary to the moral principles and values one claims to hold. A risk is that one becomes corrupt as the contradiction increases.

I LIKE THIS HELICOPTER VIEW.
YOU SEE EVERYTHING AND ALSO NOTHING



73. Moral ignorantism

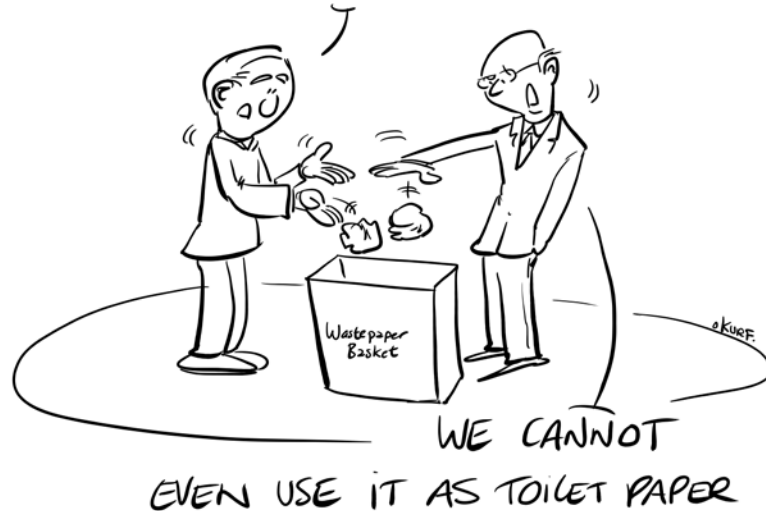
The view that ignorance is good when it prevents one from taking on too much moral responsibility. A risk is that people intentionally keep themselves ignorant about issues for which they bear moral responsibility.



74. Moral illusionism

The view that ethics is merely an illusion and deception is beneficial. A risk is that reality is ignored.

IT IS A PITY THAT OUR CODE
OF ETHICS IS PRINTED ON
SMOOTH PAPER!



75. Immoralism

The view that rejects conventional morality, any systematic approach to ethics, and even ethics itself. A risk is that any moral norm is ignored.

IF YOU DO NOT FULLY IMPLEMENT
OUR SUPPLIER CODE OF ETHICS RIGHT NOW,
THEN WE WILL TERMINATE OUR CONTRACT
AND BLACKLIST YOU! YOU'LL BE BANKRUPT!



oKURF

76. Moral imperialism

The view that one ought to promote and impose one's morality on others to gain control over their morality. A risk is that the morality of others is suppressed.

THANKS TO YOU WE NO LONGER HAD
ANY COMPLIANCE INCIDENT LAST YEAR.
THUS, THE BOARD HAS DECIDED TO
CANCEL YOUR FUNCTION AS
COMPLIANCE OFFICER!



77. Moral incidentalism

The view that one should only pay attention to ethics after incidents. A risk is that ethics does not get preventive attention.

ISN'T IT STRANGE THAT AS PROCUREMENT OFFICER
I MAY NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING, WHILE MY
COLLEAGUES AT SALES MAY GIVE
EXPENSIVE GIFTS TO CLIENTS?



78. Moral incompatibilism

The view that different moral views conflict with each other and that they cannot be reconciled.

A risk is that conflicting norms that can and should be reconciled are kept conflicting.

INDEED WE DO HAVE AN ETHICS
POLICY, A QUITE STRAIGHT FORWARD
ONE ACTUALLY. IT STATES THAT
EVERY ETHICS IS ETHICAL!



79. Moral indifferentism

The view that ethical norms, concepts, and theories are all equal and on a par with each other. A risk is that every norm is tolerated.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS
... AS LONG AS IT IS DUTY-FREE
FOR ME



80. Moral individualism (also personalism and claimism)

The view that individual interests and rights are paramount and that the individual person is of supreme value. A risk is that people ignore their duties toward others.

YOU WANT EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE AN ETHICAL COMPANY? WELL, HERE ETHICS IS IN THE AIR. WE BREATHE ETHICS, EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE. IT IS IN OUR DNA. IT IS INTEGRATED IN EVERYTHING WE DO AND NOT DO!



81. Moral integrativism

The view that given its universal relevance, ethics should be everywhere. A risk is that ethics gets integrated into everything and thus becomes invisible and unrecognizable.

• KURF

82. Moral intentionalism

The view that motives and intentions are the objects of moral evaluation. A risk is that unethical behavior is neutralized by claims of having good intentions.



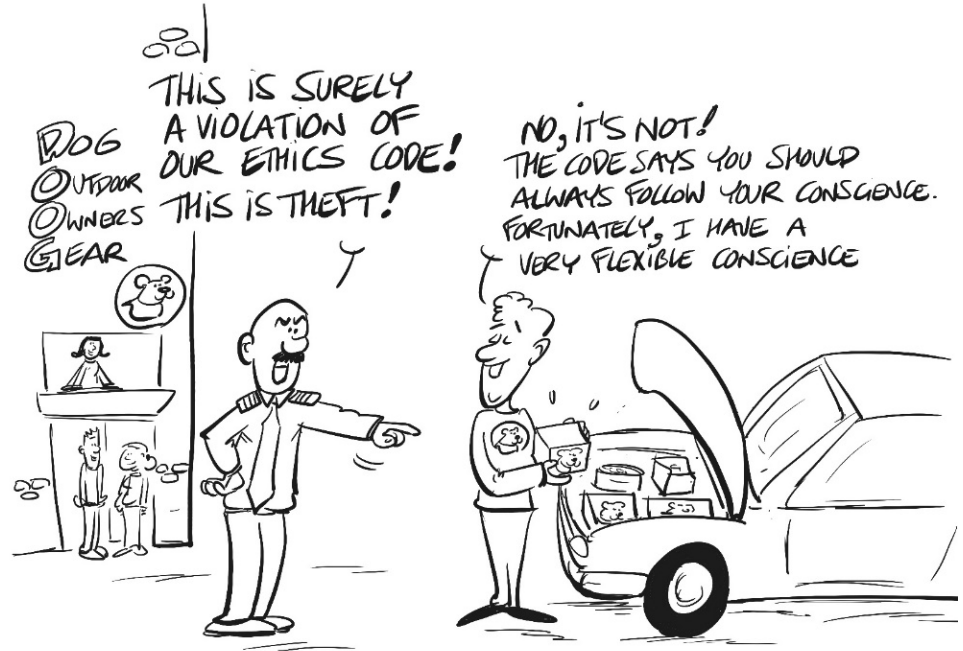
WE HAVE RECEIVED
THE ADVICE OF THE
ETHICS COMMITTEE:
WE SHOULD NOT DO IT
IF WE DOUBT IT!

THEREFORE, IF WE ARE
SURE THAT IT SHOULD
NOT BE DONE, THEN
WE SHOULD DO IT!



83. Moral interpretivism

The view that every ethical norm is a matter of interpretation. A risk is wrong interpretations.



84. Moral intuitionism

The view that our intuitive awareness of what is right or good forms the foundation of our ethical knowledge. A risk is that people misuse their intuition.

o KURF.



85. Moral isolationism

The view that one can understand only the morality of one's own culture and not that of other cultures. A risk is that criticism from people of other cultures is dismissed.

• Kunkel

I MYSELF HAD SERIOUS DOUBTS
ABOUT THE LEGALITY OF
MY ACTION! BUT THAT
I DOUBTED, WASN'T THAT
IN ITSELF ADMIRABLE?



86. Moral laxism

The view that in cases of doubt regarding moral matters the more liberal course should always be followed. A risk is that freedom is expanded at the expense of moral norms.

YOUR COST-SAVING MEASURE
IS INDEED AN EXCELLENT ONE!

YES, BY DELEGATING
ETHICS TO THE EMPLOYEES,
WE DO NOT HAVE TO DO
ANYTHING MORE AND
THEY WILL ACT ETHICALLY!



**87. Moral liberalism (also
libertarianism)**

The view that individuals should be left free to determine their own ethical choices because they are individually or collectively capable of doing so. A risk is that management shifts the ethical responsibility to the employees.

• Kurf.

I VOTE IN FAVOUR OF DONATING
FIVE PERCENT OF THE GENERATED
ILLEGAL PROFIT TO A GOOD CAUSE



88. Moral licencism
(also **vigilantism**)

The view that people have the right to behave badly when they are treated badly (as redress) or when they have done good things (as compensation). A risk is that unethical behavior is bought with a good deed.

JUST BETWEEN US AS BROTHERS...
THE SHARE PRICES OF THE COMPANY I WORK FOR
WILL RISE SHARPLY TOMORROW. YOU CAN SOLVE
YOUR FINANCIAL WORRIES BY BUYING
THESE SHARES TODAY!



89. Moral loyalism (familiarism and nepotism)

The view that we bear the greatest responsibility toward those who are closest to us. A risk is the ignorance of interests that are further from us in terms of awareness, distance, and time.

OUR NEW TALENT MODEL
CONTAINS FOUR TYPES OF TALENTS:
WOLVES, SNAKES, SHARKS AND
POISONOUS TOADS!



90. Moral malism

The view that the world is evil.
A risk is that all evil is tolerated or
even committed by oneself.

AS MANAGEMENT, WE HAVE
DECIDED TO TRY ON A NEW WAY
OF CLEANING EVERYONE'S
CONSCIENCE !



91. Moral managerialism

The view that ethics can and should be managed. A risk is exaggerated and too rigorous management.

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND
WHY WE HAVE SUCH A
BAD ETHICAL REPUTATION,
AREN'T WE QUITE ETHICAL?
WE DO NOT USE THE COPY
MACHINE FOR PRIVATE PURPOSES,
WE ALWAYS BEGIN ON TIME, AND
WE DO NOT TOLERATE INTIMATE
RELATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE!

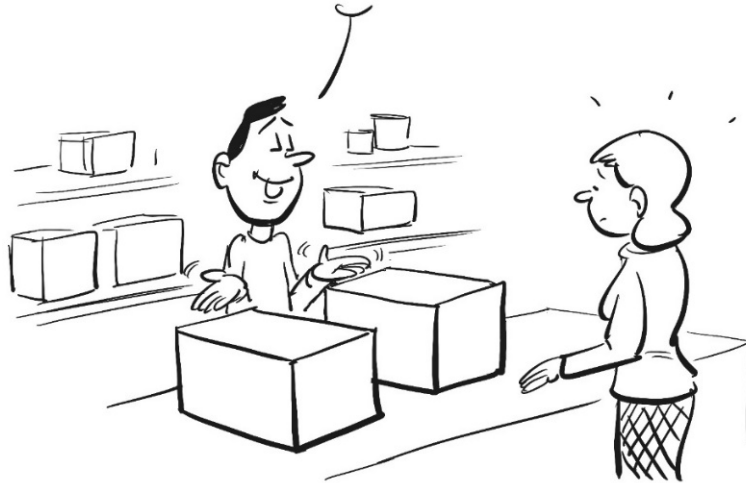
BY THE WAY, IF YOU
NEGOTIATE THE NEW PRICE
AGREEMENTS WITH OUR
COMPETITORS, THEN I WILL
TAKE CARE THAT WE CAN
CONTINUE SELLING
OUR REJECTED PRODUCTS!



92. Moral marginalism

The view that morality is relevant but not very important. A risk is that ethics is only applied to minor but not to major issues.

DO YOU WANT OUR PRODUCT
WITH OR WITHOUT ETHICS ?



93. Moral marketism

The view that the market, through the principle of supply and demand, determines what is ethical and unethical. A risk is that without a market for ethics there is no ethics.

• KURF



94. Moral materialism

The view that because products possess intrinsic goodness, companies have the duty to produce the products (and the consumers have the duty to buy them). A risk is that other moral assumptions of the economic system are blindly accepted.

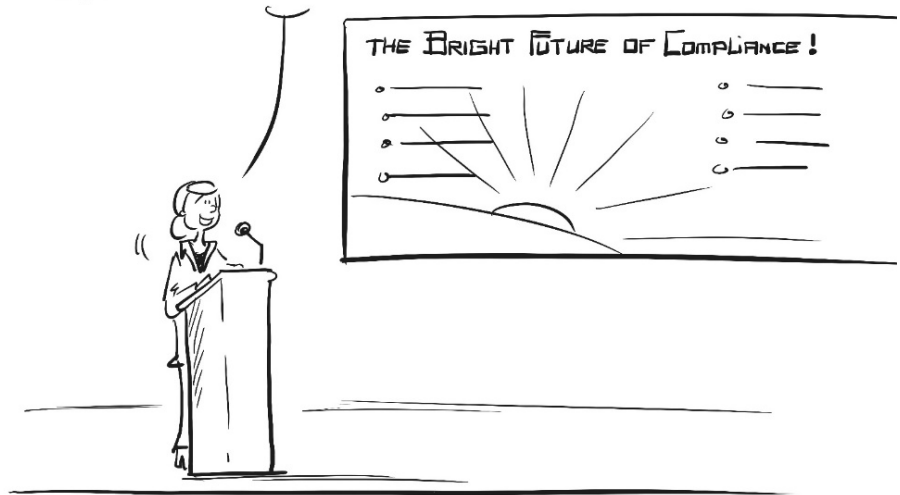


95. Moral measurism

The view that morality should be measurable because only then does it exist. A risk is that the focus is on measurement and on what is being measured and not on what it means.



IN THE NEXT DECADE, WHEN
WE HAVE REPLACED ALL OUR EMPLOYEES
WITH WELL PROGRAMMED ROBOTS,
WE WILL NO LONGER RUN ANY
COMPLIANCE RISKS!



96. Moral meliorism

The view that the world tends to become morally better. A risk is the denial of threats that make the world morally worse.



IF YOU APPROVE THIS PROPOSAL,
YOU WILL ALL GO TO HELL AND
BURN FOR ETERNITY!



97. Moral messianism

The view that one has to rescue the ethics of others by saving them from evil. A risk is that one becomes intrusive.

o. KURT.

WHAT IS YOUR CHEAPEST
AND LEAST TROUBLESOME
ETHICS PROGRAM?



98. Moral minimalism

The view that ethics should get some attention but only in a limited way. A risk is that ethics gets too little attention.

o Kurf.

I ADMIRE YOUR COMPANY'S ETHICS.
THAT'S WHY I WOULD LIKE TO WORK HERE
SO I CAN REPLACE MY OWN ETHICS!



99. Moral modestyism

The view that the ethics of others is superior to one's own. A risk is the devaluation of one's own ethics.

WE HAVE A SIMPLE COMPLIANCE CHARTER.
MY VOTE AS CEO AND YOUR VOTE AS
COMPLIANCE OFFICER HAVE EQUAL WEIGHT.
BUT IN CASE OF A TIE AND WE CANNOT
COMPROMISE, THEN MY VOTE COUNTS
DOUBLE!



• KURF.

100. Moral monarchism

The view that management should have broad moral autonomy. A risk is that supervising functions regarding management (such as compliance, risk and audit) have a very marginal role.

I AM STRUGGLING
WITH A DILEMMA
THAT I WOULD LIKE
TO DISCUSS WITH YOU!

GREAT!
I CAN THEN
GIVE YOU
THE SOLUTION!

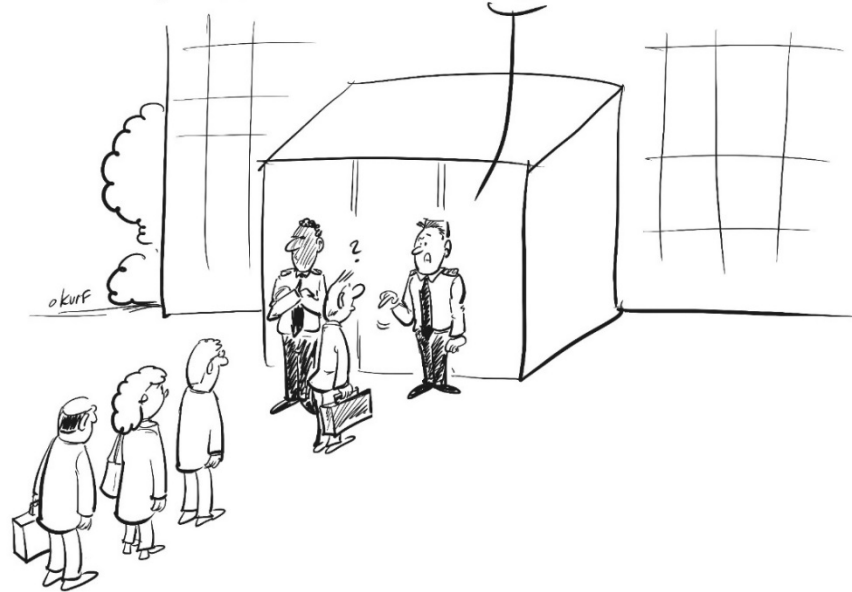


101. Moral monism

The view that there is unity with one superseding value, goal, or principle. A risk is the neglect of true dilemmas.

o KURFF.

DID YOU BEHAVE EXTREMELY
PROPERLY AFTER WORK YESTERDAY?



102. Moralism
(also **prescriptivism**)

The view that the function of ethics is to prescribe what people should (not) do. A risk is that ethics is being prescribed too much.

IT IS QUITE REMARKABLE
THAT THEY ENTRUST US WITH
THE COMPANY CREDIT CARD!



103. Moral naivism

The view that one should approach issues and other persons in a simple and innocent way in order not to become suspicious and anxious. A risk is that there is too much faith on the goodness of others.

I CHOSE THIS BANNER
BECAUSE I THINK MY COMPANY
NEEDS TO HAVE A BIG PROFILE!



**104. Moral narcissism
(or narcissism)**

The view that the pursuit of vainglorious and egoistic gratification is to some extent morally desirable. A risk is of becoming smug.

WE ASPIRE TOWARDS A VERY LOFTY
AND PROGRESSIVE ETHICS THAT COMPLETELY
FITS WITH WHAT WE DO IN PRACTICE



105. Moral naturalism

The view that only natural laws and forces (as opposed to supernatural or spiritual ones) govern the world so that moral claims are ultimately about features and facts of human beings, human nature, and human societies. A risk is that 'ought' (what should) is derived from 'is' (what is given in nature).

olmf

THERE IS ONE QUESTION REGARDING
YOUR ETHICAL PERFORMANCE LAST YEAR:
HOW OFTEN DID YOU ACT UNETHICALLY?



106. Moral negativism

The view that ethics is a negative concept, understood in terms of pain, costs, limitations, and restrictions. A risk is the focus on not behaving unethically instead of also performing ethical actions.

ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT,
30% OF OUR BUSINESS IS UNETHICAL.
THAT'S QUITE A DISAPPOINTMENT!
HOW CAN WE FIX THE REMAINING 70%?



107. Moral nihilism

The view that completely rejects ethics because any talk of an objective morality is incoherent and baseless. A risk is the attempt to behave as unethically as possible.

o KneF.

ADJUSTING INCOME SOUNDS
MUCH BETTER TO MY CONSCIENCE
THAN STEALING!



108. Moral nominalism

The view that the naming of things defines reality. A risk is that by using euphemisms wrong practices are made less wrong, neutral, or even good.

I AM NOT INTERESTED IN
WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND EXPECT.
IT IS ABOUT THE OBJECTIVE TRUTH!



109. Moral objectivism (constituted by **moral universalism, moral realism, and moral absolutism**)

The view that moral norms are based on the reality of human nature and are mind-independent. A risk is that subjective opinions are dismissed.

IGNORANCE IS BLISS!



110. Moral obscurantism

The view that it is acceptable to intentionally keep others in ignorance. A risk is that others are prevented from making good decisions by and for themselves.

I HAVE AN INDEPENDENT MIND!
IF THE BOSS IS IN FAVOR OF SOMETHING,
THEN I AM AGAINST; IF HE IS
AGAINST, THEN I AM IN FAVOR!



111. Moral obstructionism

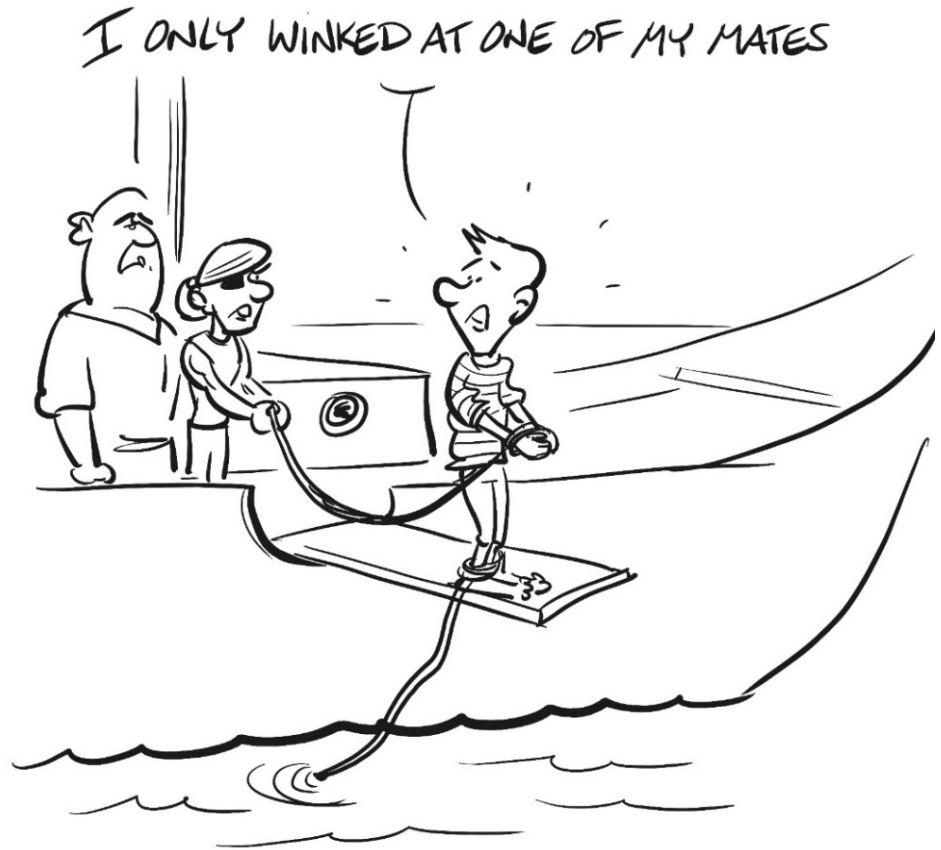
The view that it is acceptable or even a duty to oppose norms that are proposed by others. A risk is that even good norms are opposed.

INTEGRITY IS SO IMPORTANT FOR US
THAT WE ONLY SELL IT TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER



112. Moral opportunism

The view that it is acceptable to take advantage of any circumstances, with little regard for principles. A risk is that ethics is sacrificed when it is advantageous.



113. Moral oppressivism

The view that humans only behave ethically when they are compelled and coerced to do so. A risk is harsh enforcement.

OUR COMPANY HAS BECOME
MUCH MORE FLEXIBLE NOW WE
HAVE OUTSOURCED OUR ETHICS!



114. Moral outsourcing

The view that it is acceptable to entrust ethical responsibility to others, such as experts and specialists. A risk is that one avoids one's own responsibilities.

o KURF

I WANT TO LET YOU KNOW
THAT WE HAVE MADE A
SECRET AGREEMENT WITH OUR
MAIN COMPETITORS TO RAISE
THE SELLING PRICE OF OUR
PRODUCTS BY 20%



115. Moral pacifism

The view that the highest value is peace. A risk is that people will ignore ethical issues that might disturb the peace.

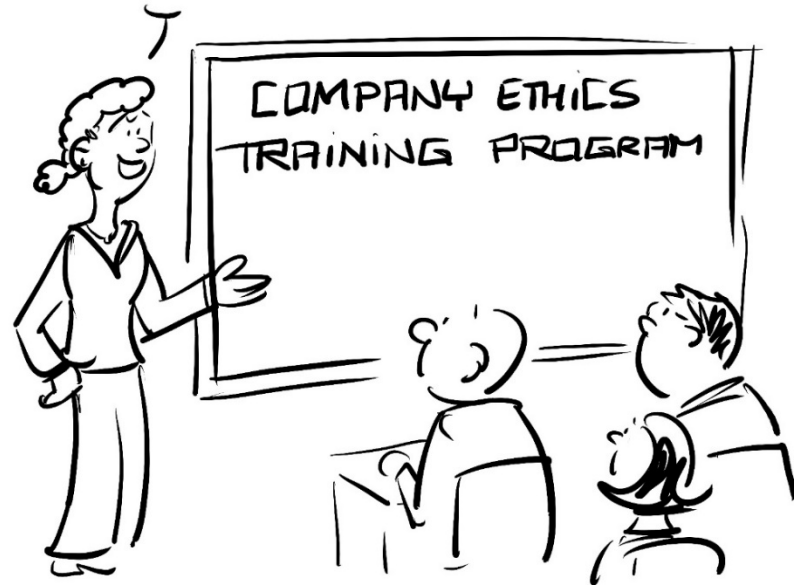
COULD YOU PLEASE LOOK
THE OTHER WAY?



116. Moral partnerism (also co-makerism)

The view that one should not take important ethical decisions and actions alone. A risk is that one involves others in unethical actions.

THERE'S A FITTING LID FOR EVERY POT.
SO A GOOD MANAGER WILL ALWAYS
FIND FOR EACH CASE THE FITTING
ETHICAL CODE!



117. Moral particularism

The view that there are no overriding moral principles that are applicable in every case but that moral judgements are made on a case-to-case basis. A risk is that each particular case has its own selective morality.

I HAVE NEVER LIED OR
EVEN HAD IMPROPER THOUGHTS!



**118. Moral perfectionism (also
punctualism and utopianism)**

The view that moral perfection is the highest value. A risk is that people suggest that they are flawless and completely honorable.

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT
HE WAS VERY BRAVE TO
SIDE-STEP THE RULES!

I FOUND HIM
ACTUALLY
QUITE CREATIVE



AND I FOUND HIM
SO EXCEPTIONALLY
LOYAL TO OUR
COMPANY



119. Moral perspectivism (also polylogism)

The view that moral judgements depend on an individual's context or point of view and that there are many equally valid moral opinions about any given topic. A risk is that people may have a positive opinion about unethical behavior.

WITHOUT ETHICS IT IS ALREADY
VERY DIFFICULT TO DO OUR JOB!



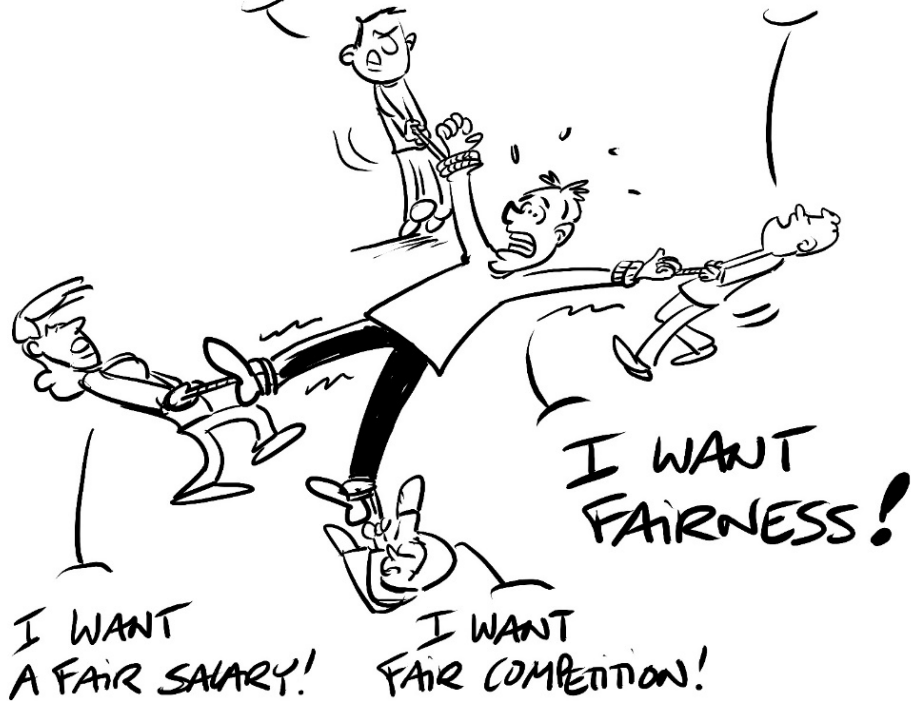
120. Moral pessimism (with
pejorism as severe pessimism)

The view that reality and the universe are essentially malevolent and evil and that true ethics is unattainable. A risk is that this is used as a justification for doing bad things.

oKURE.

I WANT A
FAIR PROFIT!

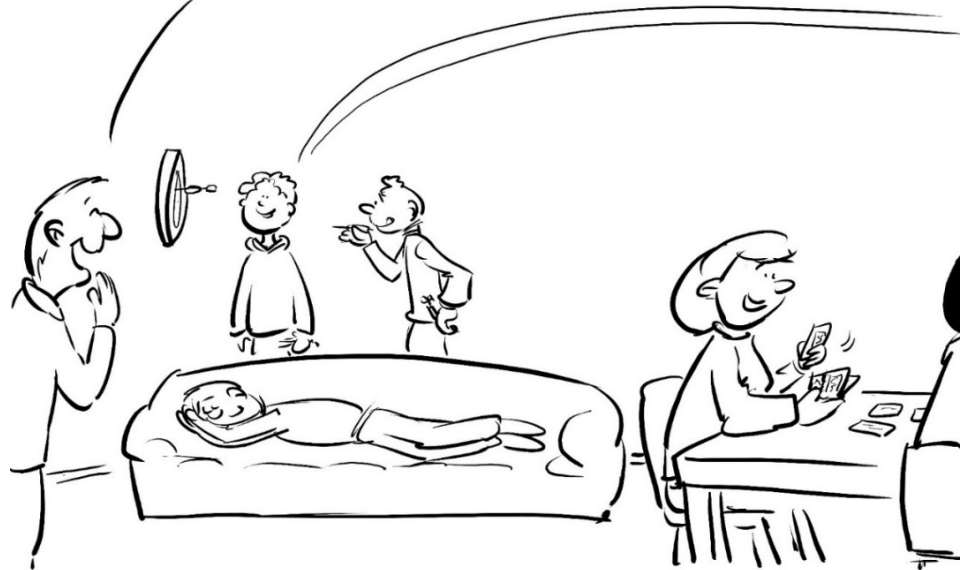
I WANT A
FAIR PRICE!



121. Moral pluralism

The view that there are several equally correct and yet incompatible fundamental values that in many cases cannot be objectively ordered in terms of importance. A risk is that decision-making becomes impossible when one is pulled from all sides.

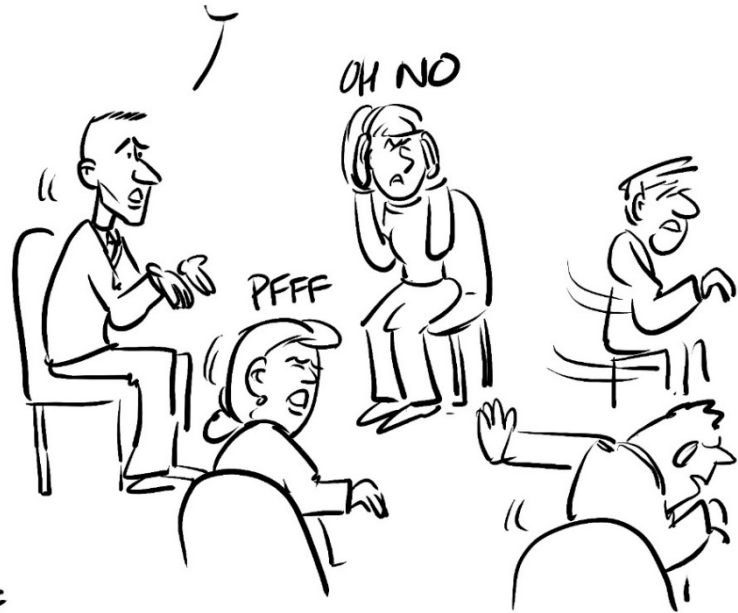
I DO UNDERSTAND
WHY OUR COMPANY ETHICS
IS SO POPULAR!



122. Moral populism

The view that norms should be made understandable for and in the interest of the “little man”, such as the simple employee. A risk is that morality is made too popular.

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE
A MORAL DILEMMA WITH YOU!



123. Moral pragmatism

The view that emphasizes the practical value and application of ethics. A risk is that the lack of attention to reflection.

WE CANNOT HAVE OUR OWN CODE
OF ETHICS AS LONG AS WE HAVE
OUR HANDS FULL WITH THE
BIBLE'S 10 COMMANDMENTS!



124. Moral primitivism

The view that a simple and natural morality is best. A risk is that morality is not adequate for current or complex issues.



125. Moral privatism

The view that ethics is personal and private. A risk is that people are not supposed to use their conscience at work.

BUT I DID WARN YOU THAT
I WOULD ACCEPT THE KICKBACK!



126. Moral proceduralism
(also **processism**)

The view that one behaves ethically as long as one sticks to procedural norms. A risk is the denial of substantial norms.

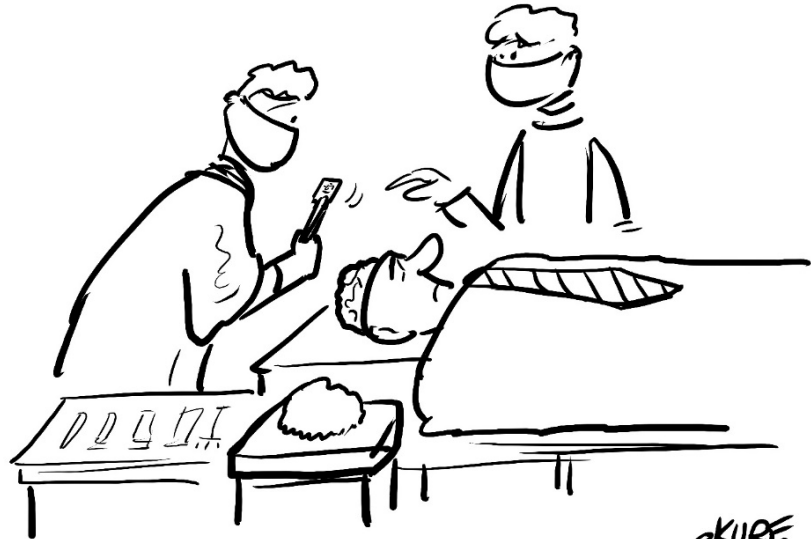
WE'RE GOING TO PUT EVERYTHING
ON PROFIT MAXIMIZATION SO
THAT WE WILL HAVE ENOUGH
MONEY TO INVEST ON PEOPLE
AND THE PLANET!



127. Moral profitism

The view that making profit is the highest moral value because it is the means for serving the interests of others. A risk is that other values are violated.

SO WITH THIS CHIP
HE'LL NEVER BE CORRUPT?



128. Moral programism

The view that ethics can be programmed. A risk is that there is no room for the unexpected.

MY COMPANY IS VERY
MISSION DRIVEN. WE HAVE
CHANGED OUR MISSION
STATEMENT AT LEAST SEVEN
TIMES IN THE LAST TEN YEARS



129. Moral radicalism

The view that severe changes in morality are needed. A risk is very frequent and big changes.

WOULD YOU HAVE A MEDICINE
FOR MY HYPERSENSITIVITY TO
ALL ETHICAL DILEMMAS AT WORK?



130. Moral rationalism

The view that moral truths and standards are knowable *a priori* just through clear reasoning and independent thinking. A risk is the moral feeling is deactivated.

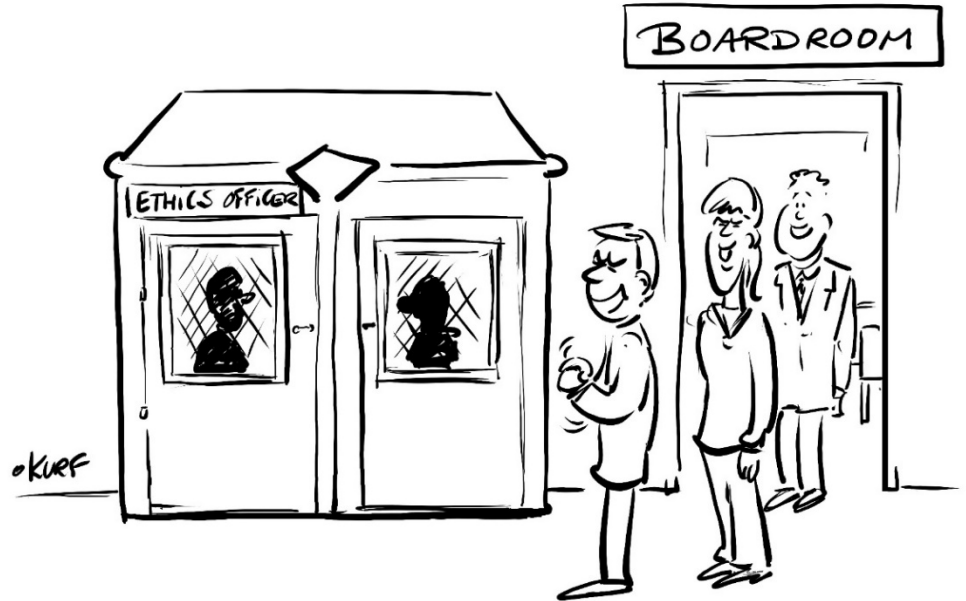
I AM AGAINST
PRICE FIXING!

THAT'S WRONG.
PRICE FIXING
IS ACTUALLY GOOD
FOR THE ECONOMY!



131. Moral realism (also **normalism** and **normism**; part of cognitivism)

The view that moral propositions refer to objective facts, independent of the human mind and opinion. A risk is that ethics becomes impersonal and remote.



132. Moral regrettism

The view that unethical behavior is not problematic as long as people regret it. A risk is that unethical behavior is easily perpetrated given the idea one will regret it afterwards.

I LIKE EINSTEIN'S
THEORY OF RELATIVITY

YES, INDEED.

OUR CHANCE OF GETTING
A PROJECT IS MUCH GREATER
IF WE IGNORE OUR OWN
ETHICS!



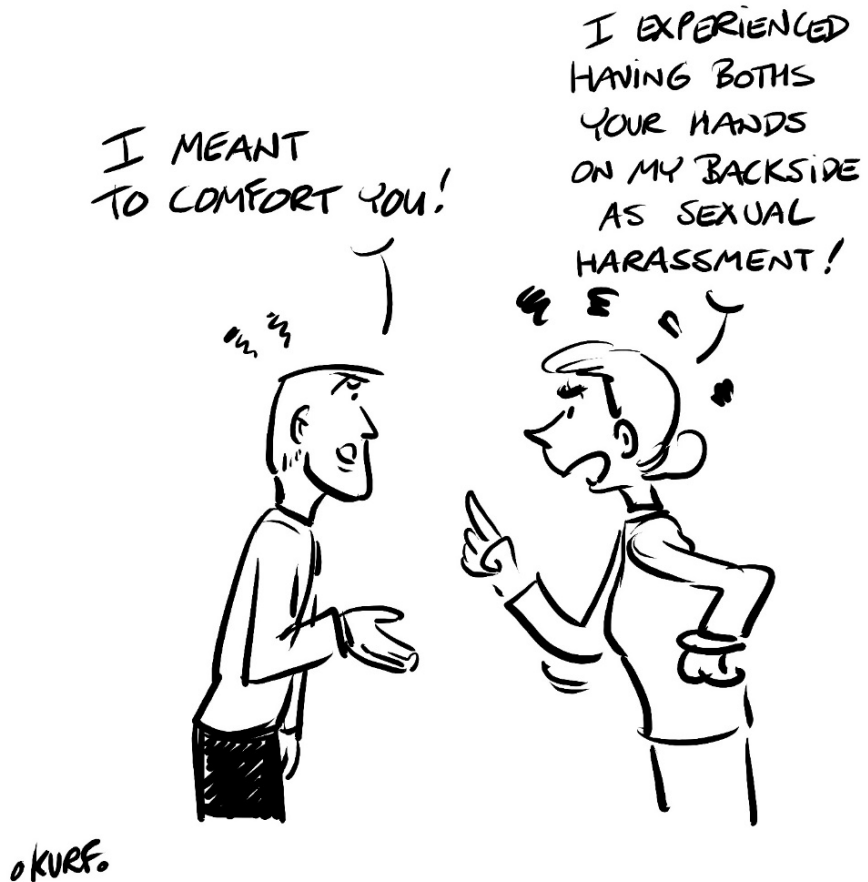
133. Moral relativism

The view that conceptions of morality are relative to the person or group holding them. A risk is that universal moral norms are denied.

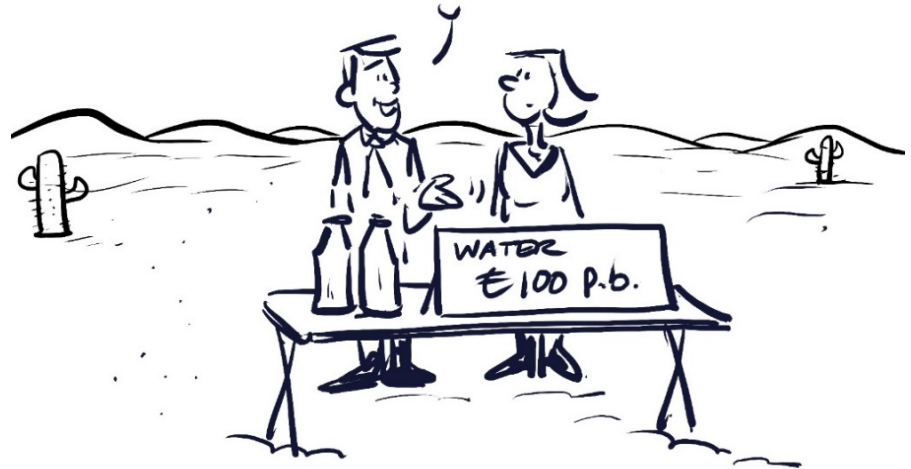
© KURF.

134. Moral sensationalism (or sensualism)

The view that morality is constructed from or consists of our sensations. A risk is that objective morality is denied.



IT IS UNETHICAL, BUT
FORTUNATELY FROM A
BUSINESS ETHICS PERSPECTIVE
IT IS ETHICAL!



135. Business ethics separatism (of secessionism and segregatism)

The view that due to some specific characteristics of the business context, business ethics prescribes different norms than general ethics. A risk is that business ethics loses its ethics.

o KURF.

WHEN WE HAVE COMPLETED ALL
COMPLIANCE FILES IN TWO DAYS,
THEN YOU CAN REST BY AGAIN
-> DOING SALES !



136. Moral short-termism

The view that focuses excessively on doing good deeds in the short term. A risk is that this kind of attention to ethics cannot be sustained.

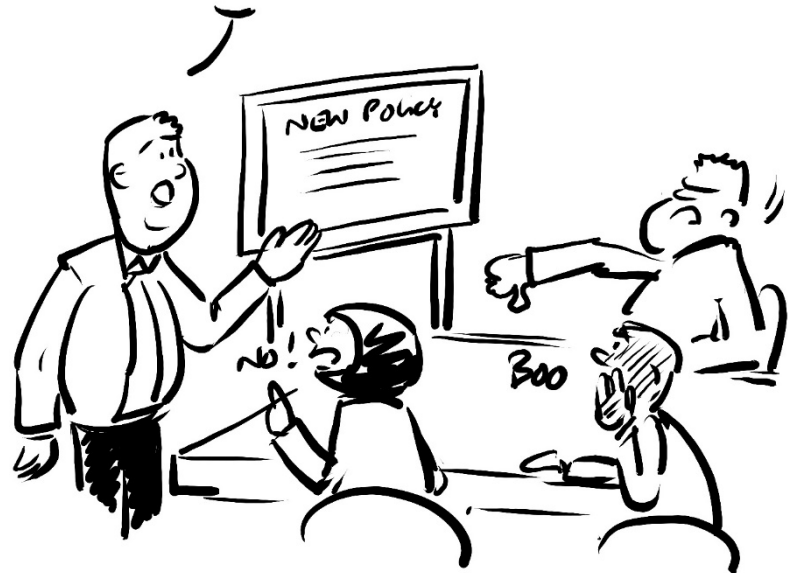
UNFORTUNATELY WE CANNOT OFFER
YOU A JOB. WE ARE A FLEXIBLE
COMPANY AND WE NEED A
COLLEAGUE WHOSE ETHICS ARE
ALSO FLEXIBLE!



137. Moral situationalism

The view that the particular circumstances deserve to be given more weight in ethical decision-making than general or universal moral norms. A risk is that ethics becomes too flexible.

I WANT TO INTRODUCE TO
YOU OUR NEW POLICY ON
SOCIAL...



138. Moral skepticism (with
pyrrhonism as total or radical
skepticism)

The view that all claims to moral
knowledge should be doubted or
actively rejected. A risk is that one
disagrees offhand with any moral
norm.

oKURF.

WELCOME TO THIS FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT SESSION OF OUR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. TODAY WE WILL LEARN HOW TO PASS THE BUCK!



139. Moral subism (also hypégiaphobiaism)

The view that people should try to evade responsibilities as much as possible (by diving like a submarine). A risk is that no one takes responsibility for unethical practices.

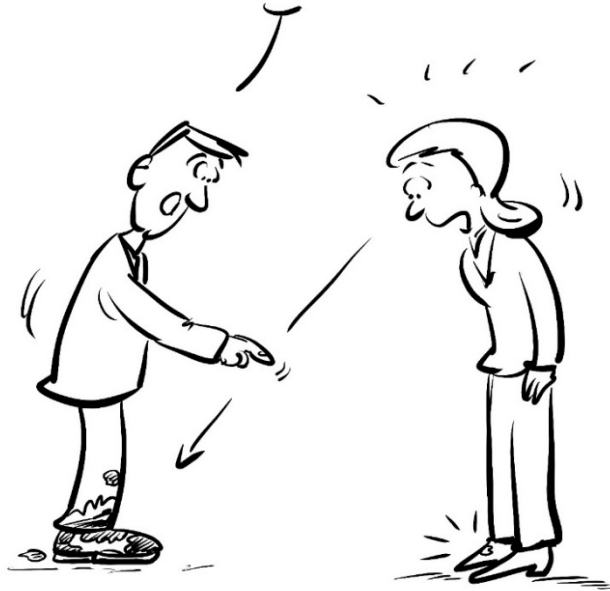
AS LONG AS I DO WHAT I
THINK, THEN YOU DO NOT HAVE
TO CORRECT ME!



140. Moral subjectivism (part of **cognitivism**; and consists of **irrationalism, nihilism, and emotionalism**)

The view that right and wrong is determined by what someone happens to think or feel is right or wrong (thereby denouncing objectivity). A risk is that unethical behavior is not objectionable as long as the perpetrators act in accordance with what they think or feel is right.

COULDN'T YOU POLISH YOUR SHOES
BETTER THAN THAT?



141. Moral supremacism (with **sexism** as an element; also known as **moral chauvinism** and **sectarianism**)

The view that there are certain traits (such as age, race or social class) the possession of which makes one superior than those who do not have them, and hence makes it acceptable for the former to dominate, control and subjugate the latter. A risk is smugness.

ohwulf

I RESPOND TO YOUR OPENNESS
WITH OPENNESS!



142. Moral symbolism

The view that morality is or should be presented in symbols that stand for morality. A risk is exclusive focus on symbols and ignoring actual behavior that is contrary to morality.

o KURF

I WOULD LIKE YOU
TO BE MORE
FAIR TO ME!

I WOULD LIKE
YOU TO TREAT
ME WITH RESPECT!



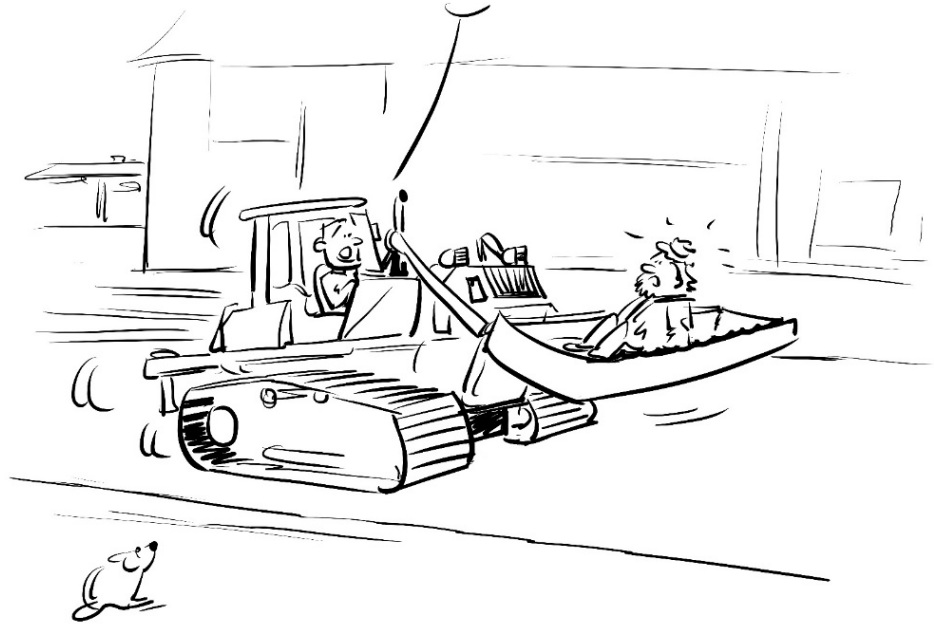
BE HAPPY
YOU ARE STILL ALIVE

oKURF.

143. Moral syncretism

The view that attempts to unify seemingly inharmonious moral principles, standards, and opinions. A risk is that real dilemmas are ignored.

I JUST HAVE TO CARRY OUT MY TASK
OF CLEANING THE ROAD



144. Moral taskism

The view that one's primary moral responsibility is to execute one's task or function. A risk is that other norms are ignored.

WLF

WE PRESENT TODAY THREE NEW
POLICIES IN OUR SERIES:
NR 11. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA, 21 PAGES
NR 12. DRESS CODE, 19 PAGES
NR 13. FORBIDDEN PRIVATE ACTIVITIES, 24 PAGES



145. Moral totalitarianism
(close to authoritarianism)

The view that morality should govern everything a person does. A risk is that individual preferences are undermined.

o kurf.

OUR COMPANY ETHICS IS SO STRONG
THAT WE WANT EVERYONE IN OUR SECTOR
TO FOLLOW IT!



146. Moral triumphalism

The view that a particular moral belief is superior to and should triumph over all other beliefs. A risk is that other beliefs are humiliated.

o kurf

WE HAVE HERE SUCH AN EXCELLENT
COMPANY ETHICS CODE THAT YOU DO NOT
LONGER HAVE TO THINK FOR YOURSELF

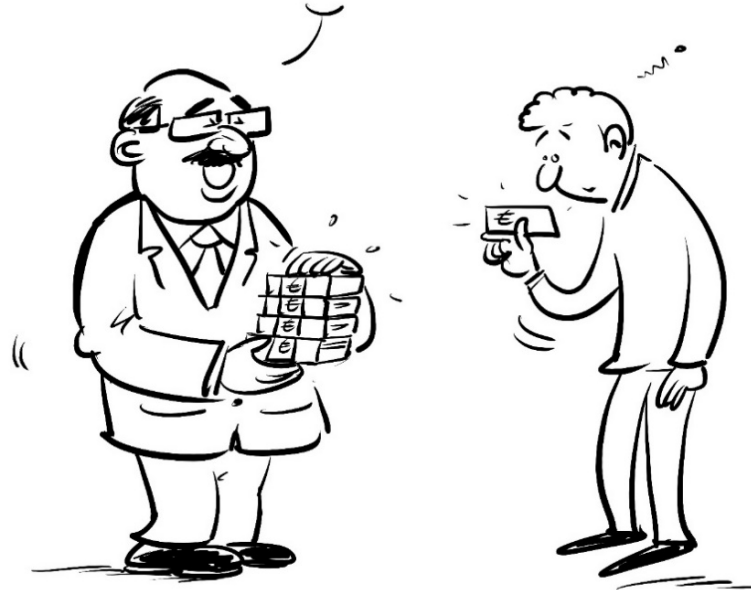


147. Moral universalism (opposed to moral nihilism and relativism)

The view that some ethical norms apply to all individuals in the same situation. A risk is that there is no room for individual ethics.

oKURF

IF YOU GET A \$100 SALARY INCREASE
AND I \$1 MILLION, THEN WE BOTH
BENEFIT. ISN'T THAT NICE?



148. Moral utilitarianism (version of consequentialism)

The view that a behavior is ethical if it produces the most benefits (utility) for all persons involved ("the greatest good for the greatest number"). A risk is injustice in the distribution of benefits.

MY OWN INTEGRITY IS SO STRONG
THAT I CAN ACCEPT THIS BRIBE!



149. Moral virtueism (also
Aristotelianism and **Neo-**
Aristotelianism)

The view that character is the
ground for evaluating and
developing ethics. A risk is the
ignorance of ethical norms and
their consequences.

oKURF

I AM A PRESENT FROM YOUR SUPPLIER!



150. Moral voluntarism

The view that the individual will is the fundamental power in the universe for realizing ethical behavior. A risk is that the context that facilitates moral behavior is ignored.

o KURF

ETHICISMS AND THEIR RISKS: 150 new cartoons about ethics at work

Muel Kaptein



Cartoons are a powerful tool for reflection on ethics in the workplace. This book contains 150 new cartoons. Each cartoon refers to a view about ethics (an ethicism) and its risk. The cartoons can be used to address ethical issues at work in a visual and humoristic way.

Muel Kaptein is a professor of business ethics and integrity at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. He is also partner at KPMG where he helps organizations in developing and auditing their ethics. See for more information: www.muelkaptein.com