



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.

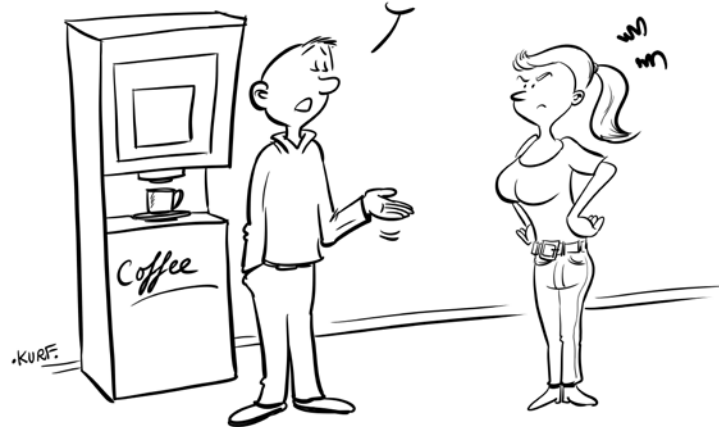
Share with others

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

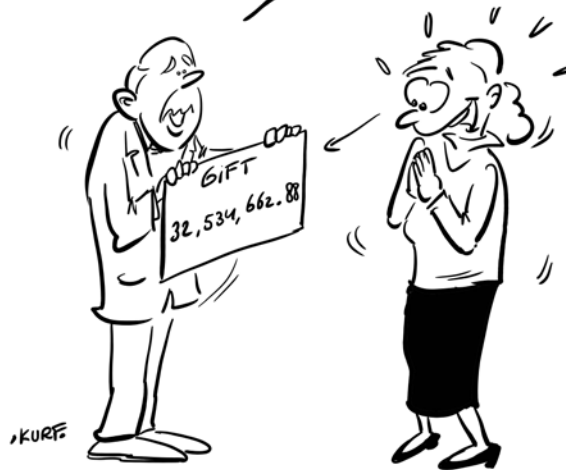
The view that to be perceived as beautiful is the highest moral value. A risk is that unethical behavior is permissible as long as others do not witness or observe it.



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

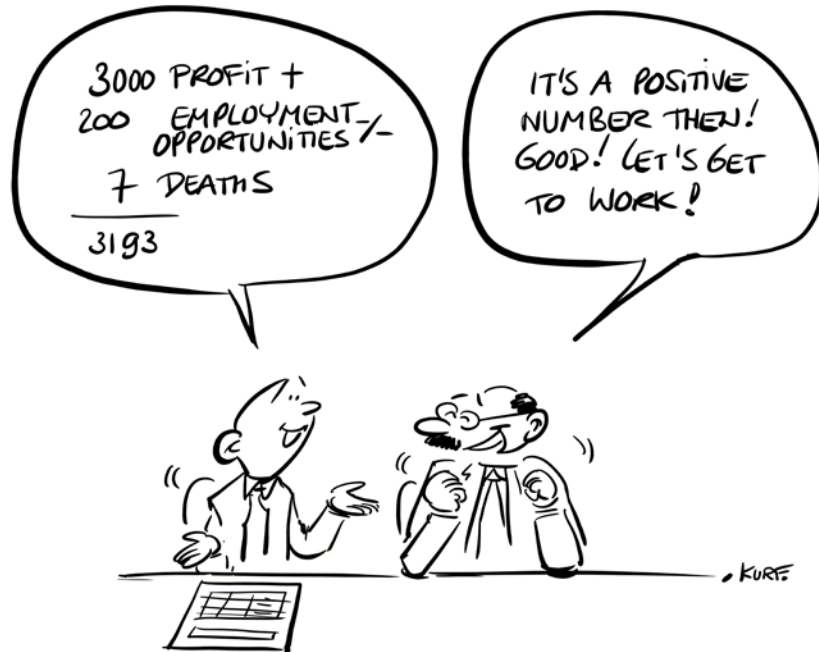
The view that ethical norms do not have a separate objective reality or basis. A risk is that every ethical norm can be negotiated and destroyed (or undermined).

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.

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