ETHICS BOOTCAMP INTRO
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“People often conceive morality as an intangible and idealized dimension, however, when it comes to violating ethical standards, they do so in a concrete manner.”


This bootcamp is intended to be an invitation to discuss how an individual in a particular situation can behave ethically/unethically «in a concrete manner».

The purpose is not to find out the right solution, there isn’t anything like that. The purpose is to discuss a particular situation and, through doing that, to cooperate in order to agree on priority values and proposals.
Conflict of interests & ethical dilemma

- **Conflict of interests**: that happens when we know what would be the right thing to do (we know where the public good is and how to achieve it) but, our needs/desires put pressure on us and circumstances offer us the opportunity to compromise, to not be compliant.

- **Ethical dilemma**: that happens when we want to do the right thing but, circumstances seem to show that whatever we decide we’ll break some rules, we’ll not be able to satisfy one or more ethical requirements.
The Donald Cressey’s* triangle

It is a model of interaction between an individual and his/her organisational context.

It gives us information about **three dimensions that can drive the individual to behave unethically:**

1) pressure of **internal needs/desires** or **external requests**;
2) dimension of **opportunities** (to behave unethically);
3) dimension of **self-justification** (rationalization).

* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Cressey
The sample situations

- We set up no. 2 ethics sensitive situations in two different contexts: one related to **using statistical information** and one related to **HR support activities** (overtime payments)

- Each group is provided with **printouts** of: the two situations, the two versions of the Cressey’s Triangle, three checklists

- Each group is invited to choose one of the two situations and **work on it as follows**
What to do with the chosen situation

**What do you think about Ms. Right’s/Mr. Right’s reasoning/decision?**

Here are some suggestions to work on that.

1. Discuss the short story and **try to find** whether it presents conflict(s) of interest or/and ethical dilemma(s), or/and other kind of ethical problems – or none;

2. Use the (first) Cressey’s triangle to **analyse** the conflict/dilemma; **help yourselves to the check lists** if you need. The lists are not completed so **any items you may add to one or more of the checklists will be really appreciated**;

3. Use the (second) Cressey’s triangle and **try to agree on suggestions** “to solve” the situation or to prevent similar situations in the future;

4. **Feel free to contribute anywhere with your own work experience**;

5. **Appoint a Rapporteur** who will report to the audience your considerations and suggestions.
How to apply the Cressey’s triangle to the situation

Analysis

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on how Ms. Right/Mr. Right justifies herself/himself. Pick items from the «rationalisation» check list or add new ones.

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on which opportunities may lead Ms. Right/Mr. Right to break the rules. Pick items from the «opportunity» check list or add new ones.

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on how Ms. Right/Mr. Right justifies herself/himself. Pick items from the «rationalisation» check list or add new ones.

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on which opportunities may lead Ms. Right/Mr. Right to break the rules. Pick items from the «opportunity» check list or add new ones.

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on how Ms. Right/Mr. Right justifies herself/himself. Pick items from the «rationalisation» check list or add new ones.

- Analyse the situation and try to agree on which opportunities may lead Ms. Right/Mr. Right to break the rules. Pick items from the «opportunity» check list or add new ones.
How to use the Cressey’s triangle to prevent similar situations in the future

Proposals

Discuss and try to agree on how to reduce the use of self-justification
The checklists (you’ll find other items in the printouts)

**Pressures/needs**

- Ambition, career expectations
- Money troubles
- (...)

**Opportunities**

- Short time left for action or decision
- Random unexpected events
- (...)

**Rationalisation**

- Everybody does the same
- I did nothing bad, actually I did that to help other people/colleagues
- (...)

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Any questions?
Have fun!

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