

General Guide for Decision Making in Ethics

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1. Propose the ethical problem.
2. State the pertinent facts.
3. Identify the individuals or groups that could be affected (in other words, the individuals or groups that could be helped or harmed and to what degree by the decision to be taken).
4. Generate the options (as the number of considered options gets bigger, the decision at the end will better).
5. Evaluate every option using the following criteria:
 - a. Is it harmful?
 - To whom?
 - How much harm?
 - Compare the options based on the harm.
 - b. Who will know about it?
 - Who should know?
 - What effect would this have?
 - Compare the options in the sense of publicity.
 - c. If I were one of the affected persons, would I consider the decision appropriate or correct?
 - Compare the options in the sense of reversibility.
6. Select and propose one or various options. (It is possible that you will have to persuade others about the selected option and it is possible there will be some negotiating involved)
7. Implement the decision or act to solve the problem.
8. Propose what to do to prevent the same problem in the future and implement the contemplated decisions.