# UNIT – III

**Moral Theory:**

A moral theory defines terms in uniform ways and links ideas and problems together in consistent ways

1. Utilitarianism –Act and Rule
2. Cost-Benefit Analysis
3. Duty and Rights Ethics
4. Virtue Ethics

**Utilitarianism:**

- Actions are good if they serve to maximize human well-being
- Focus is on maximizing the well-being of society as a whole (even though individuals can be negatively impacted)

**Negatives:**

- No emphasis on individuals
- Must know what leads to the 'greater good"

Utilitarianism is of Two Types:

- Act
  – Individual actions
  – Rules can be broken if it leads to the most good
- Rule
  – Moral rules are important
  – Adhering to the rules ultimately leads to the most good

**Benefit-Cost Analysis:**

- Do benefits outweigh the costs?

**Negatives:**

- Not truly an ethical analysis tool
- Not always easy to place a $ sign on all benefits
- Who reaps the benefits?
- Who pays the costs?

**Duty and Right Ethics:**

- Actions are good when they respect the rights of individuals
- List of duties that respect individuals
- Individuals have fundamental rights that others have a duty to respect

**Negatives:**

- How do you resolve individual versus group conflicts
- Doesn't account for overall good

**Virtue Ethics:**

- Actions are considered right if they support good character traits (such as responsibility, honesty, competency, loyalty, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, citizenship, respect)
- Behavior should be the same-personal and business

**Negatives:**

- Harder to apply
- Virtues should not lead to negative consequences

**Ethics problem-solving:**

- Analyze a problem using different methods
- If answers are different using different methods then careful analysis and weighting is needed
- Individual rights often take precedence.
- Understand all issues
    - Factual (knowns)
    - Conceptual (meaning of ideas)
    - Moral (which moral issue applies)
- Line Drawing Techniqe (+ and - on each end)
    - Evaluate alternatives with respect to where they fall on the line
- Flow Chart Technique
- Solving Conflicts (importance, compromise, bite the bullet)

**General methodology:**

**Identification:**

- Recognize/acknowledge a state of conflict.
- Identify source of conflict and stakeholders.

**Analysis:**

- Investigation, facts..
- Alternatives, ranking..

**Action:**

- Deciding on and initiating a course of action/resolution.

**Inquiries:**

1. Normative (also called moral enquiries)
2. Conceptual
3. Factual

**Techniques for solving ethical problems:**

1. **Line drawing method**
2. **Flow chart method**

**Line drawing method:**

- Line drawing technique is especially useful for situations in which applicable moral principles are clear.
- However, there is a great deal of concern about which ethical principle applies.
- Line drawing is performed by drawing a line along which various examples and hypothetical situations are placed.
- At one end is placed the positive paradigm (unambiguously morally acceptable).
- At the other end, the negative paradigm (unambiguously NOT morally acceptable) is placed.
- In between is placed the problem under consideration, along with similar examples.
- Those examples that more closely conform to the positive paradigm are placed near it, and examples closer to the negative paradigm are placed closer to it.
- By carefully observing this continuum and placing the moral problem under consideration in the appropriate place along the line (say by letter 'P'), it is possible to

determine whether the problem is more like the positive or negative paradigm and therefore whether it is acceptable or unacceptable.

<u>Pitfalls in the use of line drawing</u>

- If not properly used, line drawing can lead to incorrect results.
- Line drawing can easily be used to prove that something is right when it is actually wrong.
- Line drawing is only effective if it is used objectively and honestly.

False conclusions can be reached by

1. Incorrect paradigms
2. Dishonest placement of the examples along the line
3. Dishonest placement of the problem within the examples

# Line Drawings

Negative paradigm

Something that is
totally not acceptable

Positive paradigm

Something that is
very acceptable

Example:

1. Don not look at previous report at all
2. Copy the previous report, put your name on it and hand it as your own.
3. Use the same topic, but redo all the research.
4. Use the same topic and use the previous report as a cited reference
5. Use the same general ideas from the previous reports, but don't bother citing.
6. Use the same topic and cited references as the previous report without credit.
7. Read the report only to get an idea of the format and detail required.

8. Use the same topic and cited references as the previous report but acknowledge.

| 2 | 6 8 | 5 4 3 7 | 1 |
| negative extreme | | | positive extreme |
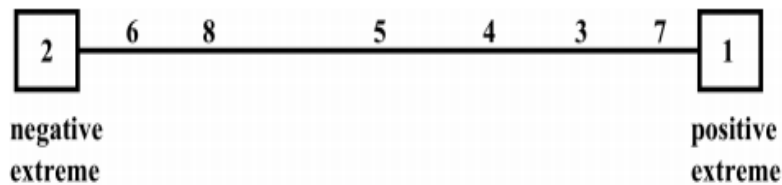
## Multi-line Drawing...

| Feature | Negative | | Positive ☺ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gift Value* | large | | small |
| Timing* | before | | after |
| Reason | Monetary | | Educational |
| Responsibility* | Self | | Others |
| Product Quality | Worst | | Best |
| Product Cost | Highest | | Lowest |
| | | *most important in this case | |

**Flow Chart Technique:**

- Provides a visual picture of a situation and helps one establishes sequences, identify moral issues and consequences of actions.
- In engineering ethics, flow charting will be helpful for analyzing those cases in which there is a sequence of events to be considered or a series of consequences that flows from each decision.
- There is no unique flowchart that is applicable to a given problem.
- For flow charting also, it is essential to be as objective as possible and approach flow charting honestly.
- The key to effective use of flow charts is to be creative in determining possible outcomes and scenarios.
- Also, one should not be shy about getting a negative answer and deciding to stop the project.
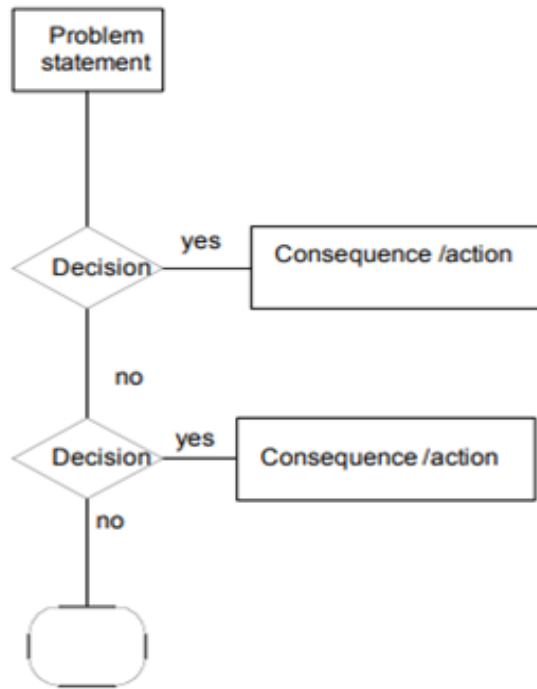
**Flow chart**

- A very logical way to dissect a problem and to understand all of the consequences.
- A very usual way to observe possibilities. As with the line graphs, one must be as objective as possible
- It is very similar to flow charting any engineering problem using a series of decision blocks that states "yes or No".