

Consequential Theories

- Contend that the moral rightness of an action can be determined by looking at its consequences.
- If the consequences are good, the act is right.
- If the consequences are bad, the act is wrong.

What is right is determined by the considering the ratio of good to evil that the action produces.

The right act is the one that produces, or is intended to produce the greatest ratio of good to evil of any alternative.

There are 2 types of consequential theory

- Egoism
- Utilitarianism

EGOISM

- Contends that an act is moral when it promotes the individual's best long-term interests.
- If an action produces, or is intended to produce a greater ratio of good to evil for the individual in the long run than any other alternative, then it is the right action to perform.

There are 2 types of Egoism

Personal Egoism

- Impersonal Egoism

Misconceptions concerning Egoism

- Egoists do only what they want
- Egoists don't possess virtues like honesty, generosity, and self-sacrifice.

Strengths of Egoism

- Provides a basis for formulating and testing moral policies
- Provides moral decision making flexibility without being arbitrary

Weaknesses of Egoism

- Ignores blatant wrongs
- Incompatible with social role of most organizations
- Can't resolve conflicts of Egoistic interests
- Provides inconsistent moral counsel

UTILITARIANISM

Asserts that we should always act so as to produce the greatest ratio of good to evil for everyone concerned with our decision

Utilitarianism is the philosophy underlying the modern welfare state

Originally formulated by Jeremy Bentham in the 18th century, and fully developed by [John Stewart Mill](#) in the 19th

Utilitarianism comes in 2 basic forms

- **Act Utilitarianism**
- **Rule Utilitarianism**

Strengths in Utilitarianism

- It provides a basis for formulating and testing policies.
- It provides an objective way of resolving conflicts of self-interest.
- It recognizes the four primary claimant groups: clients/customers, organization, profession, society.

Weaknesses of Utilitarianism

- Both act and rule utilitarianism ignore actions that appear to be wrong in themselves
- The principle of utility may come into conflict with that of justice
- It is very difficult to formulate satisfactory rules, even for Rule Utilitarians.