

## Moral Claimants

Those who have some stake in our decisions. They are affected by what we do or say. In the media, these include employers, clients, and various “third parties.”

### What we owe to others

#### *William David Ross’s “Prima Facie” duties of obligation*

1. Duties of fidelity are based on your prior acts.
  - For example, if you promise (explicitly or implicitly) to do something or to abstain from doing something, then you are obliged to either do it or to abstain from doing it.
  - Also included under fidelity is the duty of reparation.
    - If you perform a wrong action with respect to another person, then you are obliged to “undo” the wrong.
2. Duties of gratitude are based on the acts of other people toward you.
  - For example, if any person performs some service (or favor) for you, then you have some obligation to the person who performed the favor.
  - Gratitude applies to relationships between friends, relatives, or employer/employee (among others) .
3. Duties of justice are based on the need to distribute goods in accordance with the merits of the people concerned.
  - For example, if any person deserves something based on merit, and you can give them what they deserve (or prevent them getting it if they don’t deserve it), then you are obliged to do so.
4. Duties of beneficence are based on the fact that there are other people in the world whose lot in life we can improve.
  - For example, if you can make some person better with respect to their lot in life, then you are obliged to do so.
5. Duties of self-improvement are based on the fact that we should not neglect to improve our own condition in life.
  - In other words, if you can make yourself better with respect to your own condition, then you should do so.
6. Duties of non-injury are duties of not injuring others.
  - If you are in a position to avoid or prevent hurting someone, then you are obliged to avoid or prevent injury.

### The Linkage Concept

*We are linked to constituents by consequences.*

*We affect them in some way, or they affect us, or both.*

**Providers**—provide the authority and control the resources that enable the organization

to exist.

- lending institutions, government agencies, legislative authorities, stockholders, boards of directors.
- Classified as input linkages because they tend to have more consequences on the organization than vice versa.

**Suppliers**—those who furnish input needed for the organization to produce its product or provide its service

- raw materials such as: labor unions, employees, sources for news stories

**Receivers**—use the organization's output—usually in the form of products or services. Its public relations messages, its advertisements, or its news and information output.

- Typically include consumers and target audiences.

**Associates**—those organizations with similar interests or that face similar problems.

- Often linked through coalitions with the organization (i.e., trade and professional associations)

**Issue-defined constituents**—those that arise as issues dictate. Whenever the organization has consequences on its environment, these linkages arise.

- groups or organizations not normally associated with the organization in a formal way.
- special interest groups, the community in which the organization operates, environmental groups, or basically any representative of public opinion that is affected by the organization's actions.

NOTE: Charts can be found in the book, in [pdf form here](#), and in the [podcast](#) version of this lecture.