

I. Hard Ethical Problems:

I don't think any of us can do much to guarantee that we will not have hard problems, especially if we are engaged in our communities and not just "opting out" of social and personal issues.

I take there to be two benefits to articulating one's values when it comes to the Hard Problems.

1. Even though most ethicists think there is not one single true moral theory, that does not mean most think we are just left in the dark when it comes to hard problems. Articulating our values gives us a somewhat ordered set of principles or ideas to draw from. We can't expect perfection, but that's better than going in blind.
2. If we make our values more explicit to ourselves and those around us, we are better equipped to handle internal and external conflict. b/c
 - a. We are better equipped to settle misunderstandings (internal or external).
 - b. We can respond to internal disagreements (e.g. within the same company)
 - c. We can respond to external disagreements. (e.g. respond to ethical criticisms of our choices, in ways that show we are being responsible, even if criticizable.)

II. Three Ethical Outlooks:

1. We can think of the morally right thing to do, in any given situation, in terms of **production**. Some people think that something like happiness or well-being is what's good and they think "the more of it the better" – The morally right thing to do is that thing that will produce at least as much happiness as any alternative – and not just for yourself, but for all those affected by the action. Greatest good for the greatest number. (Thinking LARGE SCALE production of good consequences.) (-J.S. Mill)

We can also think of the morally right thing to do, in any given situation, in terms of **honoring or respecting** what's valuable; not in terms of **producing** what's valuable. Some people, for example, see ethics as fundamentally about respecting the right of another being to plan and live their own life free from interference. This outlook emphasizes moral rules, rule-following and the importance of inviolable **rights**. (-Kant)

On a moral outlook different from both, we can think of ethics as fundamentally about **self realization**... The way we do this is through improving our characters and we improve our characters through developing better character traits or virtues. The idea is that many of us have some measure of control over the kinds of people we become and the kinds of people our children become. (-Aristotle)

III. Two cases for discussion:

1. The cynical case: Articulating values help even those who don't really care. NFL commissioner Roger Goodell: Why were so many people so upset with his press conference? How could articulating his and the NFL's values, MUCH earlier, have helped them?

Take for granted: You can't change the violent culture of football overnight. But, what's happening would not have been done AFTER the fact, had they genuinely articulated the values they stand for.

2. BP's corporate culture before the oil spill. Even more cynical, BP just didn't care about our oceans and planet? Or a genuine mistake?

"The safety issue goes to the heart of BP's corporate culture, say some critics, who contend that compared with its Big Oil rivals, the company has historically been focused more on deal-making and less on safety and operational excellence. "Other companies were less aggressive on growth and more focused on their safety-management systems," says John Hofmeister, a former president of Shell Oil Co.

"Changing the culture is hard."

BP is under tremendous pressure to make changes. Reorganization may look good on reports to government regulators, but strategic plans won't succeed if there aren't changes in the field. **And those changes often involve the way in which individuals are treated, and given incentives.**

The Journal reported that Phil Dziubinski became BP's ethics and compliance leader for Alaska operations in mid-2006, shortly after the company suffered a 4,000-barrel oil spill on the North Slope. That happened a year after the refinery explosion in Texas City, Texas, an accident that led a federal agency called the Chemical Safety Board to suggest BP managers didn't listen enough to what workers were telling them."

"*Reporting bad news was not encouraged*," the report said, "and often Texas City managers did not effectively investigate incidents or take appropriate corrective action."

Phil earned a reputation as a bulldog, staying after organizational leaders that lagged in implementing safety fixes in Alaska operations.

At a meeting in March 2007, Mr. Dziubinski disagreed with a supervisor's assessment that the company was on track to fix all safety issues. Mr. Dziubinski said that several problems flagged by workers in the past still hadn't been addressed, and that BP was taking too long to deal with workers' current concerns. "We tend not to listen to the workers," Mr. Dziubinski said, according to notes of the meeting taken by union leader, Marc Kovac, who was there." (*Wall Street Journal* Feb 1, 2011)