Decision making involves moral responsibility, confidence in the image of what was perceived as right, and the ability to comprehend ethical reasoning process. Some decisions involve ethical dimensions that require you to make tough and sometimes unpleasant choices concerning questions of what a person “should do” or “ought to do’ or questions of right or wrong or good or bad.

An Ethical moral problem involves questions of the following kind:
1. What a person should or ought to do?
2. What is right or wrong, good or bad?

Objective:
To identify the problem
Know who said what, what was said, ordered, or demanded. Do not settle for second-hand information; get the details. Problems can be described in more than one way.
The first step of the Ethical Reasoning process is to clearly define the ethical problem.

Focus and analyze the problem on the reasoning process and your ability to logically defend your approach. It is not because of peer pressure for your action taken. Proceed from a general statement of the problem to specific statements of decisions to be made.

Remember the least behavior (action on your part) has CONSEQUENCES!

It is easy to charge ahead without thinking and then rationalize your behavior after the event. But the fact of the matter is there is no right way to do a wrong thing. The very existence of a “grey area” between right and wrong is no excuse for dispensing with ethics by suggesting a short framework to guide decision making. There are three questions to ask when you are facing an ethical problem.
Ethics Check

1. Is it legal?
   Will I be violating either civil law, company policy or my own personal policy?
2. Is it balanced?
   Is it fair to all concerned in the short term as well as the long term?
   Does it promote win-win relationships?
3. How will it make me feel about myself?
   Will it make me feel proud?
   Would I feel good if my decision was published in the newspaper?
   Would I feel good if my family knew about it?
Thursday, July 07, 2011 1:01 P.m.
To: abanderson@.com
Subject: Remember me
Hello to the most beautiful lady in the world
Don’t faint it is only me. Sorry I have taken so long to write. Just want you to know I still think of you. I still remember the reunion when we went to your room. Guess what ole stupid me did!!! I sat there and looked at the most beautiful woman in the world. Really enjoyed that night. But I still think of how much I just wanted to jump in that bed with you. Please donot let your husband see this!!!
I have retired now and just mostly stay around the house. My wif has an online business and I help her with it. Other than that my life is the same as you last saw me. My wife is in the hospital. She had trouble brathing last night and I took her there. She will be ok. Guess I had better and go see if they are about to release her. UI just wanted you to know I still think about you often. Ricardo
(Copied just as Ricardo wrote it).
WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP PROBLEM?

- In the ethics check, there were three questions. Perhaps the third question is the toughest!! Taking the right option requires a certain degree of inner strength and confidence. “Only the person who has faith in himself is able to be faithful to others”. Trying to answer this question may help decide if the problem is really an ethical one. It may act as a restraint, at times, on over-zealous interpretations of ethics. Answering this question can also, importantly, help to clarify the problem. Is it a question of one or more of the following:
  - *fairness
  - *honesty (integrity)
  - *promise-keeping
Consulting others about an ethical problem can expose one to different facts, principles and perspectives. This applies to problem solving in general and does not pertain solely to ethical decision making. Ideally, consulting others, especially if they are well informed, professionally experienced and, importantly, have ethical sensitivity and awareness, can be most helpful. 

Can you justify the decision in ethical terms? Is the decision consistent with your values?

How would you feel if your decision and behavior actions were reported in the newspaper?
- **Caring** means treating people as ends in themselves, not as means to an end. It means having compassion, treating people courteously and with dignity, helping those in need and avoiding harm to others.

- **Honesty** means being truthful and not deceiving or distorting. In the long run, there is usually less advantage and more harm to being dishonest than to being honest. One by one, deceptions undermine the capacity or open exchange and erode credibility. Individuals who lose their reputation for truthfulness usually cannot accomplish very much.

- **Accountability** means accepting the consequences of one's actions and accepting the responsibility for one's decisions and consequences. This means setting an example for others and avoiding even the appearance of impropriety.
Promise Keeping means keeping one’s commitments. When promises have been made, they are supported by the fact that the obligation to keep promises is among the most important of generally accepted obligations. Promises and agreements stakeholders create expectations or performance and establish obligations.

Loyalty means being faithful and loyal to those with whom one has dealings. This means safeguarding the ability to make independent professional judgments by scrupulously avoiding undue influence and conflicts of interest. Blind obedience is thoughtless and does not prepare a decision-maker to weigh the values in question for the best decision.
DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

- Romans 2:6  God will “render to each person according to his deeds.” God is the sovereign ruler over the universe and all human affairs, and human beings are responsible before God for moral choices and actions they make.

- We all make decisions of varying importance every day, so the idea that decision making can be a rather sophisticated art may at first seem strange. However, studies have shown that most people are much more inadequate at decision making than they think. An understanding of what decision making involves, together with a few effective techniques, will help produce better decisions.

- Answers to Exercise:
  - (1. Car #3 at $595.; #2. Go to the beach at 7).
INTRODUCTION TO DECISION MAKING 101

Objective:

1. Identify the process of Decision making.
2. Identify the function of Decision making.
3. Identify the components of Decision making.

Decision making is the study of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the values and preferences of the decision maker. Making a decision implies that there are alternative choices to be considered, and in such a case we want not only to identify as many of these alternatives as possible but to choose the one that has the highest probability of success or effectiveness and best fits with our goals, desires, lifestyle, values, and so on.
THE FUNCTION OF DECISION MAKING

Decision making is the process of sufficiently reducing uncertainty and doubt about alternatives to allow a reasonable choice to be made from among them. This definition stresses the information-gathering function of decision making. It should be noted here that uncertainty is reduced rather than eliminated. Very few decisions are made with absolute certainty because complete knowledge about all the alternatives is seldom possible. Thus, every decision involves a certain amount of risk. If there is no uncertainty, you do not have a decision; you have an algorithm—a set of steps or a recipe that is followed to bring about a FIXED result.
3 TYPES OF DECISIONS

- There are several basic kinds of decisions. Three of those types will be discuss. These are Decisions whether, Decisions which, Contingent decisions.

1. Decisions whether. This is the yes/no, either/or decision that must be made before we proceed with the selection of an alternative. Should I buy a new TV? Should I travel this summer? Decisions whether are made by weighing reasons pro and con. It is important to be aware of having made a decision whether, since too often we assume that decision making begins with the identification of alternatives, assuming that the decision to choose one has already been made.

2. Decisions which. These decisions involve a choice of one or more alternatives from among a set of possibilities, the choice being based on how well each alternative measures up to a set of predefined criteria.
KINDS OF DECISIONS

3. Contingent decisions. These are decisions that have been made but put on hold until some condition is met.

For example: I have decided to buy that car if I can get it for the right price; I have decided to write that article if I can work the necessary time for it into my schedule. OR even, We’ll take the route through the valley if we can control the ridge and if we detect no enemy activity to the north.

Most people carry around a set of already made, contingent decisions, just waiting for the right conditions or opportunity to arise. Time, energy, price, availability, opportunity, encouragement—all these factors can figure into the necessary conditions that need to be met before we can act on our maker. These are the type that occur when we seize opportunity. The best contingent and opportunistic decisions are made by the prepared mind—one that has thought about criteria and alternatives in the past.
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

1. Information. This is knowledge about the decision, the effects of its alternatives, the probability of each alternative, and so forth. A major point to make here that while substantial information is desirable, the statement that “the more the better” is not true. Too much information can actually reduce the quality of a decision.

2. Alternatives. These are the possibilities from which one has to choose. Alternatives can be identified (that is, searched for and located) or even developed (created where they did not previously exist). Merely searching for preexisting alternatives will result in less effective decision making.
3. Criteria. These are the characteristics or requirements that each alternative must possess to a greater or lesser extent. Usually the alternatives are rated on how well they possess each criterion. For example, alternative Toyota ranks an 8 on the criterion of economy, while alternative Buick ranks a 6 on the same criterion.

4. Goals. What is it you want to accomplish? Strangely enough, many decision makers collect a bunch of alternatives (say cars to buy or people to marry) and then ask, “Which should I choose?” without thinking first of what their goals are, what overall objectives they want to achieve. Next time you find yourself asking, “What should I do?” “What should I Choose?”, Ask yourself first, “What are my goals?”
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

5. Value. Value refers to how desirable a particular outcome is, the value of the alternative, whether in dollars, satisfaction, or other benefit.

6. Preferences. These reflect the philosophy and moral hierarchy of the decision maker. We could say that they are the decision maker's "values," personal values dictate preferences. Some people prefer excitement to calmness, certainty to risk, efficiency to esthetics, quality to quantity, and so on. Thus, when one person chooses to ride the wildest roller coaster in the park and another chooses a mild ride, both may be making good decisions, if based on their individual preferences.
7. Decision Quality. This is a rating of whether a decision is good or bad. A good decision is a logical one based on the available information and reflecting the preferences of the decision maker. The important concept to grasp here is that the quality of a decision is not related to its outcome: a good decision can have either a good or bad outcome. Similarly, a bad decision (one not based on adequate information or not reflecting the decision maker's preferences) can still have a good outcome.

For example, if you do an extensive analysis and carefully decide on a certain investment based on what you know about its risks and your preferences, than your decision is a good one, even though you may lose money on the investment. Similarly, if you throw a dart at a listing of stocks and buy the one the dart hits, your decision is a bad one, even though the stock may go up in value.
1. You are trying to decide between three used cars, all of which are priced the same. If you buy used car number one, there is a 70 percent probability that you will have to spend $400 to get the engine back in shape. However, there is a 30 percent probability that the engine will have to be replaced, which will cost you $2,000. If you choose car number 2, there is a 50 percent probability that you won’t have to spend any money at all, a 30 percent probability that emission repairs will cost only $200, but there is a 20 percent chance that the car will require a California smog conversion since it may be an European import that hasn’t been built for California. This will cost you $5,000. If you choose car number three, you will face a 60 percent probability of an $800 transmission repair, a 35 percent probability of a small transmission adjustment, and a 5 percent possibility that you will need to spend $1,600 to fix the engine and the transmission. Which car should you buy? Consider the costs as negative values and choose the one with the lowest negative total.
EXERCISE:

2. Your true love comes up to you and says, “Darling, I can’t decide whether we should go to the beach or to a movie, because while the beach would be twice as much fun if it doesn’t rain; there is a 30 percent chance of rain today. And if it rains, the beach would be no fun at all.” You smile knowingly and reply, “Well, sweetheart, I just happen to know how to calculate expected values. I will solve the problem for us.” If the fun you would have at the beach is a 10, what should your decision be?

See Slide #9 for answers to Exercise.