

Kohlberg’s LEVELS AND STAGES OF MORAL MATURITY

Level One: Preconventional Morality The person conforms to rules imposed by authority figures to avoid punishment or to obtain personal rewards.

Stage 1: Punishment-and-obedience orientation At this stage, the person determines the goodness or badness of an act based on the consequences. There is no real conception of right or wrong, only what you can “get away with” and consequences if you get caught. One act is measured as more wrong than another if you are punished more severely or if the objective harm is greater.

Stage 2: Naïve hedonism, or instrumental orientation For the person at this stage of moral development, conformity to the rules is for the purpose of gaining rewards or satisfying personal needs. Politicians and lawyers operate at this stage all the time, but they try to disguise their lack of moral maturity by using high-sounding terms like “quid pro quo” which essentially means “something for something.” The seriousness of the violation now depends, in part, on the intent of the actor but mostly based on how well the exchange works out.

Level Two: Conventional Morality At this level, the individual strives to obey the rules set forth by others in order to win praise, be recognized for virtuous conduct or to maintain social order.

Stage 3: “Good Boy” or “Good Girl” orientation Moral acts are for the purpose of pleasing, helping, or gaining the approval of others. A primary objective is to be thought of well by others and to be regarded as a “nice” person.

Stage 4: Law-and-order orientation The orientation is toward established authority, regulations and the maintenance of the social order. Laws are accepted with little or no question.

Level Three: Postconventional Morality, or the Morality of Self-Accepted
Developing to this stage means that morality has become a personal commitment to a set of standards that are shared by others, yet which transcend specific authority figures. In short, moral standards are internalized and have become the person’s own.

Stage 5: Social contract, or legalistic orientation Right actions are those expressed by the majority or to maximize social welfare. There is the awareness that laws may be unjust but such rules must be obeyed until they can be changed by social consensuses such as through an orderly election.

Stage 6: The universal ethical principles orientation At this *highest stage of moral reasoning*, the individual defines right and wrong based on the self-determined ethical principles of one’s own conscience. This may be the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, the greatest good for the greatest number of mankind, or *principles of universal justice and respect for individual unalienable rights that are to be applied to all, in all situations.*

Step-by-Step Ethical Decision-Making Process

7 Step Path to Better Decisions (Josephson Institute of Ethics)	10 Step Method of Decision Making (Jon Pekel and Doug Wallace)
<div>1. Stop and think</div> <div>2. Clarify goals</div> <div>3. Determine facts</div> <div>4. Develop options</div> <div>5. Consider consequences</div> <div>6. Choose</div> <div>7. Monitor and modify</div>	<div>1. Identify key facts</div> <div>2. Identify and analyze major stakeholders</div> <div>3. Identify underlying driving forces</div> <div>4. Identify/prioritize operating value and ethical principles</div> <div>5. Decide who should be involved in making the decision</div> <div>6. Determine and evaluate all viable alternatives</div> <div>7. Test preferred alternative with worst-case scenario</div> <div>8. Add a preventative component</div> <div>9. Decide & build short- and long-term action plans</div> <div>10. Use decision making checklist</div>