
Survey of Ethical Theoretic Aptitudes

Instructions: Each of the following statements can be completed in two ways. Think about each alternative, and circle the one that you think best represents your feelings.

1. Persons' actions should be described in terms of being
 - a. good or bad.
 - b. right or wrong.

2. When making an ethical decision, one should pay attention to
 - a. one's conscience.
 - b. others' needs, wants, and desires.

3. Solutions to ethical problems are usually
 - a. some shade of gray.
 - b. black and white.

4. It is of more value to societies to
 - a. follow stable traditions and maintain a distinctive identity.
 - b. be responsive and adapt to new conditions as the world changes.

5. When thinking through ethical problems, I prefer to
 - a. develop practical, workable alternatives.
 - b. make reasonable distinctions and clarifications.

6. When people disagree over ethical matters, I strive for
 - a. some point(s) of agreement.
 - b. workable compromises.

7. Uttering a falsehood is wrong because
 - a. depending on the results, it can lead to further problems.
 - b. it wouldn't be right for anyone to lie.

8. Thinking of occupations, I would rather be
 - a. wise judge, applying the law with fairness and impartiality.
 - b. benevolent legislator, seeking an improved life for all.

9. I would rather be known as a person who
 - a. has accomplished a lot and achieved much.
 - b. has integrity and is a person of principle.

10. The aim of science should be
 - a. to discover truth.
 - b. to solve existing problems.

11. Whether a person is a liar is
 - a. a matter of degree.
 - b. a question of kind.

12. A nation should pay more attention to its
 - a. heritage, its roots.
 - b. its future, its potential.

13. It is more important to be
 - a. happy.
 - b. worthy.

14. Unethical behavior is best described as
 - a. a violation of a principle of law.
 - b. causing some degree of harm.

15. The purpose of government should be
 - a. to promote the best possible life for its citizens.
 - b. to secure justice and fair treatment.

How to Score this Test

Count the odd-numbered questions to which you responded 'A'
 Count the even-numbered questions to which you responded 'B'
 Add the two numbers together, and subtract 8 from the total

| | |
|----------|-------------------------|
| +7 +6 +5 | "flaming utilitarian" |
| +4 +3 +2 | "moderate utilitarian" |
| +1 0 -1 | "mugwump" |
| -2 -3 -4 | "moderate deontologist" |
| -5 -6 -7 | "ice-cold deontologist" |

This diagnostic test has been used for many years in many settings, both in the academic world and in the private and public sectors. It is designed to ascertain an individual's inclination to approach ethical issues from a formalist or a utilitarian perspective. There are no wrong answers and no unethical scores. About 90 percent of respondents score in the +5 to -5 range.