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Chapter 02

# Cognitive Processes and Ethical Decision Making in Accounting

### **Multiple Choice Questions**

- When Sally is asked why she should share her toys with her sister, she responds by saying "Because my mom says I have to and if I don't I'll go to time-out." In which stage of moral development is Sally?
  - A. Conventional Morality
  - B. Fairness to Others
  - C. Postconventional Morality
  - D. Preconventional Morality
- 2. In reference to Rest's four-component Model of Morality, which component reflects an individual's willingness to place ethical values ahead of non-ethical values that relate to self-interest?
  - A. Moral Character
  - B. Moral Motivation
  - C. Moral Sympathy
  - D. Moral Judgment
- 3. The cognitive development approach refers to:
  - A. The thought process followed in one's moral development
  - B. The method of moral reasoning used in decision making
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- 4. Kohlberg's model can best be described as:
  - A. The various phases in one's moral development and related levels of moral reasoning
  - B. A model of ethical action that is based on one's moral development
  - C. A predictive tool to determine how a person will reason ethically based on one's moral development
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- 12. The ethical domain in accounting and auditing refers to:
  - A. The important constituent groups affected by accounting and auditing work
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- 14. Rest's "Four Component Model of Morality" can best be described as:
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- 18. James Rest's model of ethical action involves four components inherent to the ethical decisionmaking process. Which of the following relates to a person's moral judgment?
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  - B. Moral Motivation
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  - A. Disgruntled employee
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  - D. The director of the DCAA
- 40. The actions of Diem-Thi Li best illustrate
  - A. System 1 thinking
  - B. System 2 thinking
  - C. Moral blindness
  - D. Pursuit of self-interests

#### 41. Cynthia Cooper's actions in the WorldCom case can be best characterized as demonstrating:

- A. Persistence and independence
- B. Persistence and courage
- C. Courage and loyalty
- D. Persistence and loyalty

42. In the Better Boston Beans case, what is the ethical dilemma facing Cindie?

- A. Loyalty of co-worker versus trust of co-worker
- B. Trust of co-worker versus the honesty of the workplace
- C. Honesty of the workplace versus the privacy of an individual
- D. Privacy of an individual versus loyalty of co-worker
- 43. The ethical dilemma for Brenda in "The Tax Return" case can best be described as a:
  - A. Conflict between loyalty to one's supervisor and doing the right thing
  - B. Conflict between reporting an item of taxable income and ignoring it
  - C. Lack of independence due to ties to the client entity
  - D. All of these

44. The ethical dilemma in the "Shifty Industries" case can best be described as whether to:

- A. Use tax depreciation for financial reporting issues
- B. Manipulating earnings to maximize net income
- C. Maximizing section 179 depreciation expense
- D. Minimizing depreciation expense to maximize net income

45. In "Blues Brothers" the initial dilemma facing the internal accountant is whether to:

- A. Prematurely record revenue and give in to pressure from the supervisor
- B. Record revenue correctly and start looking for a new job
- C. Record revenue correctly and go to the "Blues Brothers" and seek to change their minds
- D. Record revenue correctly refuse to budge from your position

46. Kevin Greenberg's actions in the "Supreme Designs" case can be said to have been:

- A. Selfish, in that he only thought of his own interests
- B. Disloyal to the company
- C. Unethical because he wrote checks to himself for unauthorized checks
- D. Undertaken with the intent to help out his supervisor
- 47. The "Milton Manufacturing" case illustrates:
  - A. What can go wrong when a company sets a policy that potentially harms one area of its operations
  - B. How the failure to exercise professional skepticism can cloud objective judgment
  - C. The pressure that can be placed on accountants by top management
  - D. All of these
- 48. The main accounting issue in the Juggyfroot case is:
  - A. How to account for prepaid capacity
  - B. How to account for and report special purpose entities
  - C. How to account for inventory declines
  - D. How to account for investments in marketable securities

49. In the Phar-Mor case, Pat Finn's actions reflect ethical reasoning at what stage?

- A. Stage 1
- B. Stage 2
- C. Stage 3
- D. Stage 4
- 50. In the Gateway Hospital case, Troy:
  - A. Wants to be treated the same as Kristen with respect to expense reimbursement
  - B. Wants to be treated consistently with the company policy on expense reimbursement
  - C. Wants to be treated differently than Kristen with respect to expense reimbursement because of personal considerations
  - D. Believes the company's reimbursement policy is fair

#### **Essay Questions**

51. Distinguish between each stage of ethical reasoning in Kohlberg's Model of Moral Development and related effects on accounting decision-making when there is a difference of opinion with management on the proper recording of a material amount of expense. 52. At which stage of moral development are most accountants and auditors with respect to their decision making? What factors are responsible for their being at that stage? How does the stage of ethical reasoning potentially effect whether an accountant would give in to pressure from a supervisor to "cook the books"?

53. How does the "ethical domain" in accounting and auditing influence professional judgment?

54. Explain each of the four components of Rest's Model of Morality.

55. Compare and contrast the steps taken by Sherron Watkins and Cynthia Cooper in bringing their concerns to top management. Be sure to link your discussion to the stage of moral development each person was at in their decision making.

56. Explain how virtue interacts with moral development in Thorne's Integrated Model of Ethical Decision Making.

57. Describe the components and objectives of each step in the integrated ethical decision making process explained in the chapter.

58. Use the comprehensive decision making process to evaluate the actions of Cynthia Cooper as described in the WorldCom case.

59. As an executive in a mid-sized manufacturing firm, Cal finds himself thrown together with Harry, who works for a different unit of the firm. He and Harry are in the same community; their children are in the same schools; they often show up at the same social functions; and they play golf together fairly frequently.

One day, to Cal's deep dismay, he hears that Harry had been implicated in some financial irregularities at work. The issues while serious leave some room for doubt. There is reason to think Harry got ensnared by regulations, though he may have afterwards tried to cover up that entanglement by being less than forthright. Cal has heard from Harry that he was uncomfortable with the way he handled one of the contentious matters. Using Kohlberg's model of moral development, explain what Cal should do with the information he has discovered about Harry.

60. Diem-Thi Le took actions at the DCAA that jeopardized her position at the agency. What motivated her to act as she did in the case?

# Chapter 02 Cognitive Processes and Ethical Decision Making in Accounting Answer Key

#### **Multiple Choice Questions**

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  - C. Courage and loyalty
  - D. Persistence and loyalty
- 42. In the Better Boston Beans case, what is the ethical dilemma facing Cindie?
  - A. Loyalty of co-worker versus trust of co-worker
  - **B.** Trust of co-worker versus the honesty of the workplace
  - C. Honesty of the workplace versus the privacy of an individual
  - D. Privacy of an individual versus loyalty of co-worker
- 43. The ethical dilemma for Brenda in "The Tax Return" case can best be described as a:
  - A. Conflict between loyalty to one's supervisor and doing the right thing
  - B. Conflict between reporting an item of taxable income and ignoring it
  - C. Lack of independence due to ties to the client entity
  - $\ensuremath{\mathbb{D}}.$  All of these
- 44. The ethical dilemma in the "Shifty Industries" case can best be described as whether to:
  - A. Use tax depreciation for financial reporting issues
  - B. Manipulating earnings to maximize net income
  - C. Maximizing section 179 depreciation expense
  - D. Minimizing depreciation expense to maximize net income

- 45. In "Blues Brothers" the initial dilemma facing the internal accountant is whether to:
  - A. Prematurely record revenue and give in to pressure from the supervisor
  - B. Record revenue correctly and start looking for a new job
  - C. Record revenue correctly and go to the "Blues Brothers" and seek to change their minds
  - D. Record revenue correctly refuse to budge from your position
- 46. Kevin Greenberg's actions in the "Supreme Designs" case can be said to have been:
  - A. Selfish, in that he only thought of his own interests
  - B. Disloyal to the company
  - C. Unethical because he wrote checks to himself for unauthorized checks
  - D. Undertaken with the intent to help out his supervisor
- 47. The "Milton Manufacturing" case illustrates:
  - <u>A.</u> What can go wrong when a company sets a policy that potentially harms one area of its operations
  - B. How the failure to exercise professional skepticism can cloud objective judgment
  - C. The pressure that can be placed on accountants by top management
  - D. All of these
- 48. The main accounting issue in the Juggyfroot case is:
  - A. How to account for prepaid capacity
  - B. How to account for and report special purpose entities
  - C. How to account for inventory declines
  - D. How to account for investments in marketable securities

49. In the Phar-Mor case, Pat Finn's actions reflect ethical reasoning at what stage?

- A. Stage 1
- B. Stage 2
- C. Stage 3
- D. Stage 4
- 50. In the Gateway Hospital case, Troy:
  - A. Wants to be treated the same as Kristen with respect to expense reimbursement
  - B. Wants to be treated consistently with the company policy on expense reimbursement
  - <u>C.</u> Wants to be treated differently than Kristen with respect to expense reimbursement because of personal considerations
  - D. Believes the company's reimbursement policy is fair

### Essay Questions

51. Distinguish between each stage of ethical reasoning in Kohlberg's Model of Moral Development and related effects on accounting decision-making when there is a difference of opinion with management on the proper recording of a material amount of expense.

Answers will vary

52. At which stage of moral development are most accountants and auditors with respect to their decision making? What factors are responsible for their being at that stage? How does the stage of ethical reasoning potentially effect whether an accountant would give in to pressure from a supervisor to "cook the books"?

Answers will vary

53. How does the "ethical domain" in accounting and auditing influence professional judgment?

Answers will vary

54. Explain each of the four components of Rest's Model of Morality.

Answers will vary

55. Compare and contrast the steps taken by Sherron Watkins and Cynthia Cooper in bringing their concerns to top management. Be sure to link your discussion to the stage of moral development each person was at in their decision making.

Answers will vary

56. Explain how virtue interacts with moral development in Thorne's Integrated Model of Ethical Decision Making.

Answers will vary

57. Describe the components and objectives of each step in the integrated ethical decision making process explained in the chapter.

Answers will vary

58. Use the comprehensive decision making process to evaluate the actions of Cynthia Cooper as described in the WorldCom case.

#### Answers will vary

59. As an executive in a mid-sized manufacturing firm, Cal finds himself thrown together with Harry, who works for a different unit of the firm. He and Harry are in the same community; their children are in the same schools; they often show up at the same social functions; and they play golf together fairly frequently.

One day, to Cal's deep dismay, he hears that Harry had been implicated in some financial irregularities at work. The issues while serious leave some room for doubt. There is reason to think Harry got ensnared by regulations, though he may have afterwards tried to cover up that entanglement by being less than forthright. Cal has heard from Harry that he was uncomfortable with the way he handled one of the contentious matters. Using Kohlberg's model of moral development, explain what Cal should do with the information he has discovered about Harry.

Cal is facing a dilemma of being loyal to Harry or being forthright and honest about the situation. From a deontology approach, Cal must be truthful in any letter. From utilitarianism the end result may be to help Harry find another job. From justice approach Cal may not want to judge Harry and thus want to help him find another job. From a virtue approach, Cal will need to put himself in the position of a new employer hiring Harry and what he would want to be done. All of these could be related to Kohlberg's stages of moral development also.

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60. Diem-Thi Le took actions at the DCAA that jeopardized her position at the agency. What motivated her to act as she did in the case?

Answers will vary

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