

## SITUATIONAL ETHICS

Situational ethics is the family of ethical doctrines sharing the principle that, given the enormous variety and unpredictability of moral conflicts, one should always act pragmatically and on a case-by-case basis rather than on fixed rules. Situational ethics opposes inflexible deontological, rule-utilitarian, and other systems.

The advantage of a situational ethics is that it demands an in-depth study of each case, minimizes the risk of miscarriages of justice, and maximizes compassion (because of its extensive use of empathy). Its disadvantage is that it may lead to excessive leniency and even to arbitrariness. The rules and standards should be uniform and laid down in advance (unless totally novel situations arise) rather than being left to the discretion of the individual, as is usually the case with charity.

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