

REBOOT | I AGREE META Game

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The 19 Principles

A Student Reference

Six families of moral logic. Eighteen ways to answer the question: who bears it?

This list is your toolkit. Before you rank, choose one. Name it. Then argue from inside it.

Proximity Principles		
Who was closest — physically or causally — to the harm?		
#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
1	Direct Causation	The most responsible person is the one whose action was the immediate cause. The trigger-puller bears the greatest weight, regardless of context.
2	Last Clear Chance	The most responsible person is the last one who had a clear, practical opportunity to prevent the outcome and chose not to use it.
3	Chain of Causation	Every actor who contributed to the sequence shares responsibility proportionally. The longer the chain, the more blame is distributed — but no link is innocent.

Structural Principles		
Who held power, created the conditions, or occupied the role?		
#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
4	Structural Negligence	The most responsible person is the one who created the conditions that made harm possible, even if absent at the moment it occurred.
5	Power and Capacity	Responsibility is proportional to power. The greatest ability to change the outcome and the choice not to act carries the most weight.
6	Duty of Care	Certain relationships create obligations of protection. Responsibility is highest for those who had a recognised duty and abandoned it.
7	Institutional Role	Responsibility follows the function someone performs in a system. When the role fails its purpose, the role-holder bears responsibility for that gap.

Relational & Contractual Principles		
What was promised, explicitly or implicitly?		
#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
8	Broken Promise	The most responsible person is the one who created an expectation — of love, support, partnership — and withdrew it at the critical moment.
9	Benefit and Obligation	Those who extracted benefit from a relationship acquire obligations proportional to what they received. You cannot take and then refuse to give.
10	Reciprocity	Responsibility is highest for those who received something — love, trust, time — and offered nothing in return when it mattered most.

Intentionality Principles

What did each person know, intend, or choose not to know?

#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
11	Moral Agency	Only those capable of understanding the consequences of their actions can bear moral responsibility. Diminished capacity reduces culpability proportionally.
12	Willful Blindness	Choosing not to know the consequences of your refusal is itself a moral act. Those who could reasonably have anticipated harm and looked away bear greater responsibility.
13	Intent vs. Outcome	Responsibility should track what people meant to do, not what accidentally resulted. A rule applied without malice is less culpable than a knowing refusal.

Systemic & Contextual Principles

What did the structure, the system, or the situation make possible or impossible?

#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
14	Systemic Responsibility	Individuals are partially trapped within social systems. Responsibility distributes across the system, with the greatest share falling on those who most benefit from it.
15	Least Empowered Bears Least Blame	Where one actor had significantly fewer options, resources, or social power, their responsibility is reduced accordingly. Structural vulnerability is a moral mitigating factor.
16	Context Collapse	No decision can be fairly judged without full context. Responsibility must be assigned with complete knowledge of what each person knew, feared, and had access to.

Virtue & Character Principles

What did the person's action reveal about who they are?

#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT ASKS
17	Moral Character	Responsibility is highest for the person whose refusal revealed the deepest failure of character — not the act in isolation, but what it says about who they are.
18	Compassion as Obligation	In the presence of obvious human suffering, the failure to act from compassion is itself a moral failure. Witnessing distress and refusing is a form of responsibility.
19	Self-Interest as Disqualifier	When a refusal is motivated primarily by self-protection or convenience, that motivation increases rather than reduces responsibility.

How to use this list

Before you rank anyone, choose one principle from this list and write its name on your handout. You do not need to use the most sophisticated principle. You need to use the one that best matches how you are actually thinking.

You may find that two principles pull you in different directions. That tension is not a problem — it is the starting point for the discussion.

One principle. Named before the ranking. That is all this asks.

"Who Bears It: Moral Reasoning and AI for the World of Work"

