

THE ARTHUR W. PAGE CENTER
— *for integrity in public communication* —

Ethics in a Global Context

Module Six | Lesson Two

Lesson Overview

- ***Problems*** of Ethics in Global Public Relations
 - We make situation-specific decisions most of the time. What affected our decisions?
- ***Theory-Guided*** Ethical Practice
 - How can we apply ethics to practicing public relations globally with reference to public relations theories?

Justifiable lies?

When lies are justifiable (in terms of being consistent with one's own conscience and what one considers to be organizationally and socially acceptable), individuals who lie may consciously believe that they are not lying at all.

“In the case of justified behavior, the individual is not accountable to a requirement that normally applies on the grounds that the requirement has been undercut by an alternative one that better suits the circumstances.”

“the action-guiding force of moral principles depends greatly on the extent to which we can reasonably expect that immoral behavior will be found out and, upon being found out, that it will be punished.”

Discussion Question #1

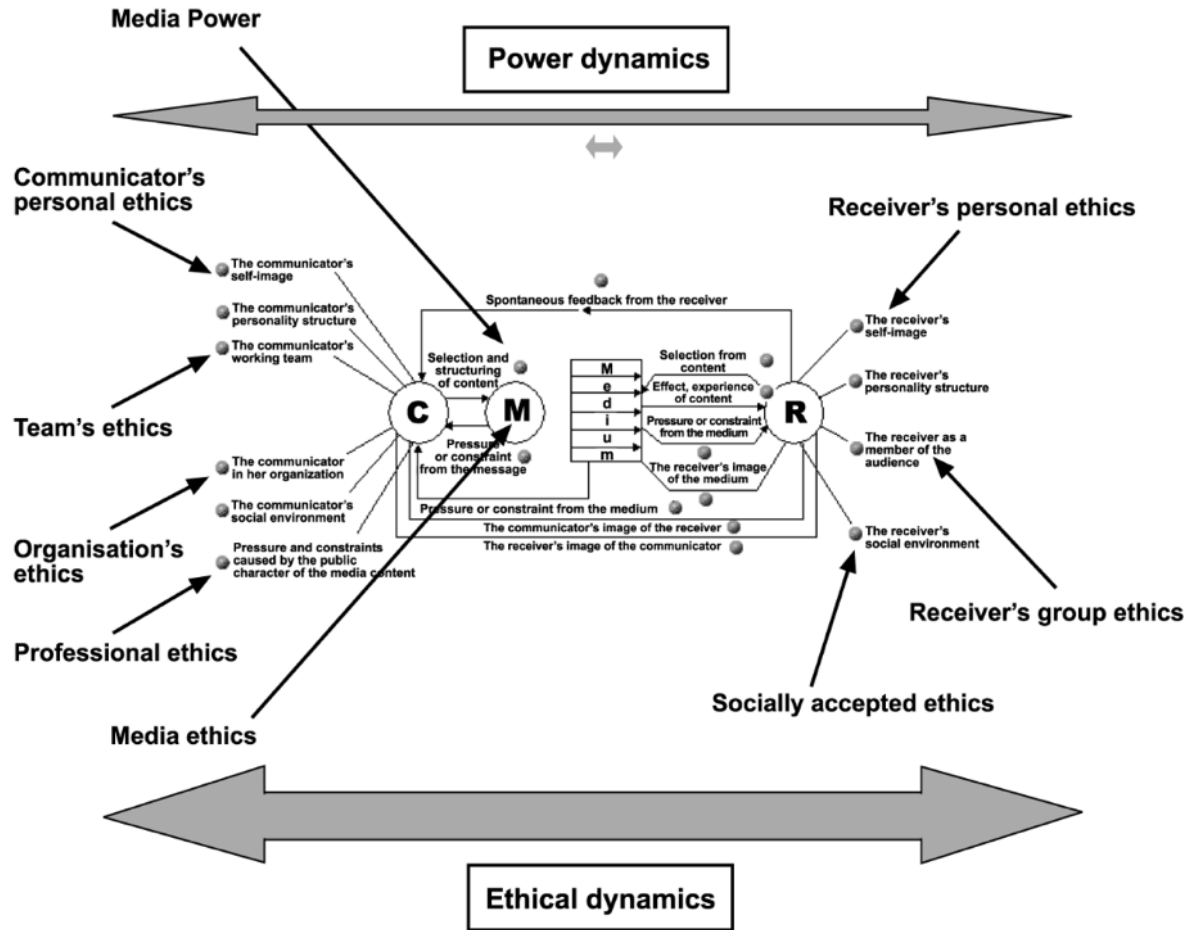
Describe the personal, organizational, professional, societal and global ethical principles which could affect our decision making.

Theory-Guided Ethical Behaviors

Fawkes highlights that practitioners consider the following factors to reach ethical decisions:

- **Ethical values of the communicator:** considering the factors based on which they construct their ethical standards
- **Ethical culture in which they operate:** considering how they express their implicit and explicit values
- **Professional codes and practices:** considering what they are and how they are enforced
- **Ethical expectations of publics towards the practitioners and the media:** considering the *different* variety of individual and social ethical values that exist and their impact

Fawkes, J. (2007). Public relations models and persuasion ethics: a new approach. *Journal of Communication Management*, 11(4), 313–331.
<http://doi.org/10.1108/13632540710843922>



Discussion Question #2

If you are asked to run a campaign for a foreign tobacco company in China, how would you use the model to guide your decisions?

Systems Theory in Balance

- According to Bivins, public relations practice should be considered in relation to the other units with which it operates interdependently, such as business and law, because such units co-exist in the environment and could affect the outputs. There are units which affect the operating environment more than others. There are units which affect the environment only under specific circumstances.

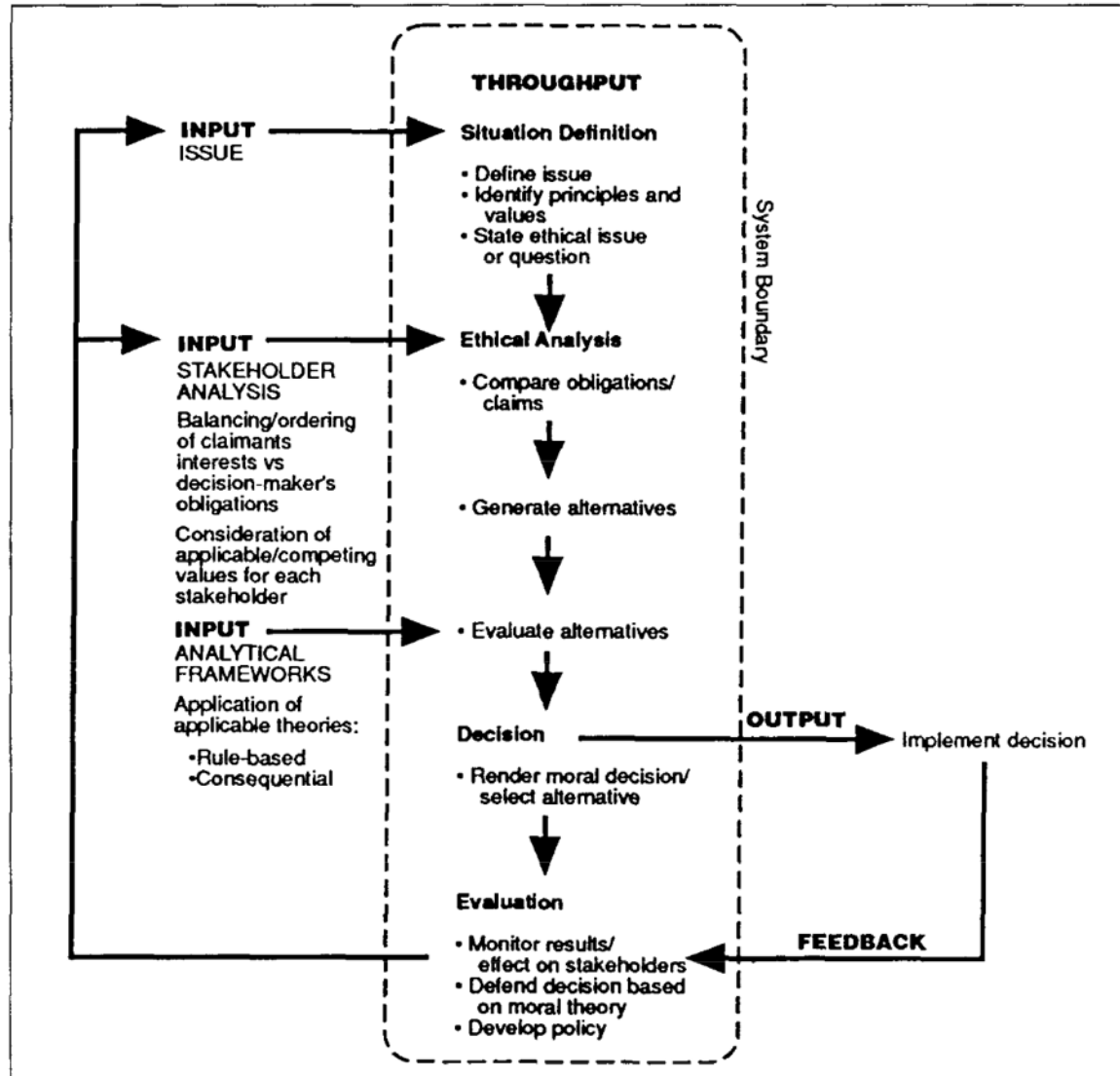


Figure 4. Systems Model of Ethical Decision Making

Discussion Question #3

Using the case study, how could ethical public relations be practiced to help the organization restore its relationship with Korean publics?