The nature of ethical decision making requires that we understand mistakes made by individuals and organizations in the past and evaluate the ways in which personal values interact with organizational culture to increase the likelihood of unethical decisions. This activity allows you to build your evaluation skills by identifying issues that create environments more likely to fall prey to unethical decision making through policies, procedures, and organizational norms. The 1977 Ford Pinto case is often studied in order to help create a deeper understanding about the dilemmas that not only impact an organization's public persona, long-term profitability, and consumer safety, but also each employee's responsibility for the decisions.

Read the article: Dowie, M. (1977, September/October). *Pinto madness.* Retrieved from http://www.motherjones.com/politics/1977/09/pinto-madness

Prepare a case analysis on the topic.

Locate and research at least three sources (excluding the Dowie's article and your text) to discover additional information about the company and its ethical dilemma. Use your text to create a foundation for the ethics theory. This must be a concise evaluation of the case, so provide information on your understanding of the application of theory and personal values.

Develop your case analysis using the five following sections:

Section 1: Introduction and situational analysis: Describe the ethical dilemma, giving appropriate background information. The term "dilemma" implies that there are pros and cons to various options, even if some are clearly more socially acceptable than others. This is also where you do your situational analysis – identifying factors related to the individual(s) involved (consider the readings from this module), company and managerial practices and policies, external factors such as economic pressure, and any other aspects of the situation that you believe helped create the dilemma.

Section 2: Stakeholder analysis: Identify the key stakeholders and how they are potentially impacted by the various options inherent in the dilemma.

Section 3: Analysis based on ethical theories: Analyze the ethical dilemma from the perspective of cultural relativism (how it relates to cultural norms – what society would view as acceptable, as well as what is legal), teleology (looking at consequences and acting for the greater good), deontology (duties and principles), and virtue.

Note that the stakeholder analysis is particularly pertinent to the consequentialist approach, and that one of the challenges is estimating the positive and negative impacts on relevant stakeholders. Do the best you can, looking at both good and bad consequences for each stakeholder group. Make sure you summarize the overall situation and come to a conclusion about the greater good.

Section 4: Conclusion and recommendations. Up to now, you have been analyzing and comparing options. Here is where you pull together the different threads of your analysis and determine whether or not the company did the right thing. Also, make recommendations about what the company should have done. Make sure your justifications clearly flow from your analysis. Make managerial and policy recommendations that would help avoid similar ethical dilemmas in the future and provide guidance to help those facing a similar dilemma.

Section 5: References. List at least three sources (in addition to the Dowie's article and your text) where you located additional information about the company and the associated ethical dilemma(s).

General guidance: Include a title page, and label the five sections. Your paper should be 2-3 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages. All citations should be in APA 6th Edition format. Double space your paper, use Times New Roman, 12-point font, with one inch margins. For more information, link to APA Tip Sheet, 6th ed. [PDF file size 177 KB]