
Spangler Ethical Reasoning Assessment **(SERA)**

How Do You Make Decisions?

Instructions: Consider situations in which you must choose between two or more different courses of action. This survey contains statements that describe different ways of making decisions. For each statement, please circle the number that represents how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. I believe my primary obligation to other people is to avoid interfering with their pursuit of what they see as their own good.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

2. The only thing I expect from other people is that they respect my freedom to pursue what I see as my own good.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

3. There are no absolute "dos" and "don'ts." What counts as a "do" or "don't" depends on the situation.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

4. When I face a decision, I believe I should conform to customs or societal expectations that bear on that decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

5. When I am facing a choice, I pay most attention to the ways my decision will influence the relationships of the people affected by my decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

6. The best way to choose a course of action is to gather facts and to predict the best- and worst-case scenarios for each possible course of action.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

7. I believe trying to achieve the overall good of a group is not as important as paying attention to the needs and interests of each individual in the group.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

8. I believe certain actions are always wrong, and everyone should always avoid them.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

9. There are no rules or principles that are always binding in every situation.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

10. When I am making a choice, I want to make sure my action upholds family or community traditions.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

11. The way to make a sound decision is to focus on the interpersonal dynamics of the people affected by that decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

12. A sound decision must involve computing the probability of success of each possible course of action.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

13. I believe each person is free to make his or her own choices, and my choices must respect that freedom.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

14. I believe certain actions are always right, and everyone, everywhere, is bound to pursue those actions.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

15. I believe there are no absolute rights or wrongs.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

16. A sound decision promotes the greatest good for the greatest number of people. It's OK if particular individuals have to sacrifice their desired outcomes in order to benefit a group as a whole.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

17. A decision is right if it strengthens the relationships of the people affected by that decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

18. A sound decision must involve analysis, such as listing costs and benefits.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

19. I believe I have a duty not to interfere with other people's choices.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

20. My decision in a specific situation is right only if every other person in a similar situation could have decided exactly what I decided.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

21. There are no actions that are simply right or wrong. Whether actions count as right or wrong depends on the consequences of those actions.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

22. When I face a decision, I believe I should try to conform to the expectations of the people affected by the decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

23. A decision is wrong if it undermines the relationships of the people effected by that decision.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

24. When considering different plans of action, I list all the possible positive and negative effects of each plan.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

25. I believe I am free to make my own choices in a given situation, and other people have a duty not to interfere with my choices.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

26. Sound decisions are based on absolute rules that are binding no matter what the situation.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

27. I cannot evaluate another person's decision by comparing it to what I would have done if I had been in that person's shoes.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

28. When I make a choice, I feel I must comply with the expectations or traditions of the different communities I inhabit, such as family, friends, and neighbors.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

29. Paying attention to interpersonal dynamics is more important than measuring costs and benefits.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

30. A sound decision must be based on as many facts as possible, to predict the likelihood of the decision's success.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Know Your Preferences

Your highest scores indicate your strongest preferences.

Strong: 30–35

Moderate: 20–29

Weak: 10–19

Dislike: 6–9

Applier (A)		Situationalist (S)	
Question #	Your #	Question #	Your #
2.	_____	3.	_____
8.	_____	9.	_____
14.	_____	15.	_____
20.	_____	21.	_____
26.	_____	27.	_____
Your total _____		Your total _____	

Individualist (I)		Communitarian (C)	
Question #	Your #	Question #	Your #
1.	_____	4.	_____
7.	_____	10.	_____
13.	_____	16.	_____
19.	_____	22.	_____
25.	_____	28.	_____
Your total _____		Your total _____	

Calculator (C)		Relationalist (R)	
Question #	Your #	Question #	Your #
6.	_____	5.	_____
12.	_____	11.	_____
18.	_____	17.	_____
24.	_____	23.	_____
30.	_____	29.	_____
Your total _____		Your total _____	