Let's start with a real scenario:
#DiselGate

Volkswagen, who remembers?

MEANWHILE AT VW'S EMISSIONS TEST CENTER

THATS ANOTHER PASS ✅

1. Volkswagen had intentionally programmed turbocharged direct injection (TDI) diesel engines

2. Activate emissions controls only during laboratory emissions Testing

3. It caused the vehicles output to meet US standards during regulatory testing

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Scale of the problem

Volkswagen deployed this programming software in about **eleven million cars worldwide**, in model years 2009 through 2015

Stock price fell in value by a third in the days immediately after the news

Volkswagen Group CEO **resigned**

Dozens of employees at all levels involved across divisions and countries

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Scale of fines

1. 8.05.2019 – Porsche got hit with 535 millions Euros

2. VW got already over 30 billions dollars of fines

3. VW CEO was charged in the United States with fraud and conspiracy on 3 May 2018

4. A study conducted by ICCT and ADAC showed the biggest deviations from Volvo, Renault, Jeep, Hyundai, Citroën and Fiat resulting in investigations opening into other diesel emissions scandals.

Dieselgate: Who? What? How?

September 2016

a study by TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT
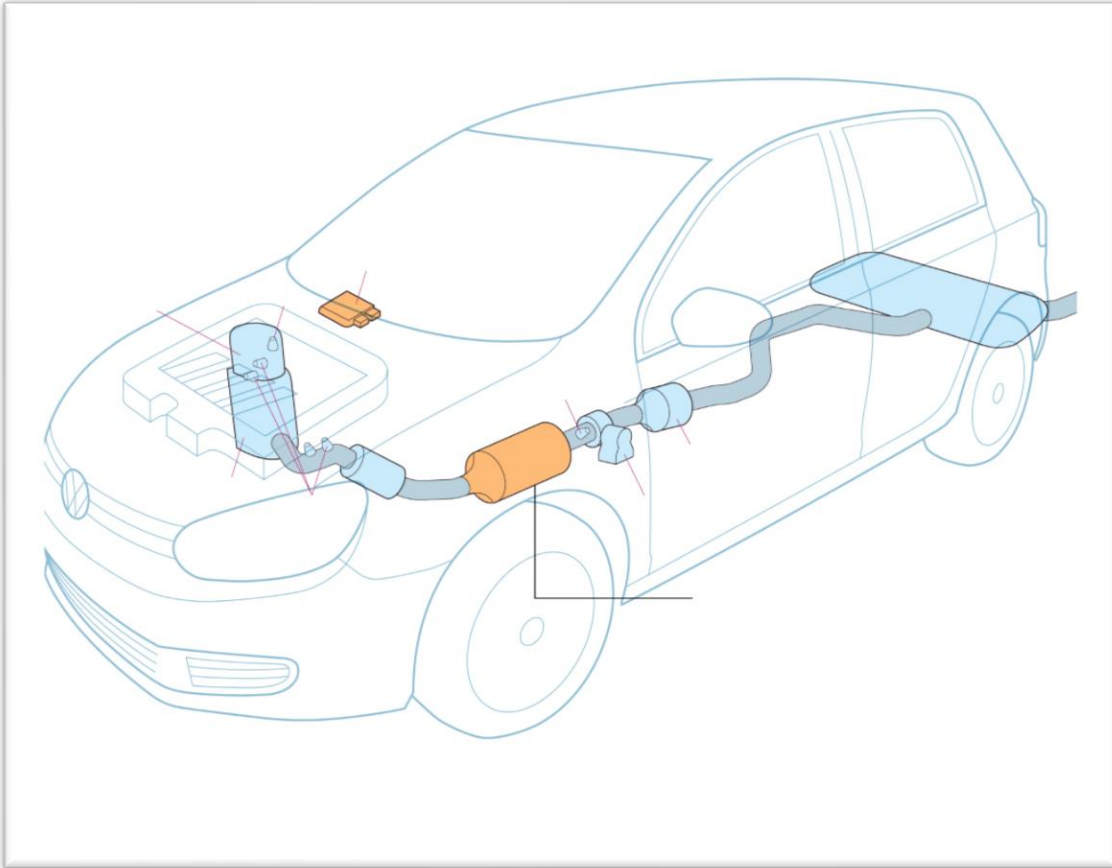
It was a technology and software problem

Illustration by Guilbert Gates
Source: Volkswagen,
The International Council on Clean Transportation

1. The software sensed when the car was being tested and then activated equipment that reduced emissions

2. The software turned the equipment down during regular driving, increasing emissions far above legal limits

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QA's role and Testing role

1. Software engineers and QAs were building and testing the cheating device

2. Development and Test Managers allowed fitting and testing

3. Leadership stood with silent approval

4. No QA raised any issue with ethical issues behind the solution !!

TROUBLE...BREATHING...

I SENSE A TDI IS NEAR

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Let's move to ethical organizations

✓ How the organizations can set the stage for ethical behaviour?

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Organizational ethics matter to employees and managers

People want to work for employers whose values and principles are aligned with their own

"ETHICS"

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How ethics spread in organization

Ethical tone of organization is the outcome of how its members address daily ethical dilemmas in their daily work

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How ethics affects people in organization

1. Ethical employers are likely to attract and retain ethical employees

2. Company values may attract candidates

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How organizations can embrace ethical behaviour?

How to work with rapid, high-stakes choices?
How to handle sensitive customers?

Low level issues = big problems for organization

- There is never a too small dilemma that cannot affect whole organization
- Similar in Project Management, each small issue might have a lot of repercussions

Work with daily ethical dilemmas of all company workers

1. Notice them and their work

2. Speak with people

3. Give them freedom to propose solutions

4. Support all proactive initiatives

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Push employees to make good choices

Understand and explain trade-offs and outcome decisions

Build, promote and follow:
- policies
- good practices

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Biggest threads affecting people

Lack of shared understanding over what happens around

- Understanding the events in organization builds an ethical response

- Bad ethical decisions are connected with ethically weak situations for employees

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Ethical disconnect between people and organization

More and more people feel they need to belong to the organization. To achieve it they work on closing the gap between organization and personal ethics, it is best way if it is raising the wave of ethics.

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# Conflicting stakeholder needs from project steering committee members

Organization stakeholders are affected by its decisions, that includes:

- Employees
- Suppliers
- Clients
- Senior managers
- Project steering committee
- Project team members
- Local communities
- Wide society
- The environment

The biggest threat, to favour one group of stakeholders over others without ethical justification might destroy momentum and team
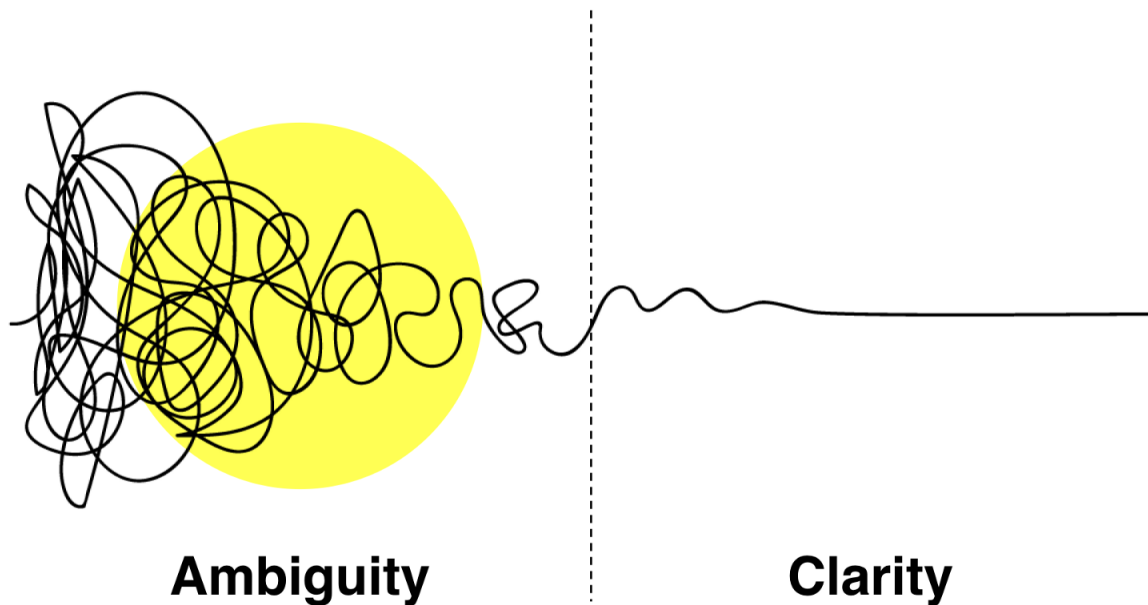
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Not knowing how to speak up
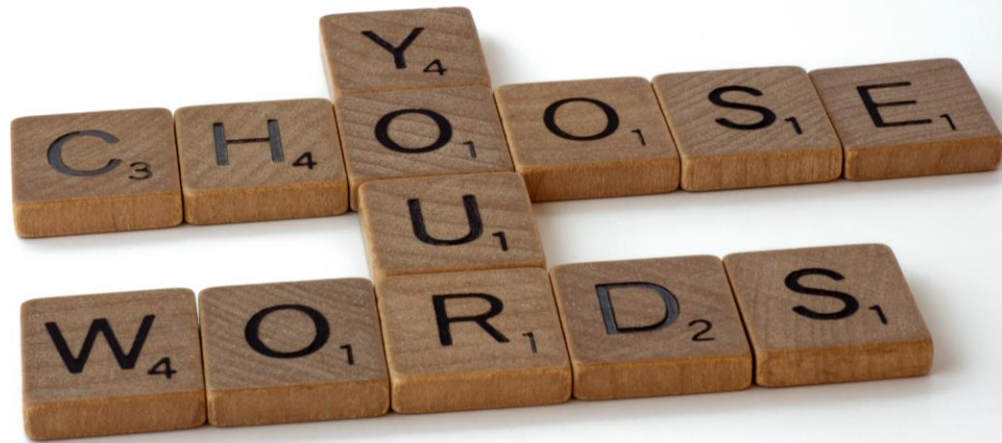
Give the autonomy to challenge unethical decisions

Photo by Brett Jordan on Unsplash

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QA's might be the ambassadors
of the ethical change !!

Acknowledge ethical ambiguity

- Discuss ethically tricky situations in detail from both project team and manager perspective
- Understand decision-making process and prepare for the conversation
- Seek the understanding and rationale for the project decisions

Ambiguity **Clarity**

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Clarify the ethical trade-offs

Trade-offs are necessary when business project decisions are made

QA's can build **an ethical framework for balancing stakeholders'** interests and project risks

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Ensure role-modeling
At all organizational levels


Photo by Liam Macleod on Unsplash

- QAs, be the role models for ethical decisions

- Do not be afraid to bring the conversation to higher levels of organization

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Embed ethics in corporate policies and programs

They should **include clear rules** to conduct or raise an ethical issue

All that rules should be reinforced during project onboarding, leadership development and project training programs

Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash

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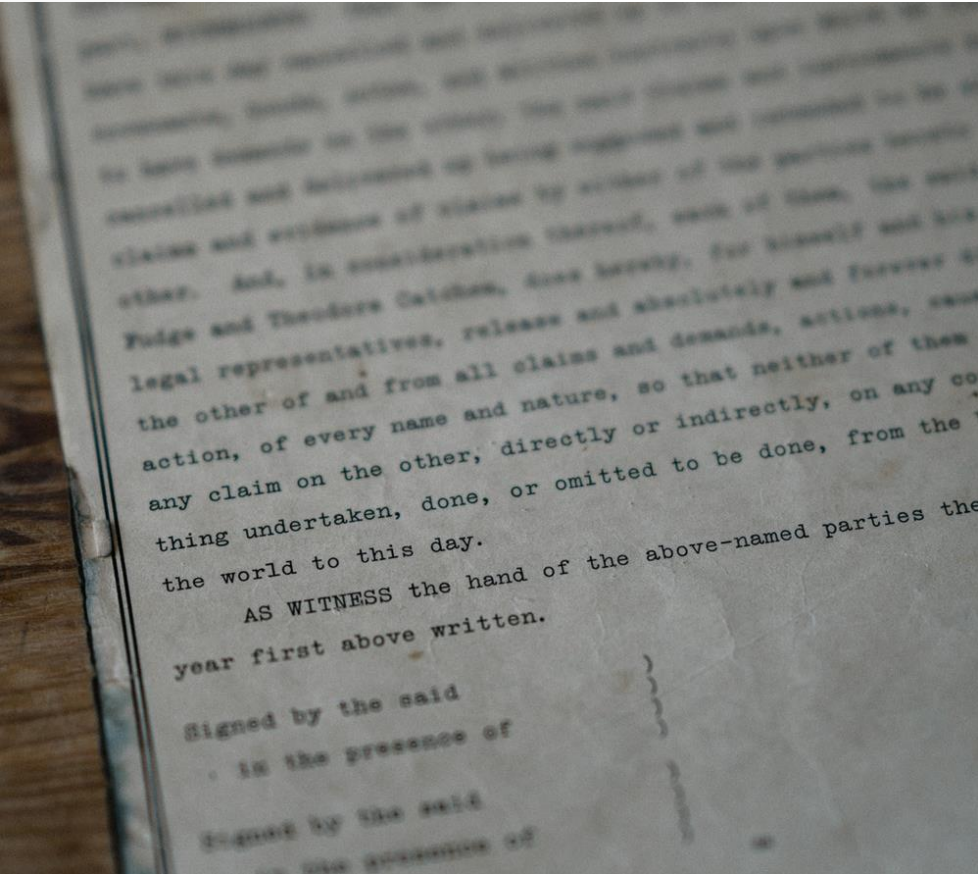
Empower individuals to handle ethical breaches

Educate. Engage. Empower.

www.amyaustinmarketing.c

All employees incl. QAs are empowered to deal with ethical dilemmas, and organization should expect for them to do so

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Embrace a higher cause

When project or company mission gets unclear it is easy for organization or project managers divert.

We, the QAs should be the guardians

Photo by Lance Anderson on Unsplash

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To summarize:
Stay strong in Your ethical behavious
Testers !!

Set the stage for „ethics"

- ✓ Ethical behaviour isn't just a top-down exercise
- ✓ We need clear direction from management – ethical role modeling
- ✓ QAs need to be ambassadors of ethical business approach
- ✓ We need to use the tools for ethical decisions
- ✓ We need to defend our choices in front of the team and management
- ✓ Codes of conduct must be clear and upheld
- ✓ We have the authority to expect them to be followed
- ✓ No company is immune from ethically questionable decision-making

<u>We as responsible people might be the cure to force better choices to not face associated reputational and financial costs</u>

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Michal Buczko
contact:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/buczkomichal
Linkedin: https://www.linkedin.com/in/buczkomichal
Twitter: https://twitter.com/Docatisto
Mail: buczko.michal@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

Q&A

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