

# **11th EASOM Summer School**

## **Teaching Ethics to Students in Occupational Medicine** Medical Faculty

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### **Ethical challenges in Occupational health : the ergonomist's perspective**

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**Purpose French-speaking ergonomics :**

**Conceive systems of work, organizations and tools with a double objective :**

- **must be used with as much comfort, security and effectiveness as possible, by the greatest number**
- **must be efficient**

**The link between ergonomics and ethics clearly relies on this double objective.**

**Ergonomics needs ethics because it is based on paradoxes which are themselves a source of ethics.**

**The practice of French-speaking ergonomics is not regulated by a professional order...**

**...We will thus not speak about deontological ethics.**

**The practice of French-speaking ergonomics focuses on the distinction between prescribed work and real work, in order to understand the situation of work as a whole and to transform it...**

**... We will speak about teleological ethics because it stresses on the goals and on the effects of the action.**

**French-speaking ergonomics and ethics meet throughout the intervention process :**

**-Analysis of the request :**

**- Settle the intervention for a person (company head,...) or for all the actors**

**- Take into account the expressed problem or take into account the problem that we can deal with**

**French-speaking ergonomics and ethics meet throughout the intervention process :**

**- Dysfunction analysis, Diagnosis :**

- **Reveal that the operators do not respect the instructions for better working or to say nothing**
- **Reach the reality of the situations of work or to remain on the level of work prescribed**
- **Be the spokesperson of inner-feelings or to say nothing**
- **Rely on facts to act but not to ignore representations**

**French-speaking ergonomics and ethics meet throughout the intervention process :**

- **Search for solutions**

- Choose the solution of one person or choose a solution favouring the greatest number
- Take into account the solution of the company or impose its own solution
- Support the solutions of primary prevention or the solutions of tertiary prevention
- Support the system's performance or the individuals' health

- **Implementation, validation of solutions**

- Make the validation oneself as the expert or to organize the validation by all the operators

- **Ethics of conviction : obligation to respect the regulation**
- **Ethics of responsibility : important thing is not the rigorous aspect but the useful one (Max Weber)**

**French-speaking ergonomics belongs to the ethics of responsibility because :**

- **search for a convergence of the various interests (Davezies)**
- **considers the worker as the first expert of his work (As the short therapies, Cabié)**

**A methodology of intervention punctuated by ethical principles to make this convergence possible :**

- **Give the workers the possibility of expression and action on their work to avoid the resistances to change.**
- **Identify solutions much more than difficulties.**
- **Organize the collective development of solutions so that they are shared and accepted.**
- **Create breathing space to make the compromise between health and production acceptable to the actors.**
- **Set up experimentation to assess the transformations.**