

Creating an  
**ETHICS**  
**Legacy**



Both for

**YOU  
&  
YOUR  
ORGANIZATION**



**Raise your hand if you're**

**UNethical**

**and wave it back and forth for the rest of us to see...**

**Why do Ethics even need to matter?**

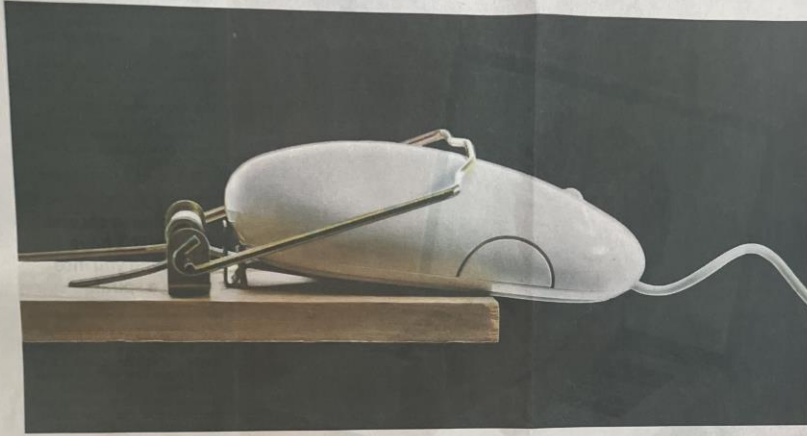
# TRUST

A12 | Monday, July 8, 2024

PERSONAL JOURNAL.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## Bosses Bust Workers With Mouse Traps



"Nobody wants to fire workers," Kleyman says. "It's the worst possible outcome."

### Digital busy work

Other work hacks, such as starting up a PowerPoint presentation or other slideshow to keep a computer screen awake, can also be detected, says Hubstaff CEO Jared Brown. The Hubstaff platform takes screenshots of employees' screens, so the repetition of screenshots from the same PowerPoint presentation would raise a red flag to employers.

He recalls one instance flagged by Hubstaff's software: An employee had set up a mouse jigglers to run for four to six hours a day on a work computer. The employer investigated further and fired the staffer after finding the worker was spending some of that time playing video games on another device, Brown says.

"Even with a few people doing it, the costs add up," he says. "It's enough that employers want to put a stop to that."

Legally, employers have broad latitude to use tracking tools, though they have prompted privacy concerns among worker advocates. There's also evidence that over-surveillance can be counterproductive. In a survey of 2,300 professionals by job-review site Glassdoor last summer, 41% said employer monitoring of their work devices made them feel less productive.

### Mouse and keyboard jigglers help staffers fake computer activity.

Gabrielle Judge, a career influencer who goes by Anti-work Girl Boss on social media, provides links to a few mouse jigglers on her Amazon storefront. She thinks they're useful when remote workers finish up early or need to take care of an errand, but says they should be used wisely.

Ultimately, she advises workers to ask themselves why they need to use a mouse jigglers in the first place. Often, it's a sign they're in a work place that values busyness over actual output.

"I would beg to question if that's a good working environment to begin with," she says.

Many are looking out for the most egregious cases of faking work activity and often use findings to examine work loads and how people are managed before taking disciplinary action.

GETTY IMAGES

sparked angst, and questions. "Anyone else concerned?" wrote one Reddit user. Another, more to the point, asked: "Can IT detect my mouse jigglers?"

The answer, increasingly, is yes. The share of companies using some kind of electronic worker-surveillance system surged during the pandemic, reaching nearly 50% in 2023, according to a survey of nearly 300 medium to large employers by research and advisory firm Gartner. These systems, which track how active workers are at their computers, have long been able to detect some installed software or extra hardware.

More of these software systems, such as Teramind and Hubstaff, now also use machine-learning tools that can identify repetitive cursor movements or irregular patterns in someone's computer activity. In addition, some worker-monitoring software can randomly scrape screen images to check whether screen activity is changing as the computer mouse moves.

**Not so undetectable**

Most mouse jigglers on the market are detectable, says Ilya Kleyman, Teramind's chief growth officer.

A typical jigglers works like one sold under the brand Tech8 USA for \$19.99 on Amazon—essentially a mini turntable that swivels the mouse in different directions. On Tech8 USA's site, it claims to be undetectable since it doesn't require installing software on a work computer and shifts the mouse around at seemingly random intervals and speeds.

Retailers also sell devices that can manually tap a key or mouse at random.

Neither technique is likely to foil Teramind's algorithms, Kleyman says. "It won't look like normal human mouse cursor activity that regularly clicks, drags, etc.," he says. Plus, the software can flag artificial activity in general, such as when a cursor is active over the same static Wikipedia page for hours on end.

Diana Rodriguez, marketing director for Tech8 USA, says such surveillance tools' detection capabilities can vary significantly and sometimes incorrectly flag a person's work patterns as suspicious or unproductive. In customer surveys, most people say microman-

By SANVI BANGALORE

It's getting harder to outsmart the digital minders at work.

The rise of remote work and, in turn, employee-monitoring software sparked a boom in mouse and keyboard jigglers and other hacks to help staffers fake computer activity—often so they can step away to do laundry or a school pickup.

Now some companies are cracking down on the subterfuge, deploying tools that can better spot the phony busyness.

The latest salvo in this productivity-tracking arms race came in a recent regulatory filing from Wells Fargo. In the disclosure, first reported on by Bloomberg News, the bank said it had fired more than a dozen employees in its wealth and investment management unit for allegedly simulating keyboard activity to create the "impression of active work."

Wells Fargo declined to say exactly how it detected the suspicious activity or whether the workers were remote, only that it "does not tolerate unethical behavior." Across Reddit and other social-media forums, the report

## Amazon Tells Staff to Work in Office Full-Time

Amazon wants employees in the office five days a week. In a message posted to the company's website Monday, CEO Andy Jassy said Amazon believes there are significant

By Victoria Albert, Sebastian Herrera and Chip Cutter

advantages to having employees in the office full-time.

Like many companies, Amazon let some employees work from home because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Amazon staff were required to be in the

office at least three days a week since May 1, 2023. The return-to-office requirement will take effect in early January 2025.

Amazon is joining other large companies, including UPS, JPMorgan Chase and Boeing, that called at least some workers back to the office full-time. The moves reflect some executives' efforts to refill office buildings and rebuild cultures that existed before the pandemic. The mandates so far haven't led to a broader filling of desks, however. The average office occupancy in 10 major U.S. cities has hovered around 50%

for months, according to data from security-provider Kastle Systems.

Jassy has said he values in-office culture and the five-days-a-week decision comes after Amazon invested in its office spaces in recent years and pushed its employees to be close to their teams.

When employees are in the office, he said, "We've observed that it's easier for our teammates to learn, model practice, and strengthen our culture; collaborating, brainstorming, and inventing are simpler and more effective; teaching and learning

from one another are more seamless; and, teams tend to be better connected to one another."

Amazon, like other tech rivals, has been ramping up its spending in artificial intelligence, as it looks to cut costs in other areas. Jassy has said generative AI could be one of the largest technological transformations in decades.

Jassy also said Amazon is moving to have fewer managers overseeing teams, pledging to tackle bureaucratic impediments such as what he called "pre-meetings for the pre-meet-

ings for the decision meetings."

The company will now have a dedicated method for employees to flag any "bureaucracy or unnecessary process that's crept in and we can root out," he said. Some employees have said Amazon hasn't done as good of a job at keeping the startup culture that fueled its success.

Amazon last year told many employees they would have to relocate to what the company calls "main hub" locations, such as its headquarters in Seattle, or offices in New York or San Francisco.

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## Amazon Sets Full Office Work

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Francisco. The decision prompted some staff to leave or be pushed out, and some speculated the return-to-office rules were another way to thin out the workforce. Amazon laid off more than 27,000 employees from late 2022 to early 2023 and cut its workforce across divisions such as entertainment and its Alexa department.

Even as early as August 2020, Amazon indicated that its future would be at the offices it opened throughout the country. The company that year expanded its offices in six U.S. cities, and executives spoke about the importance of working in person. The company expanded in New York, Dallas and Phoenix, among other cities, and has large offices in Arlington, Va., and Nashville.

Jassy said the policy would allow for remote work in extenuating circumstances, such as having a sick child, as it did before the pandemic. Approved exceptions to the return-to-office policy will be respected, he said.

The move could prompt other tech companies to follow suit, said Rob Sadow, CEO of Flex Index, a software firm that tracks return-to-office efforts.

"Major tech companies will now think about their policy again, potentially, in light of Amazon making this change," Sadow said. He said it is also likely to trickle down to the decision makers at smaller companies that look up to the tech giant. "It will cause a bit of churn and some meaningful reflection, I think, in a lot of technology companies," he said.

In the third quarter of 2024, 33% of all U.S. companies required employees to come to the office full-time, according to Flex Index's data. Among technology companies with more than 1,000 employees, only 7% had such a requirement.

Executives at some companies have tried to lure employees into offices more often, hoping staffers see value in working side-by-side with their employees or in learning from colleagues in person.

"I'm very carrot, not stick,"

said Sarah Franklin, CEO of Lat-tice, a human-resources technology company that has a hybrid in-office policy. "I would like more people back in the office, but we're doing well, and people feel like they're adults, they're trusted, they're not being tracked."

Many have come to accept that employees will spend at least some of their working time at home, and that hybrid work arrangements will be tough to abandon altogether.

"Hybrid is the most complex environment to actually orchestrate or pull off," said Paul Knopp, CEO of the professional-services firm KPMG US. "The other two are sort of simple: either you're at the office all the time or you're fully remote."



How many of you suffer from

# Imposter Syndrome?

**Imposter Syndrome** is a psychological pattern where an individual doubts their accomplishments and has a persistent fear of being exposed as a “fraud.”

# Overcoming Imposter Syndrome:

- Self-Honesty and Authenticity.
- Compare yourself to yourself, not others.
- The most important conversation you have each day is the conversation you have with yourself!
- Be an Open-Minded Learner...on everything (Curiosity).
- You never have to remember *anything* if you always tell the truth...Mark Twain

- The Antidote to FEAR is Faith (Believe in Yourself)

*Believe in Yourself?*

**Yes...because YOU Matter!**

Everything you say, every action you take, every email and text you send, everything you post on social media matters. Not just to YOU, but to ALL of us...forever.

There's never been, isn't now, and never will be again... someone *just like you*. **YOU Matter!**

**But... is that important?**





# **YES!** More than ever with the advent of: **Artificial Intelligence!**

**AI will impact our lives more than anything else  
in the history of all mankind!**

- Are you worried or **EXCITED?** (It's a CHOICE)
- Will you use AI as a **CRUTCH** or a **SPRINGBOARD?** (It's a CHOICE)
- What role will **ETHICS** play in your utilization of AI? (It's a CHOICE)

## Are you a ***Rationalization Expert?***

- In 30 seconds, come up with 3 things you rationalized in the last hour.
- How did those 3 rationalizations impact YOUR life?
- What impact did those same 3 rationalizations have on *the lives of the people you interacted with?*
- **We're ALL constantly rationalizing every minute we're awake each day.**
- **Our rationalizations define our ETHICS.**
- **We'll use "Rationalized Ethics" to define our personal approach to Artificial Intelligence.**





# Self-honesty is the antidote to the negative use of rationalization

We all become experts at some point, but the big question is when.

When did you become an expert at rationalizing things? Did it begin early in life? Was it all the way back to pre-school or maybe even before? Who were the people that unknowingly influenced the role rationalization could play in your life? Are there times when rationalization can play a positive role in your decision making? Has rationalization become so commonplace that we don't even realize when we utilize it and the direct impact it has on our life?

Lots of questions. How about some answers?

More than one of my mentors has taught me about being cautious of the negative role rationalization can play in every area of our life. Rationalization can have addictive qualities. As time goes by, it can become so natural for us to utilize rationalization that we don't even acknowledge the impact it's having on our life. It can become a "The End Justify the Means" philosophy that embodies a fundamental principle of Consequentialism, meaning it's an ethical theory suggesting that the morality of an action is entirely dependent of its consequences. Okay...that's a little deep but think about this...Morality? Ethics? What roles do those two words play in your current life and decision making?

Maybe, a better question is: How often are you honest with yourself? Do you hide behind negative consequences using self-



**Paul White**

GUEST  
COLUMNIST

rationalization? Here's the thing. At this point I could come up with endless rationalization examples to prove

my point, but no one is better suited to strike a personal chord with you than YOU. Take a quick journey through your life and start listing the times you allowed rationalization to sway your decision making rather than sticking to the tried-and-true "is it right or wrong" method. The right or wrong method isn't necessarily easy or fun, nor does it always provide immediate gratification, but it's simpler and does support us being honest with ourselves when we don't have to rely on rationalization to make a decision.

Growing up, our brains get training in decision-making. Early on we're taught how to weigh the pro's and the cons of everything and make a moral and ethical decision that has us proceeding when the pro's side is heaviest and not proceeding when the cons side is heaviest. That's thoughtful analysis. But rationalization creeps into our lives and is powerful. So powerful, we can use it to place our finger on the cons side of the scale to convince ourselves that we actually WANT to make a decision we know is wrong or bad.

So, when does rationalization enter our lives? Is it when we decide that we

want to learn for ourselves that touching our tongue to that metal light pole on a 10-degree day might offer more pro's than cons? All I know is that it happens early in life and is influenced by the people closest to us.

Did your parents always give their best to everything and everyone, go to church regularly, handle money responsibly, work hard at their job, treat all others with kindness and compassion, volunteer, and act neighborly? If so, lucky you. Or did they drink, smoke, gamble recklessly, do drugs, have an affair, or tell lies when it was convenient? If so, you were taught rationalization at an early age. While most people are in the middle of the two extremes I just shared, everyone tends to lean one direction or the other when it comes to rationalization. The difference? Rationalization is utilized to its fullest extent when someone makes a bad decision. In other words, making a decision that may bring harm to themselves and others.

People striving to live a moral and ethical life tend to move past the use of rationalization by always being honest with ... and this is profound ...THEMSELVES.

I've said before that the most important conversation we have every day is the conversation we have with ourselves. So, if it's such an important conversation each day, why in the world would we be willing to utilize rationalization and lie to the person we see in the mirror?

It's illogical, yet we all do it on any given day.

If only there were an antidote.

Wait, there IS an antidote to the negative use of rationalization. We employ the antidote any time we're completely honest with ourselves ... in every area of our life ... with everything that impacts our life.

Sit a spell and ponder the term "self-honesty" for a while. Go ahead. Really! YOU are worth some thoughtful analysis about how self-honesty can point you down a path to living the most fulfilling and wonderful life possible regardless of your current circumstances. Funny, when you're completely honest during the most important conversation you have every day, you'll find yourself having less stress and anxiety in life.

Look, if you've been guilty of some poor decision-making utilizing rationalization (haven't we all?), it's worth hitting the refresh button of life and begin today just being consistently honest with yourself...all the time. Doesn't cost you a penny and yet can deliver what the maximum return on your effort. Go right now and look in the mirror, smile, and set off on a new journey of self-honesty. It's the journey of a lifetime.

Hey...I Believe In YOU! GiddyUp!

*Paul White is a guest columnist and author. Purchase his Life-Changing book "The Answer Discovery - How to Change the World by Helping Others...and Ourselves" at <http://bit.ly/PaulWhiteAmazon>*

# The ANTIDOTE to Rationalization is SELF-HONESTY!

Some people say:

**Getting AI to do your work is the first step.**  
*If you don't, your boss will.*

**The second step is to take the time you've freed up and**  
*do work that the AI can't do.*



# 3 Important Thought Processes regarding AI

1. Humans prefer Simplicity over Complexity. AI handles Complexity really well!
  - > What Organizational changes/shifts take greatest advantage of that?
  - > How does your organization maintain an Ethical Commitment doing that?
2. Will AI lead to solving your Organization's Biggest Challenges and become the Greatest Support Tool EVER?
  - > Who in your organization will best *ethically* apply the gifts AI has to offer?
  - > What role will their application of AI play in advancement/promotion?
3. How can your Organization fully embrace increasing the *Speed of AI Knowledge*?
  - > Using AI, will EVERYONE become better Critical Thinkers and Problem Solvers consistently offering Advanced Perspectives on the things that matter most?
  - > What Advanced Training and Ongoing Education will facilitate the *ethical* use of AI moving forward?

## Example 1:

Recent WSJ article title: Bosses Are Drowning in AI-Buffered Resumes.  
Question: How can bosses utilize AI to better handle this change? **Suggestions?**

## Example 2:

Spending Boom In AI Reshapes Jobs, Strategies. **What's that mean for YOU?**

## Example 3:

For 3 years, I've written a weekly column featured in 23 publications across the country.

**Choice 1)** Keep writing with limited use of any AI (Research Only).

**Choice 2)** Upload 10 previous articles so AI gets a feel for my writing style, submit a topic, and ask AI to write a 950-word article on a particular subject utilizing my writing style.

**Choice 3)** Write each article and then submit to AI requesting it rewrite it to make it clear, convincing, compelling, persuasive, positive, and concise.

**Which choice? and WHY?**



# Creating a “Personal Ethics Philosophy”

- It's a statement or list, on a single page, of *what you stand for*.
- It goes a long way in defining your personal character.
- *Consistent use builds Trust, Trust amplifies Ethics*



THOUGHTS become WORDS  
WORDS become ACTIONS  
ACTIONS become CHARACTER  
CHARACTER is EVERYTHING



## ***An Ethical Guide for Rotarians Worldwide:***

### **The Rotary Four-Way Test**

- 1. Is it the TRUTH?**
- 2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?**
- 3. Will it Build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**
- 4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?**



# Creating an “Ethics Guidelines” Strategy

*Goal: A comprehensive framework designed to ensure that an organization/group/team operates in a manner consistent with ethical principles and standards.*



# “Ethics Guidelines Strategy” framework:

- 1. Core Values and Principles:** Clearly defined values and principles that guide the organization's actions and decisions. These might include integrity, transparency, fairness, respect, and accountability.
- 2. Code of Conduct:** A detailed document outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviors for employees, management, and other stakeholders. This often includes guidelines on utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI), conflicts of interest, confidentiality, and professional conduct.
- 3. Training and Education:** Regular training programs to educate employees and stakeholders about the ethical guidelines, why they are important, and how to apply them in various situations. This might include workshops, seminars, and online courses.
- 4. Decision-Making Framework:** Tools and processes to help individuals make ethical decisions. This might include checklists, flowcharts, or decision trees that guide users through ethical considerations.
- 5. Reporting Mechanisms:** Systems for reporting unethical behavior or violations of the guidelines. This could include anonymous hotlines, online reporting tools, or designated ethics officers. *Could include system for reporting GOOD BEHAVIOR SUCCESSES!!*
- 6. Enforcement and Accountability:** Clear procedures for investigating and addressing violations of the ethics guidelines. This might include disciplinary actions, corrective measures, and mechanisms for ensuring accountability.
- 7. Stakeholder Engagement:** Strategies for involving stakeholders in the development and implementation of the ethics guidelines. This might include surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees.
- 8. Continuous Improvement:** Processes for regularly reviewing and updating the ethics guidelines to ensure they remain relevant and effective. This might include periodic audits, feedback mechanisms, and benchmarking against industry standards.
- 9. Communication Plan:** A strategy for effectively communicating the ethics guidelines to all relevant parties. This might include internal communications, external communications, and public disclosures.
- 10. Leadership Commitment:** Demonstrated commitment from the organization's leadership to uphold and promote the ethics guidelines. This might include public statements, personal adherence to the guidelines, and leading by example.

**By incorporating these elements, an "Ethics Guidelines Strategy" can help create a culture of ethical behavior and decision-making within an organization, including all organizations in the process of effectively embracing and integrating AI.**

# **It's absolutely TRUE!**

- Each of us leaves an **ETHICS LEGACY** with every co-worker, every customer, and every person we interact with each day.

## **Moving forward...**

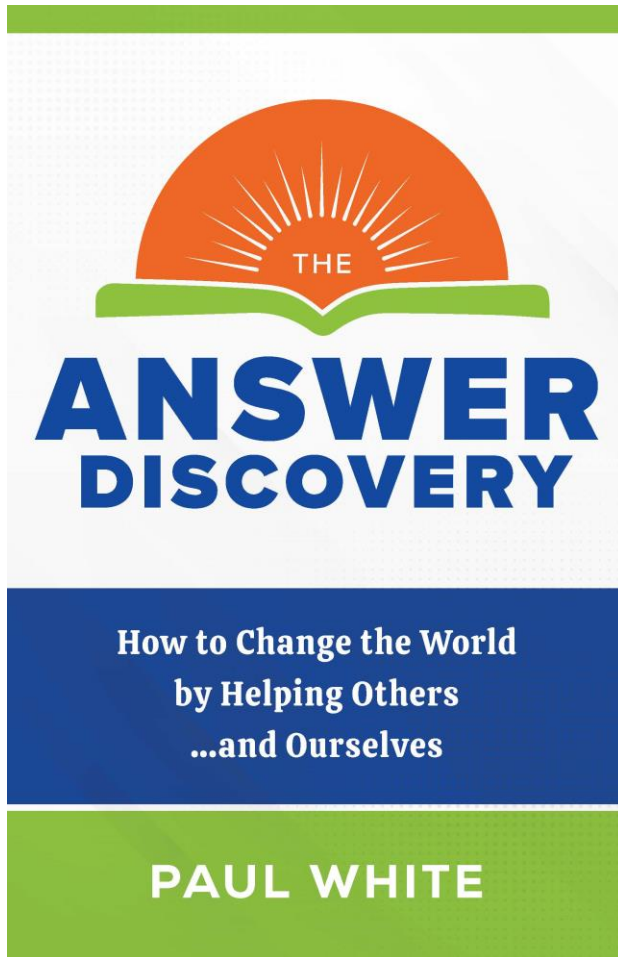
- What actions will you take based on the ETHICS you hold deep in your heart that will define your legacy long after you're gone? Ask yourself that question every day.

**IT matters and YOU matter!**

***Take ACTION and WIN with ETHICS!***



# My Book



# QR Code for my website

All my weekly columns are there 😊

