# Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

**Besides domain knowledge, a public official needs innovativeness and creativity of a high order as well, while resolving ethical dilemmas. Discuss with suitable example.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| 2021 | GS - IV | Ethics & Morality |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Ethical dilemmas, innovative thinking, creativity, empathy, problem-solving, public interest, alternative solutions, proportionality, constitutional values, participatory governance, administrative discretion**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

Domain knowledge enables a public official to understand rules and procedures, but ethical dilemmas often require creativity to reconcile competing values and find humane, lawful solutions.

### Importance of Innovation and Creativity

- **Reconciling competing values:** Officials may need to balance efficiency with compassion, confidentiality with transparency, or public safety with individual liberty.
- **Finding alternatives:** Creative thinking helps identify solutions that achieve policy objectives without unnecessarily harming vulnerable groups.
- **Resource optimisation:** Innovation enables officials to deliver services despite financial, staffing or infrastructural constraints.
- **Citizen-centric governance:** Participatory methods and local knowledge help develop solutions suited to people's actual needs.

- **Ethical adaptability:** Novel situations may not be adequately addressed by existing rules, requiring principled judgement within the law.

**Example**

During a disaster, an official may face a shortage of food supplies and must prioritise distribution. Rather than relying solely on a first-come, first-served approach, the official could use transparent vulnerability criteria, community verification and special arrangements for children, elderly persons and persons with disabilities. This combines creativity with fairness and compassion.

**Necessary Safeguards**

Innovation must remain consistent with constitutional values, legal requirements, transparency and accountability. It should not become an excuse for arbitrary discretion.

**Conclusion**

Domain knowledge provides the foundation, while creativity enables ethical problem-solving. Together, they help public officials develop lawful, practical and compassionate responses to complex administrative challenges.

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