

Gauging your team's moral compass

From Oxford sociologists comes a study of how emerging adults have begun to view moral decisions as “just a matter of individual taste,” and with that a serious erosion of their moral ground.

The research, based on quantitative analysis and detailed qualitative interviews, shows young people in their late teens and early 20s consider drunken driving and cheating as options subject to choice.

They seem perplexed when asked to make judgments about right and wrong, exhibiting pure moral relativism.

“I guess what makes something right is how I feel about it” is a typical response.

Our advice: In hiring, use questions or case studies to screen out amoral individuals. In leading, make your value system explicit.

— Adapted from *Lost in Transition*, Christian Smith, Kari Cristoffersen, Hilary Davidson and Patricia Snell Herzog, Oxford University Press.