

# **Universalism vs. Particularism**

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## **Universalism vs. Particularism**

Universalism can be defined as an obligation to adhere to standards that are universally agreed to by the culture in which we live; following the Golden Rule. On the other hand, particularism focuses on circumstances; makes decisions based on the scenario presented. In the textbook, an example that was presented was a friend who hit a pedestrian going at least 35 miles per hour, in which the speed limit was 20 miles per hour. The friend's lawyer asks for you to testify that your friend was driving the speed limit of 20 miles per hour to reduce their consequences. Do you tell the truth or lie to protect your friend? Typically particularist cultures would more than likely support their friend by giving false statements. Universalists would regard such actions and state the truth. Furthermore, universalism and particularism from a business perspective explained that a universalist way of thinking is essentially following the rules such as similar production, managing, contracts or even business trips.

Based on my past work experience, I have encountered universal experiences with my jobs working in retail. Retail stores such as Academy Sports and Outdoors or Michaels follow an outline on how to conduct their business and how to manage employees. Depending on the scenario with an employee or customer, there is a guide on how to approach and manage each situation. A line that I have been told by managers is, "The customer is always right", businesses do not want to lose customers so managers reward customers when they have been considered inconvenienced. In major retail stores there is a mix between universalism and particularism based on the scenarios and structure of the retail business. In another scenario, that I have experienced at work is a co-worker sexually harassing just about everyone on my team. In this case, I reported his actions and it was resolved immediately.

Lastly, I consider myself a very truthful and honest individual, I will only bend the truth if it is necessary to save someone's feelings or lessen the consequences of a situation. For universalism, I tend to follow my own golden rules, do not lie, do not steal from others and respect others. For particularism, I will make decisions based on the scenario. To explain, let's say my teammate was late to study hall, since she was only a few minutes I would not hold her accountable or tell coach; the action is minor and not something that should be addressed.

Overall, universalism can be defined as an obligation to adhere to standards that are universally agreed to by the culture in which we live. Furthermore, particularism focuses on circumstances; makes decisions based on the scenario presented. These concepts can be applied to all aspects of life, work or school.