

Seven-Fold Test For Evaluating Truth-Claims & Worldviews: Combinationalism Test:

Here is a seven-fold test one can use to evaluate truth-claims & worldviews. Why? (1) Not all explanations are created equal. (2) We tend to rush to judgment without careful evaluation due to vices like impatience. (3) We travel habituated paths of observation & interpretation. (4) We fail to be critical enough because of other interests (e.g., wide array of emotions, longings, self-interests, mesmerizing personalities, & impulses). (5) We are leery to commit the fallacy of reductionism. (6) A worldview or truth claim might pass a criterion (e.g., logically coherent) but still not be the best explanation. (7) Mistakes can be costly & extract the best from us. (8) We seek to be lovers of truth. (9) We don't want to be misled or mislead others. (10) We don't want to embrace something that will negatively impact ourselves, others, our spheres of influence, & even our legacy.

1. LOGICALLY CONSISTENT:

Is this truth-claim or worldview free of logical inconsistencies?

(1) Are the truth-claims made logical?

Logic is the art & science of reasoning. Central to computer science, math, & rhetoric, logic involves principles that govern how we should think & act; it is the study of right reason, an ordering of how to thinking rightly, & a way to think so that we can come to correct conclusions.

Three First Principle Laws of Logic:

(1) The law of identity (P is P):

If a statement is true, then it is true. In other words, a thing must be identical to itself. Being is Being.

(2) The law of non-contradiction

(P is not non-P):

If a statement is true, then it can't be false. Opposites cannot both be true. Being cannot be non-being.

(3). The law of the excluded middle

(Either P or non-P):

A statement is either true or false. Since being and non-being are opposites, that is, contradictory, & opposites can't be the same, nothing can between being and non-being.

(2). Does this truth claim harmonize with what we already know to be true? Test for coherence.

Coherence is a negative test of truth in that if a truth claim is wrong, then it will be inconsistent with what we already know to be true.

(3) Does the worldview make self-contradictory truth claims?

2. EMPIRICALLY ADEQUATE:

What evidential values does this truth-claim or worldview possess?

A fact is something that actually exists; it has objective reality; it is a provable concept. What evidences do we have for it? Here we are appealing to a *correspondence with reality*. In other words, does it match up with the way things actually are?

3. EXISTENTIALLY RELEVANT:

Does this truth-claim or worldview relate directly to how you actually live your life?

In other words, is this truth-claim or worldview germane, pertinent, & relatable to our existence, your personhood?

4. WORKABILITY:

Does this truth-claim or worldview actually work?

While practical, beneficial results do not guarantee truthfulness (e.g., a lie may produce good results), if something is true, then it will work. But if something works, it doesn't necessarily mean that it is true. Notwithstanding, it is valuable to examine the workability of a truth-claims & worldviews. What are its results? What are its consequences? How does it "unpack" itself?

5. VIABILITY:

Is this truth-claim or worldview worthwhile?

Related to existential relevance & workability, this criterion focuses on whether a truth-claim or worldview can be lived out. If a truth-claim or worldview cannot be lived out, it is not worthwhile. Though this criterion is a negative test, it is worth using. The test of viability helps clarify our goals, plans, priorities, & pursuits.

6. EXPLANATORY POWER:

Is this truth-claim or worldview weighty or substantive?

Does it pull all of life together? Does this truth-claim or worldview shed light on other known claims, inquiries, insights, or even discoveries?

7. MORAL & AESTHETIC EXCELLENCE:

Does this truth-claim or worldview promote moral & aesthetic qualities that meaningfully improve or degrade that which is good, honorable, & noble?

Does it generate virtue or vice? Does it contribute or degenerate our well-being & good of others? Does it satisfy, conform to, & enrich our conscience? Or is it counter-intuitive, extracting the best parts of our personhood & community?