The golden rule, like a diamond, reflects a different beauty from different perspectives. My perspective is logic, which is about forms of valid reasoning.

All A is B
This is A
:. This is B

good form

Use to prove things and test consistency.

All A is B
This is B
:. This is A

bad form

All parrots are birds.
This is a bird.
:. This is a parrot.
If you want X to do A to you, then do A to X.

If you'd want X to do A to you if the situation were reversed, then do A to X.

If you want Dr. Davis to remove your appendix, then remove her appendix.

different situations

If you’d want your fellow thief to help you rob banks if the situation were reversed, then help him rob banks.

flawed desires
Gensler’s GR

Treat others only as you consent to being treated in the same situation.

GR forbids this combination:

- I do something to another.
- I’m unwilling that this be done to me in the same situation.
GR involves imagining yourself in the other person’s place.

I’m a waiter who hates broccoli and thus don’t want it served to me. If I follow GR, can I serve broccoli to a customer who ordered it?

Ask this

Am I now willing that if I were in the same situation then this be done to me?
GR involves a present attitude toward a hypothetical situation.

Little Will puts his finger into electrical outlets. Does GR let us discipline him?

Ask this: Am I now willing that if I were in the same situation then this be done to me?
GR forbids an inconsistent action-desire combination. Satisfying GR-consistency doesn’t guarantee that your action is right.

“I grow rich with my coal mine while paying my workers only $1 a day.”

The owner (out of ignorance of what $1 can buy) is willing that he be paid that much in his workers’ place. It doesn’t follow that his act is right.
If you’re conscientious and impartial, then you won’t steal Detra’s bicycle unless you’re willing that your bicycle be stolen in the same situation:

You steal Detra’s bicycle

You believe it would be all right for you to steal her bicycle

You’re willing that your bicycle be stolen in the same situation

You believe it would be all right for your bicycle to be stolen in the same situation
Applying the golden rule in a rational way requires knowledge, imagination, and sometimes rationalized desires.

The golden rule is not a compass but a path.
GR can be embedded in different frameworks:

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<td>self-interest</td>
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Harry J. Gensler, S.J.   April 17, 2008
http://www.jcu.edu/philosophy/gensler/goldrule.htm