

VALUE BASED LEADERSHIP

First I want to say thank you to everyone who downloaded the [Values Alignment Exercise](#) from our [Free Success Tools Library](#). I also want to say thank you to those who contacted me personally to ask for some guidance in facilitating it with their work group. It was a joy working with you.

In the past several newsletters I've set the stage and established the case for not simply having organizational core values, but the benefit in doing so, and how to go about creating a culture of success because of it. At the end of the day it's a simple formula. Our personal values, and we all have values, define who we are individually - our character. Since an organization is made up of 2 or more individuals, it is then the collective character of those individuals that defines the culture of the organization. If those character traits are not in sync, we are likely to find the organization is dysfunctional. When they are in sync, there you will find a success.

Moving forward, and the whole purpose of this series, is to share and discuss a Core Value and provide the reader with a tool to consistently communicate their organizational core values, either through meetings, employee recognition, employee reviews, coaching, or the disciplinary process. I will structure the article as if I am speaking to you in the first person.

Today's Core Value:

INTEGRITY AT THE MOMENT OF CHOICE



Why it is important to our organization:

Integrity, the one value that trumps all other values (small "t". No political statement here). We could probably fit every other core value under it. When all else about us is gone, the only three things we still have is our name, our freedom to choose, and our integrity. Collectively as an organization it is the same. Our integrity in what we do, what we produce, is paramount to our success. It is how the rest of the world, our customers and our suppliers, sees and measures us against, not the competition, but against what is right or wrong, good or bad. It is how we are being judged. You are fooling yourself if

you think you are not being judged. You are. We are. Our success or failure depends on what happens in the space between stimulus and response. It's called, "Integrity at the moment of choice".

I want to remind all of you, you are going to be faced with choices. Some will be easy, some difficult- moral dilemmas. It is in that moment, what you say to yourself and the action you take, that will speak to your integrity. Do you leave early to go out with the girls, or do you stay late and finish the report? Do you go home to catch the recital you promised your 9-year-old daughter, or stay late to finish the report? You are trying to lose weight; do you open the refrigerator and reach for the Hagan Das, or a healthier snack? You and a coworker are up for a promotion. You discovered a significant flaw in a project they are responsible for. You have the ability to correct it immediately. Do you fix it or let them take the fall? Integrity at the moment of choice. We can't afford to make the wrong call. Moving forward for us as an organization I want to

- a.) encourage each of you, when faced with choices, to take a moment to contemplate the decision you make between doing what YOU know to be right or what you know to be wrong.
- b.) Take time, before you are faced with those dilemmas, to reflect and be introspective of what integrity means to you.

The Story:

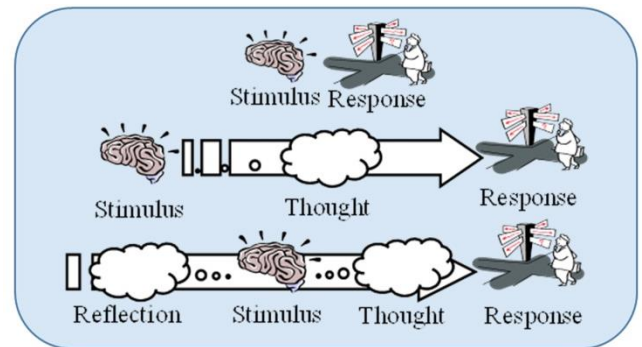
We can often think of stories where individuals failed to exercise integrity at the moment of choice. . . cheating athletes, less than honest politicians, and small business owners to fortune 500 CEOs. But today I want to share with you a story about one of our own. She probably doesn't know that I know this but that's part of what makes it so important.

A few weeks back I was walking past the break room on the way to Dorothy's office when I overheard a couple of employees discussing another employee's failure to perform. They weren't being very nice about it and I was going to step in to address it. Instead I heard Cindy join the conversation. She asked the two if this person was aware of how they felt about her. How will she ever improve if no one takes time to talk to her about these real or perceived failures? Cindy went on to suggest that perhaps there are reasons we are not aware of, reasons that, as co-workers, we could help her overcome. Rather than getting into a discussion with them about this person's performance, Cindy instead suggested they speak with her and see what we can do as a team to best get the project(s) done. She asked one of the individuals to approach this person and set aside a time they could all get together to have this conversation so we can have successful project going forward.

When it comes to integrity it's about having the courage to step up. Be open-minded to different ideas. Be a team, even when it appears to be difficult. The initial conversation should have perhaps not occurred in the first place, but because it did, somebody, Cindy, had the integrity to address the situation in a safe, professional manner, eliminating potential for work place drama and, as such, further reducing our team productivity and effectiveness.

Final Thoughts:

If you don't think discussing organizational core values are important, consider this - James Weber, PhD, in his research of the relationship between organizational leader's value orientation and that of the employees, found that 85.9 percent of managers claim that they draw their moral standards at work from the expectations perceived in the work environment. Trevino adds that organizational norms that are embodied by the corporation's culture are strong determinants of individual thought and behavior in the workplace. Gillespie notes that corporate culture (values) is recognized as a key contextual influence in establishing and maintaining norms.



Extraordinary Leaders have Extraordinary Character; with Extraordinary Character they are Not Afraid.

Be Extraordinary!



President & CEO
 Leader Development Institute
www.LDiWorld.com