COVID-19 & LEADER CHARACTER

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Proposition, Objectives and Agenda

Viewing personal and organizational phenomenon through the lens of Leader Character provides new insights, perspectives and approaches including:

• *Fostering awareness of what leader character is, and how it influences individual well being and organizational performance*
• *Developing and exercising leader character influences quality of judgment and decision making*
• *Embedding leader character in the organization influences key processes, including selection, and transforms organizational culture*
Character Based Leadership & Expected Outcomes

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Individuals: Heightened well-being; Greater engagement and commitment; Reduced stress and anxiety personally and professionally, enhanced performance

Teams: Greater collaboration; Less silo mentality; Less friction; Greater innovation

Organization: More robust culture; Sustained excellence – both short and long term; Less misconduct; Better risk-management

Stakeholders: Cultivating stronger relationships of trust; Less friction; Better collaboration; Cross-enterprise innovation

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**Organization Practices**

- HR Processes
- Culture & Conduct
- Strategy & Values
- Diversity & Inclusion

**Assess/Develop**

- 360 LCIA
- Targeted Dev.
- Coaching

**Awareness**

- Workshops
- Readings
- Self LCIA

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Character Based Leadership - Awareness

- Workshops
- Readings
- Self LCIA

Assess/Develop
- 360 LCIA
- Targeted Dev.
- Coaching
The Effective Leader

- Competency has been focus of education, HR
- Commitment is “table stakes”
- Character leverages Competency & Commitment


- 350 Leaders
- Focus Groups
- Canada, US, Europe, Asia

- Key Insight – Character implicated but no agreement on what it is or how it can be developed

Elevate Character Alongside Competence!

http://www.ivey.uwo.ca/research/leadership
Character Infused Culture and Competence

Leader Competencies:
WHAT I do

CULTURE & VALUES:
Reflection of Character

Leader Character:
WHO I am
Defining Leader Character

• Being a leader is less about the position and more about the disposition to lead. Having the disposition to lead is what allows professionals to rise above the fray and bring the best of themselves to their daily activities.

• Character is a “habit of being”. Excellence of character is captured by a set of behaviors that directly influence the development of competence, the commitment to action and ultimately performance.
Research to Practice
### Examples of dimensions and elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temperance</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>Controls strong emotions like anger or disappointment, especially in difficult situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Continuous learner</td>
<td>Takes advantage of any opportunity to learn from someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Demonstrates initiative</td>
<td>Recognizes the need for, and takes prompt action, without being asked to do so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Keep in mind...

• All 11 Character Dimensions Matter - Virtues become vices in excess or deficiency, therefore it is dangerous to focus on only some dimensions of character (e.g. Courage without Temperance is reckless)

• Character dimensions are interconnected and support one another. Leaders continue to develop strength across all dimensions (e.g. The more you develop Drive the more you also need to develop Humanity)

• Character is revealed in the behaviors supporting the dimensions

• Character is exercised through judgment

• Quality of judgment impacts individual and hence organizational performance

• Character is practiced and can be developed

• Context can build or erode character hence there are important implications for Culture in general and HR Practices in particular
Strength of Character

• The strength of character varies, however all dimensions can be developed

• Three archetypes
  1. Strong character – high on all dimensions
  2. Weak character – low on all dimensions
  3. Compromised character – high on some dimensions and low on others

• Strong character (along with strong competence) brings strong judgment
  • Compromised character compromises judgment – risk factor
  • Weak character allows context to dictate individual actions
Addressing Character Misconceptions

• Character is simply about being a “good” person and compromises performance
  • False: Strengthening character strengthens judgment and ultimately sustained excellence for individuals and organizations

• Character is formed early in life and cannot be developed
  • False. Character is a habit of behavior that can be attended to and developed.

• Character is subjective and can’t be measure or managed
  • False. Because character is revealed in a set of defined behaviors it can be measured and managed – 360 Leader Character Insight Assessment
Character Based Leadership – Assess / Develop

- HR Processes
- Culture & Conduct
- Strategy & Values
- Diversity & Inclusion

Assess/Develop
- 360 LCIA
- Targeted Dev.
- Coaching
Developing character: A Continuum

Developing Character
- Discovering latent character strengths
- Activating character through reminding, priming, reinforcement
- Actively working to develop character
- Connecting character dimensions
- Sustaining character dimensions hold across contexts and under stress
Leader Character Insight Assessment - LCIA

INTEGRITY

Holds oneself to a high moral standard and behaves consistently with ethical standards, even in difficult situations, is seen by others as behaving in a way that is consistent with their personal values and beliefs. Behaves consistently with organizational policies and practices.

INTEGRITY RESOURCES

WATCH
- Jack Welch: Create a Code in the Workplace (Stanford Graduate School of Business, 2009)
- Our Busy Moral Code TED Talk by Dan Ariely (2009)
- What We Don’t Understand About Trust TED Talk by Donna O’Neill (2013)
- Golden Balls - Fail Soft or Fail Hard? (YouTube, 2020)
- Golden Balls - The Weirdest Soft or Steal Ever (YouTube, 2008)

READ
- Why We Lie: Dan Ariely (The Wall Street Journal, 2012)
- Integrity in Conflict: Michael Josephson (Josephson Institute, 2011)
- Integrity: Doing the Right Thing for the Right Reason: Barbara Kellner (McGill-Queens University Press, 2010)
- Integrity and Authenticity: Neil Trilling (Harvard University, 2009)
- True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership: Bill George (Jossey-Bass, 2007)

LEARN

“Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.”
- Abraham Lincoln

In responding to the LCIA items you were asked to identify how likely you would be to engage in various behaviors that reflect the character dimensions and elements described in this report. You responded using the following scale: 1=Extremely Unlikely, 2=Unlikely, 3=Neither Unlikely Nor Likely, 4=Likely, 5=Extremely Likely. The graph below shows your score for each character dimension.

The chart below displays your ratings for INTEGRITY and its key elements.

The chart below displays your ratings for INTEGRITY and its key elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>AUTHENTIC</th>
<th>CONSIDERED</th>
<th>TRANSPARENT</th>
<th>PRINCIPLED</th>
<th>CONSISTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Character Based Leadership – Organizational Practices

Organization Practices
- Culture & Conduct
- Strategy & Values
- Diversity & Inclusion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>If Present</th>
<th>If Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>Recognize key issues; solid decision making</td>
<td>Poor decisions, confusion, &amp; resistance to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>Decisions are made; opposition to poor decisions; innovation thrives</td>
<td>Agreement of poor decisions; satisficing rather than maximizing is the norm; moral muteness prevails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>Sustained momentum around focused priorities &amp; high productivity</td>
<td>Lethargy &amp; low productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Effective teamwork enhancing productivity; diversity in teams</td>
<td>&quot;Every man for himself&quot; mentality; lack of information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Trust, transparency &amp; effective communication</td>
<td>People operate from a position of self-interest &amp; mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperance</td>
<td>Effective risk management; thoughtful consideration</td>
<td>Short term gains dictate strategy; desire for instant gratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Ownership; commitment to decisions</td>
<td>Failure to deliver results &amp; take responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Fairness fostering trust; going above &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Inequities exist; favoritism &amp; nepotism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Willingness to identify &amp; discuss mistakes; support of continuous learning</td>
<td>Arrogance &amp; overconfidence; complacency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanity</td>
<td>Deep understanding of what is important to stakeholders</td>
<td>Failure to acknowledge critical social interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendence</td>
<td>Commitment to excellence; clarity &amp; focus; inspiration motivates innovation</td>
<td>Narrow goals &amp; objectives; failure to acknowledge, appreciate, &amp; strive for excellence; not inspired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Embedding Leader Character in HR Practices

- Recruiting & Selecting for Character
- Character Aligned Culture
- Human Resource Practices
- Promoting Leaders with Character
- Leader Character Development
- Rewarding Character
- Character Onboarding
Next Steps

1. Begin with **yourself**
   - Identify character dimensions that warrant development
   - Resources in the “Leader Character Insight Assessment” (LCIA) report available through Sigma Assessment Systems and “Developing Leader Character” book

2. Exercise your leadership – share with others
   - Share the slides and articles – engage conversations

3. Many options for follow up including:
   - consultation, presentations, workshops, and building an agenda that aligns with organization initiatives and priorities

**WHEREVER COMPETENCE RESIDES – CHARACTER BELONGS**
Thoughts to Destiny

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR **THOUGHTS**, THEY BECOME **WORDS**.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR **WORDS**, THEY BECOME **ACTIONS**.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR **ACTIONS**, THEY BECOME **HABITS**.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR **HABITS**, THEY BECOME **CHARACTER**.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR **CHARACTER**, IT BECOMES YOUR **DESTINY**.

Adapted Quote
Reference Materials
Key References


