

QUICK TIPS – INTEGRITY

A young, newly-promoted manager was questioning the meaning of “*integrity*”. Upon reflection, these thoughts are offered as a potential strategic roadmap.

Integrity is defined as “*soundness of moral principle and character. Honesty*”.

Navigating life's situations often can become complicated by ambiguity and choice. If determining what the “*right thing to do*” seems to present a serious challenge, then *integrity* should serve as the fundamental compass by which to steer one's thoughts and actions.

Integrity is the path that extends outward from one's very core into the world. A straight, tight path reflects congruity and consistency. A rambling path denotes variability and discord.

In some situations, what is *right* and what is *wrong* are clearly delineated and obvious. Acting with integrity, in these cases, simply means doing the *right* thing. It becomes more difficult, however, if the situational options are less qualified due to murky vagueness and uncertainty. What then is one to do?

When things are complex or are open to interpretation, the opportunity to consider multiple options is amplified. There are some professions, such as accountancy and law, which thrive in this arena within legal and moral boundaries. Their role is to assess the circumstances, consider alternative actions and consequences, and make recommendations to their clients. Even then, those decisions may be subject to subsequent challenge.

For individuals, pushing the legal and moral envelope is fraught with peril. One might ponder the “*chances of getting caught*”, but that is insufficient as the criteria for making a decision. How do you feel about it in your gut and in your head? It is *YOU* who will be living with the consequences and memories can plague the conscience long after the event.

The best action, in virtually every situation, is to avoid marginal decisions, no matter how persuasive a counter-rationalization may be. In order to maintain and sustain your equilibrium, side with what you *believe* to be the best action, not the one that you think *may* be permissible.

Consistency in thought and action will strengthen your *integrity*, in both business and your personal life. You will be more comfortable and sleep more peacefully.

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