

Integrity at Work – How Are You Showing Up?

As the business sections of today's papers and magazines read more and more like the police blotter, "integrity" is fast becoming a hot topic of conversation in business boardrooms, around water coolers, and in today's business best-sellers. Integrity is defined as walking the talk when it comes to living one's true values, being authentic. Take this self-assessment and explore how you walk your integrity talk when you show up at work.

Integrity is a lot like being pregnant. In other words, either you're pregnant, or you aren't. There's no middle ground. It's the same with integrity. Either you're behaving in integrity, or you're not.

While integrity is not a robe that one can put on and take off when it's convenient, many day to day workplace behaviors indicate convenience plays a large role in whether people show up in integrity or not. Who people are at work, and how people are at work, seems to change like the weather, the weather of convenience.

When asked, many folks say they believe they are, in fact, acting in integrity. However, when we look at actual day-to-day, minute-by-minute workplace behaviors this is clearly not the case. Why? One reason is that folks' basic ego needs for control recognition and security get in the way of acting in integrity — often moving away from their true and authentic self, from their deeper inner values, and towards behaviors that are out of integrity.

So, do you think, feel and believe you live your core values at work, that you show up in integrity in your workplace, when you are alone, when you are in relationship with colleagues? Take this self-assessment and explore who you are and how you are at work when it comes to integrity.

1. On an integrity scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), how would you rate yourself when it comes to the following workplace behaviors: (a) gossiping; (b) bullying; (c) viewing or downloading porn; (d) stealing physical materials; (e) stealing intellectual property; (f) stealing time; (g) telling the truth; (h) taking responsibility for your piece of your team's projects; (i) making excuses; (j) being direct, open and honest in your communications; (k) respecting others; (l) living your values; (m) keeping an honest set of books and following appropriate accounting principles?

2. Who or what usually takes you out of integrity?

3. When you're out of integrity, what kind of self-talk do you engage in?

4. Do your needs for control, recognition and security take you out of integrity?

5. Do you lie to yourself about being in integrity? If so, why?

6. Does it matter to you that you are out of integrity?

7. Do you use the same definition to define integrity for yourself and for others? If not, why not?

8. Do you respond if others act out of integrity and their actions directly affect you?
9. Do you respond if others act out of integrity and their actions affect your team, your unit, your department or your organization?
10. Do you ever excuse, justify or rationalize your being out of integrity? If so, when and why?

At the end of the day, your workday, integrity is all about telling the truth about ourselves, to ourselves, and to others. Integrity is all about living this truth.

Many of us are quick to judge and criticize others who act out of integrity. But truth be told, many of us are just as prone to separate from our core values and act out of integrity when it's convenient in some way. The operative question is: "Why?" What does acting out of integrity get me?

So, how did you do with your self-assessment? Who are you and how are you when it comes to showing up at work in integrity?

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