



ASLON CHRONICLE

Dedicated to bringing interesting leadership trends to senior executives focused on integrity and values.

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"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day."

Sally Koch

LEADERLESSNESS PROVES THE NEED FOR ROLE MODELS

The TV show *60 Minutes* ran a segment that tells us something important about the lack of leadership and the importance of mentoring through role models.

The park rangers at a South African wildlife preserve were concerned about the slaughter of 39 rare white rhinos in their park. It turned out that the rhinos were killed not by poachers but rather by juvenile delinquents—teen elephants.

The story began a decade ago when the park could no longer sustain the increasing population of elephants. They decided to kill many of the adult elephants whose young were old enough to survive without them. And so, the young elephants grew up fatherless.

As time went on, many of these young elephants roamed together in gangs and began to do things elephants normally don't do. They threw sticks and water at rhinos and acted like neighborhood bullies. Without dominant males, the young bulls became sexually active, producing excessive testosterone and exhibiting aggressive behavior. A few young males grew especially violent, knocking down rhinos and stepping or kneeling on them, crushing the life out of them. Mafuto, the gang leader, eventually had to be killed.

The park rangers theorized that these young teen-aged elephants were acting badly because they lacked role models. The solution was to bring in a large male to lead them and to counteract their bully behaviors. Soon the new male established dominance and put the young bulls in their places. The killing stopped. The young males were mentored—and saved.

Citation: Ken Sowers, Mentor, Ohio; 60 Minutes (1-20-99).

ASLON Extends Global Reach

In our effort to meet the growing need for international leaders of our clients and to be a relevant part of the global supply chain for technology, services and manufacturing, ASLON Group has joined the International Executive Search Federation. This partnership will strengthen our international contacts and allow us to tap into the knowledge of professional search executives worldwide.

The purpose of the IESF is to provide a comprehensive global executive search capability to meet the needs of its clients across the world. By their spread of global locations, IESF is one of the world's largest executive search networks with 85 offices in over 53 countries. They provide partner companies with local expertise for their clients and maintain common quality standards for clients and candidates alike.



Global reach....Local Knowledge

TRUST IN CORPORATIONS CHARACTER, COMPETENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

In a previous edition we wrote an article about the importance of trust in the corporate environment. Trust is critical to a company's health and to its effectiveness. When people in a company don't trust each other or their leaders, the company becomes a diseased organism that will poison those who come into contact with it, or shrivel up and stop producing fruit—often times both.

And while mistrust can and does exist at all levels within a company, its leaders generally set the tone for organizational health. Unfortunately, many leaders do not realize that trust has several key components. Often times, when a leader is told that they are not trustworthy, they mistakenly take it to mean that they are being accused of dishonesty or deceit.

But a leader's (or group of leaders') credibility stands on not just one, but three legs; when any one of those three legs is broken or even wobbly, trust quickly erodes; a leader's credibility is called into question, and the company's health is compromised.

These three legs are *character, competence, and communication*.

1. **Character.** This component of trust is the most obvious, and the one that is most often singularly equated with trust. Character can be defined as a leader's sense of moral fortitude, an inner compass that determines how a person acts when no one else is looking, and it is often described externally as a person's reputation.
2. **Competence.** But even if a leader demonstrates honest and trustworthy character, he or she might not be competent for the task at hand. A person can be an amazing and truly inspiring visionary, but not at all gifted in the areas of strategy and day-to-day execution. In these areas, this person would be deemed trustworthy. It's not that he was dishonest, but he was

unreliable—not as deep-seated as a true character flaw, but a variation of untrustworthiness nonetheless. As a result, even though his character was above reproach, trust in his leadership will begin to break down.

3. **Communication.** The final leg of trust is communication, and this is often the most easily overlooked element of trust, because it exists at the most basic, everyday level of leadership. But it is precisely because it exists at such a basic level that communication is so foundational to leadership trust.

If a leader does not communicate well (with honesty and frequency at all levels in the organization and along all stages of an issue or task), colleagues and staff will start to wonder if a deeper problem exists. And it is this first question that starts to weaken the foundation of trust.

Now, one incident of mis- (or missing) communication generally isn't enough to cast a cloud over otherwise impeccable character and competence. However, a pattern of spotty communication allows doubts to surface. Trust erodes, and eventually character itself gets called into ques-

tion.

For most leaders the first step is simply awareness. As an executive, recognize the importance of trust. Next, learn the difference between the three legs, and their different roles in facilitating trust. Finally, learn to recognize when one or more of the legs are broken or in danger of breaking down in your organization, and how to repair them. The result will be a stronger foundation, a healthier company, and greater effectiveness.

Excerpts taken from article by Angie Ward Newsletter@LeadershipJournal.net.

The WEB defines character as an inherent complex of attributes that determine a person's moral and ethical actions and reactions.

Managing Data Security Threats

The Ponemon Institute (who conducts independent research on the responsible information and privacy management practices in business and government) reports various troubling data security facts, including that 78% of US IT professionals claim their companies have suffered unreported insider-related security breaches. Since these are unreported we truly do not know the full extent of the ongoing data security problem. Also, according to the report, "lack of resources and leadership makes it difficult to address the insider threat." Ninety-three percent of US IT respondents state their belief that the foremost barrier to handling this risk is lack of sufficient resources. Meanwhile, 80% also place the blame on lack of leadership. On top of this, 31% further report that another cause is the fact that no one person within an organization has overall responsibility for managing insider security threats.

To read more of these troubling facts visit [CNET News.com](http://CNETNews.com) and Findlaw.com

"Decisions are easy when values are clear."

Unknown

THERE IS NOTHING AS FAST AS THE SPEED OF TRUST

What are the organizational and societal consequences of low trust? Most people don't really even know how to think about this question because they don't know how to quantify or measure the costs of such a so called "soft" factor as trust. But the fact that it's hidden doesn't mean it's not there. The reality is this: the costs of low trust are very real, they are quantifiable, and they are staggering!

A way to think about the cost of low trust is to compare it to receiving a paycheck. On your pay stub you can see the taxes that are taken from your salary right off the top. Similarly, when trust is low, in a company or in a relationship, it places a hidden "tax" on every transaction: every communication, every interaction, every strategy, every decision is taxed. In low trust situations, people don't hear fully what their leaders are saying; rather, people only hear a portion of what their leaders are communicating because the leaders are being taxed right off the top.

By contrast, individuals and companies that have earned and operate with high trust experience the opposite of a tax—they receive a "dividend" that is like a performance multiplier, enabling them to succeed in their communications, interactions, and decisions and to move with incredi-

ble speed. Watson Wyatt's study showed that high trust organizations outperformed low trust companies by nearly 300%!

Think of your own situation: what is communication like when you're talking with people who trust you? You can say the wrong thing and people will still get your meaning. But what is it like when trust is low? You can be precise and measured and people will still interpret it the wrong way. The difference is evident to all of us...

There is no quick fix to establishing and restoring trust because trust demands both character and competence, it cannot be manipulated and it values actions over words. Destroying trust, on the other hand, can happen almost overnight.

In today's knowledge worker age, the returns of generating trust, the results that flow from it, and the abundant dividends that surround it make it clear--there is nothing as fast as the speed of trust.

Stephen M.R. Covey

http://www.sensationalspeakers.com/covey_article.html

TRULY AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

With the recent death of President Gerald R. Ford, the qualities of a great leader have been mentioned often at his eulogies. What was thought to be a bad decision at the time turned out in hindsight to be the right decision for the country, coming from a courageous and humble leader. The following excerpts were taken from US News & World Report "The problem isn't the lack of potential leaders, but a wrongheaded notion of what exactly a leader is. Search committees and voters alike fall into the trap of choosing leaders for their style rather than their substance, for their image instead of their integrity. The only valid test of a leader is his or her ability to bring people together to achieve sustainable results over time."

"The time is ripe to redefine leadership for the 21st century. The military-manufacturing model of leadership that worked so well 50 years ago doesn't get the best out of people today. Authentic leaders know who they are. They are good 'in their skin', so good they don't feel a need to impress or please others. They not only inspire those around them, they bring people together around a shared purpose and a common set of values and motivate them to create value for everyone involved. Authentic leaders know the 'true north' of their moral compass and are prepared to stay the course despite challenges and disappointments. They are more concerned about serving others than they are about their own success or recognition. Yet by acknowledging failings and admitting error, they connect with people and empower them to take risks."

"Usually, authentic leaders demonstrate the following five traits:

1. Pursuing their purpose with passion
2. Practicing solid values
3. Leading with their hearts as well as their heads
4. Establishing connected relationships
5. Demonstrating self-discipline"

To be effective leaders of people, authentic leaders must first discover the purpose of their leadership. A test is to see how they act under pressure, if they have the ability to develop enduring relationships and if they have a high level of self-discipline. "No individual achievement can equal the pleasure of leading a group of people to achieve a worthy goal. When you cross the finish line together, there's a deep satisfaction that it was your leadership that made the difference."

To read the entire article visit: www.usnews.com/leaders.



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TRUST AND IMPACT COME OUT ON TOP

One of the major outcomes of a recent Watson Wyatt Survey, WorkUSA 2000, was the identification of seven key factors that drive employee commitment. The top rated factors were all quite similar in ranking, but together the list provides useful items to consider in any company's efforts to improve worker commitment.

Employees rated trust in senior leadership and the chance to use their skills on the job as the two most important drivers of employee commitment, followed by job security and receiving a competitive compensation package.

Key Drivers of Employee Commitment (percent impact of each factor)

Trust in senior leadership	14%
Chance to use skills on the job	14%
Job security	11%
Competitiveness of rewards	11%
Quality of company's products/services	10%
Absence of work-related stress	7%
Honesty and integrity of company's business conduct	7%
All other factors	26%

"Employee commitment used to equate with old-fashioned loyalty to a career employer," observed Pfau. "But today's mobile workers look for an employer of choice - one they can be proud to work for and whose leadership they trust. This sense of trust in senior leadership is really a key factor in commitment, which is a key factor in creating economic value for the organization."

Trust in Leadership

Companies with employees who had high trust and confidence levels in their senior management had a three-year total return to shareholders of 108%, compared with a 66% return at companies with low trust and confidence levels. However, only 50% of the surveyed workers expressed confidence in the job being done by senior management. Twenty-one percent expressed no confidence, while 29 percent were neutral.

The surveyed employees also identified seven factors that drive their trust in senior leadership, including promoting the most qualified employees, gaining support for the business direction, motivating the workforce to perform at peak levels, and explaining reasons behind major business decisions.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to be the leading integrity-based retained search firm focused on identifying, assessing and delivering world class leaders.

A total of 7,500 workers at all job levels and in all industries were surveyed about their attitudes toward their workplace and employers.

For more information, please read entire report <http://www.watsonwyatt.com/research/resrender.asp?id=W-304&page=1>