Leadership and Organizational Character

Why Character Matters: Ethics in business are sustained by culture, not simply by compliance. Truly effective internal controls (mandated by Section 404 of Sarbanes-Oxley) are the result of cultures of character – cultures that are created and maintained by leaders of character.

Overarching Elements	Qualities	Leadership Character	Organizational Character
Integrity		Basic Integrity – defined by honesty, authenticity, and truth telling – is the foundation for being seen as an ethical leader.	Basic Integrity – defined by honesty, authenticity, and truth telling – is the foundation for an ethical organization.
Respect	**Empathy**	Treating everyone in the organization with empathy helps leaders earn trust. Leaders who are empathetic create strong bonds and are seen as less "political."	In an organization high in empathy has a good understanding of both employees and customers alike, making communication smooth and commitment high.
	Lack of Blame	People who project blame are seen as irresponsible and lacking in integrity.	In organizations high in this quality, departments don't blame each other and take responsibility when things go wrong.
	Humility	Humility keeps leaders from appearing arrogant or self-righteous, and keeps the ethical conversation open.	Willing to learn from other organizations, open to change and the need to change, not too proud to look inward.
	Emotional Mastery	Leaders who are explosive are viewed as lacking in empathy and consideration for others, and don't hear the truth in the organization.	The norms of the organization support constructive conflict and openness, but don't support explosiveness and hostility.
Responsibility	**Accountability**	Leaders who are accountable follow through on commitments and are willing to hold other people accountable.	Accountable organizations get results, keep promises to customers, and stay focused on goals.
	Self Confidence	Leaders with self-confidence are less likely to go along with the crowd, and feel confident and assertive enough to speak their minds.	An organization with confidence is proud of its accomplishments and its culture, and feels that it can win in the marketplace.
	Courage	Leaders with courage are willing to address uncomfortable issues and take risk, even when they may endanger their own position or career.	Organizations with courage own up to mistakes, make reparations quickly, take risks, and try new things readily.
	Focus on the Whole	Leaders who focus on the whole are able to put the organization's interest or even the larger community's interest above their own self-interest or their own department's interest.	An organization that promotes a focus on the whole shares information widely and helps everyone understand how they work together to make the whole successful.

Leadership and Organizational Character are grounded in integrity, and reinforced by balancing Respect (the sense of partnership and mutual consideration that creates strong relationships) and Responsibility (the accountability and action- orientation that gets things done). See the scales that represent Leadership Character at www.leadershipcharacter.com.

Turknett Leadership Group offers character-based executive and organization development. The Leadership and Organization Character models are used in our consulting and ethics work, and are used specifically in a Leadership Character 360 and an Organization Character survey.

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