

Leadership Character Award Nomination

Nominee: MAPICS

Category: Large Organization

There are numerous examples that support why MAPICS should be recognized as a company that models the way for leadership. The enabling foundation for this model can be found in the company's core values:

- Openness and respect for the individual, allowing them to take risks & express diversity without fear of admonishment
- Maintaining the highest standards of personnel & business integrity
- Establishing an environment which allows all employees to work at their maximum potential
- Motivating employees by involving them in appropriate problem-solving & decision-making activities
- Caring for & standing behind employees
- Recognizing process professionals

Dick Cook, President and CEO of MAPICS has often commented that our employees are the intellectual capital of our company. Our company services manufacturers – an industry whose assets are inventoried, required “just in time”, and most often have considerable physical presence – like a factory or equipment. But at MAPICS, *“Our most important asset goes home every night.....and comes back each day because they believe in our company vision. **People are our most important asset!**”*

Like a factory asset, care must be taken to ensure the ongoing maintenance and care of the asset. At MAPICS this means:

- Treat everyone with respect and equality. Employees are expected to be “blind” to any attributes of a given individual that might drive pre-judgment.
- Respect the “diversity” of our team – indeed, celebrate the uniqueness of each individual and what they bring to the table.
- “Listen” to everyone's input. Managers are expected to have an “Open Door” such that any employee, at any level, is comfortable approaching management on any subject.
- Invest in Employee development & vitality to ensure that the asset has a long life
- Use an equitable compensation plan to attract, retain, and reward employees

At MAPICS, employees at all levels are expected to operate as process professionals. *Professionals aren't hired hands; they are hired heads and hearts.* Characteristics of a process professional include:

- Demonstrate cognitive capabilities, business literacy & multi-task proficiency
- Show strength of character & exercise highest levels of personal & business integrity
- Pursue constant process improvement in all business areas
- Provide a sense of urgency & commitment to aggressively seek delivery of new products & new methods of delivering services.

- Engage in teamwork, working with all stakeholders to benefit the organization as a whole
- Plan for the future based on sensitivity to changing market requirement & technological advances
- Innovate to create uniqueness that has a high level of value to our customers
- Establish equitable alliances with all partners, treating them as we would like to be treated if part of their organizations

Successful companies create the vision of the future such that individuals can align their goals passionately with the goals of the company. Although the use of the word passion may seem strong here, consider that “passion” is that for which you would voluntarily give your life – and with well over 40 hours a week given out of our life to work, the work should be meaningful! Even with a “virtual office concept” available to assist employees in aligning their work and their play, it is important to have strong buyin to the company goals.

In addition to the company’s values, there are several guiding practices at MAPICS which contribute to the development of leaders. These practices are captured here:

- Integrity: do what you say, when you say
 - If you can’t do it, tell people - in time to do something about it
 - If you blow it, admit it - don’t blame others
 - Say NO - if you have no desire or intent or ability to do it
- Ethical: do the right thing. People who have the most business success are known for not just doing things right, but doing the right things
- Each employee represents MAPICS and so each must set the right tone in all they do.
- Some simple thoughts:
 - It’s OK to say “I don’t know”
 - Getting help isn’t a sin
 - Stay as you are
- Exercise fiscal responsibility
- Set expectations:
 - Behave professionally
 - Meet performance expectations & objectives
- Provide Performance Plans
- Conduct Coaching / Mentoring
 - Learning to fly
- Provide Vitality Plan

As part of his management training, Dick will usually give the following quiz:

What is your Life Philosophy? (a quiz from the late Charles Schulz)

To puts things in the world in proper perspective:

- Name the five wealthiest people in the world
- Name the last three Heisman trophy winners
- Name the last three winners of the Miss America contest
- Name five people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize
- Name the last three Academy Award winners for best actor and actress
- Name the last five year’s worth of World Series winners

It doesn't take long for the attendees to realize that none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. Although all of the achievers are the best in their fields, the applause dies, awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten, and accolades & certificates are buried with their owners.

Dick suggests that instead we consider the following:

- List the two best teachers who aided your journey through school
- Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time
- Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile
- Think of five people who made you feel appreciated and special
- Think of three people you enjoy spending time with
- Name five heroes whose stories have inspired you

Isn't this what leadership is all about – who you are and not what you do? MAPICS is a leadership company and develops extraordinary leaders.