

Turknett Leadership Character Awards Nomination

Nominee: Dean Eisner

Organization: Manheim

Category: CEO/President/Managing Partner

Eighth Annual Awards: February 4, 2008

***Integrity** is defined by honesty, authenticity, and truth telling. Some examples of behaviors that typically illustrate integrity would be: always telling the truth even when it is difficult, keeping all promises, never twisting facts for personal advantage and being willing to stand up for what is right. Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Integrity:*

Dean Eisner understands that integrity in an organization comes from the top. He has always encouraged a high level of integrity amongst his direct reports as a guiding principle in how they operate. This is so important to him, that when it comes to evaluating an individual's performance, their bottom line numbers and results aren't enough. Individuals must exhibit Manheim's company values to succeed in the organization. In fact, even strong performers have parted ways with the company because their operating style wasn't a good fit with the values of the company.

Another example of Dean's integrity has to do with his willingness to adapt his own style and expectations to that of his company. Earlier in his career, Dean was successful working at GE, well known for its highly structured and traditional, professional business environment. When he came to Manheim, a decentralized organization with a history of valuing entrepreneurialism, Dean took the time to learn and understand the culture. Rather than imposing his concept of how things should work, he realigned his expectations to lead in such a way that it worked for Manheim. Dean is a leader, but not by such a distance that it causes discomfort by those who are following.

Dean also values varied viewpoints within a team and encourages a noisy debate in order to get all perspectives on the table. Disagreement with his position is something he values highly as it helps him to clarify his thinking. And, he never uses disagreement in a negative way. There is never an "I told you so" attitude after the fact.

***Respect** helps create a state of partnership and teamwork. Respect is defined by the qualities of humility, empathy, lack of blame and emotional mastery. Some examples of behaviors that typically illustrate respect would be: listening and being respectful of others, not blaming others, welcoming suggestions, being willing to compromise, admitting limitations, and maintaining composure by expressing disagreement calmly. Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates respect:*

A demonstration of Dean's respect for the culture and operating style of Manheim is evident in the implementation of the business planning process. When Dean tried the GE approach to business planning with a Florida Manheim location, he got back a 160 page plan with numbers and no passion. So, he blew up the approach and his

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expectations of it. Instead he asked Manheim locations to provide five year business plans that were all about the strengths and ambitions of their individual operating locations. Few guidelines were provided and the locations were encouraged to go down their own road, no matter where it led. The magic that resulted wasn't only in the plans themselves, but more so, in the way it brought people together as a team. Week in and week out, Manheim operating locations are focused on the steps they need to take to execute successful sale days. The business planning process enabled employees to step out of their day to day operating focus and to grow and develop as a team as a result of the process they went through to create the business plans.

Dean's respect for Manheim employees is evidenced in the confidential all-employee opinion survey he championed. Initiated in 2003, the Your VOICE survey is conducted every 18-24 months and contains questions in 18 categories including leadership, innovation, communication, career development, customer focus, work/life balance and more. The survey enables Manheim to recognize and reinforce areas of strength as well as to identify and address areas of concern. After each survey, Dean reports back on where the company is doing well and commits to areas of improvement, such as advancing career development opportunities. As changes are made and initiatives are implemented, they are shared with the employee population and linkage is made to the fact that the changes/initiatives were borne out of Your VOICE. Overall employee participation in the Your VOICE survey has grown from 45% in 2003 to 85% in 2007, proof that employees believe their voice counts.

Further confirmation of Dean's respect for the voice of employees is illustrated by the programs created to solicit ongoing feedback from them. Each month 12-15 different Home Office employees have Breakfast with Dean. They spend an hour and a half to two hours of face time with Dean asking whatever questions are top of mind for them and getting answers straight from the top. In addition, more than 200 hourly employees from field operating locations across North America have traveled to Atlanta to participate in feedback sessions. The objective of the feedback sessions is to get thoughts and ideas from employees about different ways to improve Manheim. Employees also get face time with Dean and other senior executives. Most recently, Dean has implemented Town Hall meetings. For the comfort level of employees, the sessions are broken out into manager and non-manager one hour sessions. Once again, employees are encouraged to ask questions and get answers straight from the top.

Responsibility is the acceptance of full responsibility for the success of the project, the team and the organization. Responsibility is defined by the qualities of accountability, self-confidence, courage and a focus on the whole. Some examples of the behaviors that typically illustrate responsibility are: taking initiative and being willing to act to get things done (whether it's your "job" or not), delivering on promises and holding others accountable, being willing to express an opinion, and sharing information across the company. Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates responsibility:

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Dean feels a strong sense of responsibility to Manheim employees. Responding to the Your VOICE all-employee survey results, he has been a huge advocate and force for employee career planning and development. Dean actively encourages employees to let their managers know of their career interests and aspirations for advancement. Working closely with the People Strategies department, he has guided the introduction of the following:

- Formalized Performance Management Process
- Manheim Learning Lane – over 100 training courses offered
- Mentoring Programs
- Talent Review – to identify future leaders
- Leadership Development Guides for Home Office and Field Operating Location employees
- HR Manager Development Guide
- Trainee Programs

Dean is an advocate for environmental responsibility. Under his leadership, Manheim has invested literally millions of dollars in environmental improvements to Manheim facilities. These initiatives include one of the most advanced water treatment and conservation systems in the world, changing from solvent-based to water-based paints and implementation of paint mix management processes, as well as the introduction of an improved hazardous waste management process, improved energy management systems and alternative energy sources for various locations.

Finally, when things don't go according to plan, Dean doesn't point fingers. Instead, he rallies people as a team. He provides an explanation of where things are not quite on course and offers suggestions on how Manheim employees can pull together to accomplish objectives. Whereas other leadership styles can be divisive, Dean's approach unifies employees toward the same goals.

*Please relate an incident or tell a story that shows how this person demonstrates **Leadership Character**. Examples may include professional or community involvement:*

One of Dean's best attributes demonstrating his Leadership Character is his absolute willingness to allow people to dream their own dreams, and chase them. There is no such thing as "just an admin" in his eyes, and he has personally mentored a woman from an entry level admin role to a Director level business development position. The woman had an initial experience/skill set that was not much broader than her passion for growth. Dean coached and worked with her to achieve her goals and dreams.