

Leadership – Applying Concepts

Source: Robbins & Judge (2016), *Essentials of Organizational Behavior*, 13th ed. Pearson. Instructor Manual

As evidenced by the growing number of corporate scandals of which almost all involve the CEO and other top officers, corporate America in many cases is missing one essential leadership ingredient—character. Character building may well be one of the new buzz words that will be heard across the airways and Internet in the next few years as a prescription for what is wrong with our current state of top management. Corporate leadership has failed its character test in the last few years and has some ground to make up in the future. Character is not just a manager's psychological profile carried to an extreme. It is, to use an old phrase, doing the right things, not just doing things right. To learn about character, young executives should go through self-awareness training, study, and, most importantly, experiential training with respect to character issues.

As plebes in the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, “new” managers of men and women are taught eleven principles of leadership from the Army's manual, *Principles of Leadership*. The principles (summed) are as follows: (1) Know yourself and seek self-improvement; (2) Be technically and tactically proficient; (3) Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions; (4) Make sound and timely decisions; (5) Set the example; (6) Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being; (7) Keep your subordinates informed; (8) Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates; (9) Ensure that the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished; (10) Train your personnel as a team; and (11) Employ your wit in accordance with its capabilities. Following these principles can certainly improve one's character.

1. What are your thoughts about the importance of character in effective leadership?
2. Using the eleven principles of leadership in the exercise, list which principles would be most instrumental in developing character in a leader.
3. Think about your own leadership in your place of employment (or recent employment) in terms of past managerial and leadership accomplishments. How does your profile as a leader compare to the eleven principles listed in the exercise? What do you think you need to work on for future success? Why?