

The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.

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CHOICE
Jean Strosinski, PhD, PCC



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Quotable Quotes

"When you are a leader of good character you have high moral values and integrity. You do what you say you will do on a consistent basis. To be consistent you have to act on your promises and threats as well." ~ Unknown

"Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy." ~ Norman Schwarzkopf

"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." ~ Peter F. Drucker

"In a moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing." ~ Theodore Roosevelt

"Leaders who give the best of themselves get the best from others." ~ Lee Colan

Dear Jean,

Welcome to a surprise guest author this month - Shelby Green. I was delighted when

Shelby took a look at the list of topics for this year and asked if she might write specifically to leadership and values. Of course the answer was "Yes" and I believe you will find more than just a couple of nuggets to take away with you this month. Shelby is a friend and professional colleague for these past 15+ years that I have been in New Mexico. She is truly one of those individuals you can sit with for a few hours and find yourself walking away knowing more intellectually and feeling more grounded in who you are. She embodies the spirit of living her values daily. This topic of values and leadership is not just one she chose to write about - it is also about the life she leads.

Shelby Green is a Talent Management and Organizational Development/Organizational Effectiveness professional in Albuquerque, NM. She works with organizational leaders to develop vision, structure, and direction for Talent Management, which includes identifying, assessing, developing, and enabling leaders within an organization. As an OD/OE professional, Shelby works with leaders and their teams to address workplace performance improvement opportunities. As a facilitator, she facilitates team building, strategic planning, conflict resolution, and other related activities. She has also served in several board positions including Annual Workshop Committee Member, Annual Workshop Committee Chair, Vice President of Publications, and Chapter President. Because of her service to NM ISPI, Shelby was awarded the Honorary Lifetime Chapter Member Award in 2007. She is currently serving as the Vice President of NM ISPI and serves on the membership committee for the International Coach Federation - New Mexico Chapter. Shelby has received several awards for her work in instructional design, including the Sandia National Laboratories' Gold President's Quality Award and the NM ISPI Award of Excellence for Outstanding Performance Technology Intervention.

With Joy,
Jean

Staying True to Your Principles and Values *by Shelby Green*

In a 2011 Forbes Blog titled "The Only True Leadership is Valued-Based Leadership," author Harry M. Jansen Kraemer, Jr., states that, "leadership must be rooted in who you are and what matters most to you. When you truly know yourself and what you stand for, it is much easier to know what to do in any situation. It always comes down to doing the right thing and doing the best you can." He goes on to say that knowing one's values as a leader and never losing sight of who one is, makes it far easier to make decisions, no matter the need.



This sounds easier than it actually is. Leaders are "agents of the corporation," - which means that at times, leaders must support corporate actions and decisions that don't align with their own personal values and principles. Is it possible to support the "company line" and still be an authentic leader? Can leaders inspire others to do something in which they don't agree? The good news is that they can, but to do so, they must first understand their own values and principles and be able to articulate how these shape their leadership style and behaviors.

Values describe what is important, while principles are rules that guide actions and decisions. If leaders aren't clear on their values and principles and how these influence their day-to-day interactions and decisions, they don't apply them consistently. When stressed or pressured to make quick decisions, they may deviate away from their personal values or make decisions that don't align with their principles. Actions such as these lead to inconsistent behaviors, which overtime, will cause mistrust and lack of confidence in their abilities. In addition, leaders who lack awareness about their own values and principles may not be able to articulate misalignments between their personal values and principles and those of their corporations, leading to feelings of stress or discomfort, without knowing why they feel this way or what to do about it.

When faced with a misalignment, leaders should spend time reflecting on which values or principles are being jeopardized and why. Leaders should take time to get clear on how they feel and what might be done. Next, leaders should talk to others in an attempt to better understand what their company is doing and why. Often coaches, mentors, or other trusted confidants can help leaders gain new insights or different perspectives that help to reconcile misalignments. Finally, it helps to spend time understanding the WIIFM's (what's in it for me) for the company, the customers, the employees, and the leaders themselves. Studies demonstrate that employees are more successful when they're intellectually and emotionally engaged. Understanding how the situation (decision or change) affects themselves and their employees helps leaders better understand their own reactions and anticipate how the employees might react.

If misalignments can't be reconciled, then they must be faced. Just stating the "company line" and ignoring how one personally feels comes across as disingenuous. Employees are quick to recognize when leaders are not being truthful...resulting in distrust in the leaders, in the company, and in what they are being asked to do. In short, it does more harm than good.

Andy Bryant, the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Intel, developed an approach where his people always knew they were going to hear what he truly thought while simultaneously supporting the organization. When asked to support the company line, Bryant would tell his employees, "I would have gone a different way, and here's why. On the other hand, I want you to understand why the C.E.O. or whoever made this decision. I don't know if I'm right and they're wrong. What I know, though, is that they were empowered to make the decision. It's a decision that can be defended, and our job now is to optimize that decision." (Bryant, A. [2015, April 11]. Andy Bryant of Intel: Don't Just Check Off Career Boxes. Retrieved May 3, 2015, from http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/12/business/at-work-dont-just-check-off-boxes.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share&_r=1)

Next, leaders must provide guidance and direction and "model the way." Continually focusing on why leaders disagree with decisions keeps employees from moving forward. Once leaders explain how they feel, they must, as Bryant explains, shift the focus to optimizing decisions. Leaders must begin to create environments in which the employees can get behind corporate decisions or actions and take steps to support them.

At the end of the day, leaders must support corporations' decisions and hold their employees accountable for doing the same. Leaders who are honest about their feelings, but support their organizations, model the way for the employees. This creates an open

and trusting environment where leaders and teams can come together to accomplish organizational goals.

Tools and Resources

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[From Values to Action: The Four Principles of Values-Based Leadership](#) by H. M. Kraemer (2011)

[Principle-Centered Leadership](#) by S. R. Covey (1992)

[Principle-Based Leadership: Driving Your Success as a Leader](#) by J. Anderson (2013)

[Lead Like Butler: Six Principles for Values-Based Leaders](#) by K. Millard and J. Cebula (2012)

[Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value](#) by B. George (2004)

[True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership](#) by B. George, P. Sims, and D. Gergen (2007)

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[Values Based Leadership](#) - MITVideo

[What Are Your Values? Deciding What's Most Important in Life](#) - Mind Tools

From the February 2007 Harvard Business Review Issue - [Discovering Your Authentic Leadership](#) by B. George, P. Sims, A. N. McLean, and D. Mayer

[Value Based Leadership](#)- Skills2Lead

[Principles of 'value-based leadership': Drawing upon his experiences at P&G, President and CEO Bob McDonald outlines 10 characteristics of a great leader](#) - Kellogg School of Management

Reflection

Have you reflected on your principles and values? Do you know what they are? Take time to determine which are most important to you and those that you will use as a leader.

The following suggestions are taken from the Practicing Your Values and Principles chapter in "*True North - Discover Your Authentic Leadership*" by B. George and P. Sims (2007).

Values

1. List the values that are important to you personally and as a leader. Next, rank

order them based on which ones you feel are non-negotiable, those which are desirable but negotiable, and, finally, which ones are situational.

2. Reflect on past personal situations in which your values were in conflict. How did you resolve these conflicts? Which values came out on top and why? What were the outcomes and were you happy with them?
3. Think about a situation in which your values were tested under pressure. Did you deviate from your values or principles? If so, why? What were the circumstances that caused you to deviate? What resources did you call upon to deal with the pressure? What would you do differently?

Principles and Boundaries

1. List the leadership principles you use (or wish to use) when leading others and rank order them according to importance. Consider whether or not they align with your corporation's principles. Do they align? If not, how will you deal with the misalignment?
2. List the ethical boundaries that you will not cross. How do these influence your decisions and actions?
3. Recall a situation in which you deviated from your principles? What did you do and why? What caused you to deviate from your principles and what was the impact? Did this cause you to re-evaluate your principles? How will you handle this situation if you face it in the future?

How can you recognize when you are beginning to veer away from you values and principles? What can you do to avoid this?

(Copyright 2007, Bill George, True North)

Choose To

Take time for self-examination...get in touch with your own culture, experiences, education, and family...reflect on your values and principles and their influence on you as a person and a leader...write your values and principles down and contemplate on what they mean to you...know how they play out in your everyday life...stay open...learn how your principles and values influence the choices and decisions you make...revise them over time.



June Joyful Observances

Effective Communications Month
National Fruit and Veggies Month
[National Rose Month](#)
Rebuild Your Life Month

Pet Appreciation Week (June 7-13)
Nursing Assistants Week (June 8-13)
Superman Days (June 11-14)
[Animal Rights Awareness Week \(June 14-20\)](#)
Meet a Mate Week (June 21-27)
North American Organic Brewers Days (Last Weekend, June 25-28)

National Go Barefoot Day (June 1)

[Hot Air Balloon Day \(June 5\)](#)

[World Oceans Day \(June 8\)](#)

[Flag Day \(June 14\)](#)

[Worldwide Day of Giving \(June 15\)](#)

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (June 26)

Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- * Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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