



A Guide to  
**Building High Character**  
Leaders and Organizations

# Better Business Bureau



*An Ohio Collaborative Leadership Education Project*



***MISSION:***

***To foster free enterprise and  
business self-regulation through  
consumer education and  
business ethics advocacy.***

*Acknowledgements:*

Character building is a team effort. As such, we gratefully acknowledge the commitment of Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell in establishing the Ohio Center for Civic Character. The center advocates the collaborative adoption of adult character-building resources among Ohio government, business, faith, education and media leaders. We also wish to acknowledge the work of the American Center for Civic Character for crafting UncommonSense and the leadership character-building guide content.

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# A Declaration of Character



Many years ago, your BBB created the Business Integrity Awards as a visual way of illuminating high standards of business ethics. We have learned through this program that there is a very direct correlation between the recipients of this award and the *intentional* effort they have put into imbedding defined character building ideas into their firm's leaders and teams.

What we discovered is that leaders require a clear "bulls eye" that really defines "character." That is why we have adopted a code known as UncommonSense.

Although trust appears to be under attack in this country, your BBB has long been at the forefront promoting the highest standards of business ethics and conduct. Over the years, our evolving mission became firmly rooted in the concept of trust. By helping businesses self-regulate (a fancy term for doing the right thing without government or legal mandates), the BBB fostered voluntary acceptance of ethical business standards. Adopting this UncommonSense Code has raised the stakes and commitment even higher. Leadership Character Building in addition to self regulation - what a great combination!

Members of the BBB have held high our stringent fourteen membership standards. No other association's members are so closely monitored for adherence to standards of ethical, responsible practices, or asked to make such an intentional effort to address and resolve customer concerns as a standard of membership. Our dispute resolution services help build bridges of understanding and trust between business and their customers. Furthermore, the BBB reports have become a key resource for local consumers who ask, "whom can I trust?"

We enjoy working closely with the American Center for Civic Character, the authors and providers of UncommonSense to pro-actively foster character ethics through the discussion, application and dissemination of the UncommonSense Code. When all is said and done your BBB believes that UncommonSense stimulates people to favor truth, favor one another, and favor right behavior and it is this sense, *made common* that will produce a truly uniting culture in America. We encourage you to join the BBB in this most timely local and national Character development initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kip Morse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "M".

Kip Morse, BBB Foundation President

## UncommonSense™

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### The Critical Importance of Truth:

- 1) **SEEKING WISDOM: Ethical or high character people courageously seek something greater than intelligence or knowledge (knowing what is); they seek wisdom (knowing what is right or true).** Wisdom must logically culminate in the identification of conscience-convicting truth to be intellectually honest. Hence, the relentless pursuit of truth, its source and its compelling advocacy is the moral objective of ethical, character-building people. (Observable Virtues: principled, prudent, contemplative)

### Applying Truth First, to Ourselves:

- 2) **FIDELITY: High character people courageously strive to be what they say they are.** Their behavior matches their beliefs. As a result they resist the temptation to sacrifice “what is right or wise” for “what might work or be popular” and overcome private and peer temptations that would render them hypocrites. Only those who strive after what is true and then first apply this consistently to *themselves*, are capable of authentically creating order and building trust (the prerequisites to relationship) within their organizations, marriages, families, fellowships, friendships, teams, etc. (Observable virtues: courageous, sober, reflective, self-aware, single-minded)

### Applying Truth in our Relationships:

- 3) **INTEGRITY: High character people do what they say they will do.** Because of their habit of wisdom and fidelity they demonstrate the courage of their convictions by doing what they say they will do even when there is great pressure to do otherwise. As a result they do not manipulate anything or anyone at any time. (Observable virtues: consistent, predictable, orderly, faithful, guileless)
- 4) **COMPASSION FOR OTHERS: High character people are compelled by wisdom, fidelity and integrity to extend unmerited kindness to others; as an act of the will.** They are compelled by an operative conscience (rather than their emotions alone) to be genuinely benevolent and sacrificially giving. They abhor meanness, cruelty and neglect of others. Act-of-the-will compassion makes loving the “hard-to-love”, possible. (Observable virtues: kind, gentle, patient, benevolent, generous)



- 5) **HONESTY: High character people speak the truth with compassion.** Ethical people speak up, present their facts with thoughtful accuracy, and do so with compassion. They are not avoiders; they are care-fronters...they confront because they care. They clearly qualify their yes and no and thereby minimize misunderstandings. They do not deliberately mislead or deceive others by misrepresentations, overstatements, partial truths, selective omissions or other intentional means. They take responsibility and don't shift blame. To avoid confusing others high character people break habits of sarcasm and cynicism. To avoid inflaming others they avoid sanctimonious and condescending tones. (Observable virtues: discrete, discerning)
- 6) **JUSTICE: High character people uphold truth, expose error and correct wrongs.** Just people are diligent in weighing evidence. They contend for truth and perform vigorous and unbiased examinations of individuals and information. Just people do not oppress powerless persons, or condemn innocent persons; they protect them. In the process of affirming good and reproofing evil they strive not to be harsh, exasperating or manipulative. Just people strain to objectively determine what outcome, however difficult or painful, is right. (Observable virtues: upright, bold, diligent, decisive)
- 7) **ACCOUNTABILITY: High character people scrutinize themselves and welcome the scrutiny of others.** They acknowledge that human nature compels us towards independence. Our preference for independence results in isolation from one another. Isolation breeds temptation to unethical conduct. High character people resist this chain reaction by adopting transparent life and work-styles that invite inspection. They place themselves in relationships that motivate self-examination and encourage constructive critique from others, particularly those they serve. (Observable virtues: an open, up-front, disclosing spirit)
- 8) **RESPECT: High character people treat others, as they would want to be treated.** They have an accurate view of the human condition: namely that every person is capable of both dignified and depraved conduct. As a result, they weigh the intrinsic worth of others as exactly equal to their own worth. This is why people of character are convicted by the Golden Rule. This conviction makes valuing diverse roles, giftedness, skills, style, personality, race, religion, and genders logical if not irresistible. Respect leads diverse people to value the dignity of others while having the liberty to passionately disagree with their opinions (opinions which can be influenced by our depravity). (Observable virtues: an inclusive, engaging and honoring spirit)
- 9) **PROMISE-KEEPING & TRUSTWORTHINESS: High character people do not break their word with others.** Because they prize interpersonal trust,

they do not make promises lightly, they are candid in supplying relevant information and they are diligent in fulfilling their commitments. They make every reasonable effort to fulfill the letter *and* the spirit of their promises. They tirelessly maintain a promised confidence. They do not interpret agreements in any unreasonably technical or legalistic manner in order to rationalize non-compliance or to justify escaping their promises. (Observable virtues: faithfulness)

- 10) EXCELLENCE: High character people strive to be their best knowing that this enables them to do their best every day.** Ethical people experience good “being” that fuels great “doing”. Excellence is the result of high character merging with high competence. Excellence is a high task achieved virtuously. When high character people collaborate they produce a “culture of excellence”. True and enduring organizational excellence therefore is only sustainable by people of high character. (Observable virtues: self-control, discipline, enthusiasm, pureness of heart, persevering spirit)
- 11) SERVING-LEADERSHIP: High character people sacrifice themselves for those they lead.** Serving-Leaders model and mentor high character conduct and produce an inspiring environment in which their sacrificial example of serving others produces relational harmony, principled reasoning, effective communication, clear mission, constant learning and character-rich decision-making. Leaders of high character produce cultures of character where followers increasingly manifest virtues rather than vices. (Observable virtues: courage, humility, selflessness)
- 12) UNITY: High Character people strive to build relationships that foster oneness among others who are bound with them to a common promise, mission or purpose.** Ethical organizations seek *uniformity* in their people’s shared character ethics and *unity* among their otherwise richly diverse people. Without a persevering commitment to shared character ethics, there is no hope for sustainable unity. (Observable virtues: reconciler)
- 13) FORGIVENESS: Because they know they are far from perfect people of high character are humble and they extend to and receive from others, unmerited acceptance.** Character breeches separate people. Separation injures conscience. High character people forgive and genuinely seek forgiveness to reconcile or restore their relationship with any person to whom they have committed a character lapse. Seeking forgiveness requires a confession of error by the offender. Rendering forgiveness is a radical act of undeserved understanding (or grace) by the offended. High character people are thankful when forgiven and are motivated to forgive inevitable offenses against them. They forgive others and seek the forgiveness of others intentionally. (Observable virtues: humility, patience, gratefulness, long-suffering)



- 14) HONORING AUTHORITY: All people are imperfect, requiring boundaries for behavior. High character people willingly yield to the authority of those who are charged with upholding those boundaries.** They help shape and then abide by the legitimate laws, rules and boundaries established by legitimate authorities and strive to live within those boundaries for the betterment of all people. When those given authority violate conscience-convicting character ethics; high character people take wise action to justly hold them accountable. (Observable virtues: yieldedness, submission/”under the mission”)
- 15) LIBERTY: High character people preserve their public rights by fulfilling their personal responsibilities.** In order to preserve public freedoms, every single person must exercise private restraints. Therefore, free people embrace self-control so that the need for public controls are minimized. As a result, high character people communicate and live out character ethics and intentionally exhort others to do likewise as an active act of preserving liberty for everyone. (Observable virtues: temperance, self-control)
- 16) LEARNING & MENTORING: High character people are lifelong wisdom-seekers and wisdom-advancers.** They have both a teachable and a teaching spirit. They impart truth to the uninformed. They reduce ignorance by illuminating the disenfranchised. They multiply character-based people and leaders. They nurture teaching relationships in order to maximize the character and competency of others: they are mentors. Mentors endeavor to invest their lives in others in order to help them *help others* to attain *their* greatest potential. (Observable virtues: curiosity, creativity, teachability, inspiration)
- 17) STEWARDSHIP: High character people live as if they will eventually reap what they sow.** They actively identify with the role of trustee or steward rather than owner. They perceive their function as a resource or role “caretaker” for a limited time. As a result they regard “positions” and “possessions” as “conferred in temporary trust”. Therefore, they care for their respective positions & possessions diligently and seek to add value to every role and every resource to which they have been entrusted. Ethical people have a high regard for multiplying the value of their “accounts” for the purpose of serving others and benefiting those who follow. (Observable virtues: humility, orderliness, carefulness)
- 18) SEEKING COUNSEL: High character people seek wise counsel particularly when confronted with issues that cause tension and/or confusion between two or more character ethics.** Because they are guided by their tireless pursuit of truth they regularly seek the wisdom of others of high character. After they weigh this counsel they act. The goal of this process is

wise actions (what is right) rather than popular action (what would make one appear good) or pragmatic action (what might appear to work). The result of a decision made with wise counsel is a clear conscience and the fruit of a clear conscience is contentment. (Observable virtues: thoughtfulness, patience, discernment, confidence)

### Our Ability to Change

- 19) SUBMISSION TO TRUTH: Truth transforms people only when we submit to it.** People who seek truth *cannot not transform*. Eventually everyone confronts the power of truth. When people of conscience are confronted by what is true they feel convicted to replace or “put off” their lower character by pursuing and “putting on” high character ethics. Taking action on this choice can occur over night or over a long (and often painful) period.
- 20) VALIDATING TRANSFORMATION: Over time high character people exhibit consistent hope-giving and conscience-affirming character virtues, which are the outer proof of inner uncorrupted character ethics.** Virtues and vices are simply the observable fruits that spring forth from either healthy or corrupted roots of character ethics. Therefore, character builders must make the lost language of character ethics their first language. Moreover, since good character is built in the valleys of life, not on the mountaintops and since it is fueled by the daily grind not on vacation, character builders must adopt an accurate view of the benefits of suffering.

Persevering as a character-builder is the only thing that is truly 100% within our personal control. This means there is hope for personal change today that is not dependent on change in others or in our circumstances. Our conscience drives our convictions, these convictions generate courage, and this courage drives our conduct, regardless of our past, our current circumstances or even cultures/ settings that are hostile to high character.



## The Case for Character Ethics

Character ethics are self-evident, conscience-affirming truths that when acted on consistently, produce virtuous behaviors, such as: compassionate acts, honest answers and just decisions. These virtuous behaviors create order and build trust. These are the twin indexes that best predict leadership success among presidents, pastors, parents and principals.

### Why is character-building essential to every leader's role?

“Character-building” is a leader’s most important role because character, rather than competencies such as communication skills, is the cornerstone of functional relationships and teams. High character is what unites high competencies to deliver mission force.

No matter how “competent” leaders may appear...if they choose to devalue, ignore or fail to demand character (first in themselves and then in others), then they will experience low character or dysfunctional relationships.

Dysfunction forces a leader to expend more and more limited leadership capital to deal with the results of low character: conflict interventions, ruptured teams, lawsuits, broken relationships and heartache. When the leader’s progress toward delivering the mission is chronically distracted by this dysfunction, the leader has failed.

### Two reasons why every leader needs to be an intentional character-builder.

**It’s our responsibility**...To some degree or another, “followers” (workers, constituents, and students) entrust themselves to leaders. This offering of trust triggers a moral imperative and often a legal imperative that compels leaders to create and sustain a nurturing, order-creating, trust-building, character-rich environment.

**It’s our right**...Leaders serve others best when they demand excellence. Excellence is fueled first by the example of the leader and then by empowering others (giving problem-solving authority to those closest to the challenge). Leaders who distribute authority to people must correspondingly demand high character of them. Leaders have the right to cultivate, and expect others to cultivate, high-character environments. American leaders who neglect intentional character-building (particularly in this age) are taking a great risk, as well as missing their calling.

## 12 Principles for Building Your Character

Take a moment to thoughtfully read the following statements in their entirety. Then, starting with the first principle, try to honestly assess to what extent you are a leading character-builder. Better yet, since self-deception is a powerful enemy of the character-building enterprise, ask several others who know you well to review this “Character-Building Prediction Test” with you. (A suggested measure might be: “I find that I am OFTEN=5, RARELY=3, or NEVER=1 characterized by this principle.”)

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess the Right Motivation:** As a leader, I am called to be an example-setter of high character to the people to whom I am responsible – whether they are my peers, children, employees and/or constituents. No matter if it seems inefficient, inconvenient or ineffective, I will build character because it is the right thing to do.
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess an Accurate Mindset:** My character flaws undermine my leadership, but are correctable. Character is who I am; competency is what I do. I will no longer confuse the two. Character is not only attractive to me, but is irresistible.
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess the Freedom to Choose:** I am 100% in control of my character and my response to others. I choose to be a leader of character. I regret my past character-poor choices. I *will* do all within my power to change. I will become more like the mentors and models I most admire.
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess a Teachable Spirit:** I am designed to be a lifelong learner. I am teachable and have a strong bias to apply what I learn, to who I am and what I do.
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess an Optimistic Vision:** A few might remember my competence, but virtually all will remember my legacy of character, good or poor. Many will exceed me in various competencies, but I will set my sight on building a reputation of uncommon character.
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ I possess a Clear Target:** I know the “bulls-eye” of high character. I know exactly what character-ethics are (such as UncommonSense) and the corresponding behaviors I desire, even though I may struggle to achieve them consistently.



7. \_\_\_\_\_ **I possess the Right Tools:** I have taken the time to assess and acquire the correct resources to support my character-building journey, including a list of defined character-ethics and a support system of like-minded leaders.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ **I possess a Sensitive Conscience:** I may not always act on its every conviction, but I have a conscience that consistently generates a sense of great personal peace when I act in high character and appropriate guilt when I do not.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ **I possess the Ability to Find a Caring Mentor:** My mentor(s) know me personally and we have agreed on a transparent, accountable, encouraging relationship as it relates to building character. My mentor(s) help me to create and maintain the conditions and principles necessary to build my character. Our respective roles and expectations are defined and mutually understood.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ **I possess an Integrating Perspective:** My goal is to operate out of one, unifying and aligning character identity. I will tirelessly work to reconcile all of my various relationships to conform to this single identity.

11. \_\_\_\_\_ **I possess a High View of Relationships:** I value relationships, but I'm not perfect. I want to forgive those who make errors and be forgiven as well when I commit them. While this does not eliminate the consequences of committing wrongs (or omitting rights), it assures others that I earnestly value them.

12. \_\_\_\_\_ **I have Counted the Cost:** If I start, there is no going back. I will be painfully exposed for what I am if I attempt to champion a double standard or refuse to confront chronically poor character of those in my charge and/or completely abandon my own pursuit of character.

## My Character-Building Action Plan

*Questions to get you started:*

1. What did you discover as you thought deeply about these measures?
2. What personal actions can you take immediately to start leading with rare character rather than with manipulation?
3. What character-building tools might best benefit you in the future?
4. What old habits do you need to shed and what new habits do you need to acquire to replace them?
5. Is there anyone with whom you need to be reuniting or reconciling?
6. Who could you ask to help encourage and hold you accountable to achieve these goals month to month?

## 12 Principles for Building a Team (or Culture) of Character

**Recommendation:** Do not begin this section until you have completed the prior section.

Leaders who desire long-term sustainable success must ultimately build a culture of character in their organizations. Huddle your leadership team around the following principles and “take inventory” privately and then share your results together. How true are these statements of your current culture? A suggested measure might be: “As a group we are ACHIEVING=5, STRIVING=3, or FAILING=1 to consistently fulfill this principle.” Make two of your group’s ground rules “to speak the truth with compassion” and “to record your action plan.” Be willing to extend this process until you reach a true consensus.

**1. \_\_\_\_\_ We define the target...then don’t lose sight of it:** We let our character creed (such as UncommonSense), like the Constitution, do the work of convicting people’s consciences; move people toward the document. We use the document to consistently coach, to encourage and to settle disputed matters.

**2. \_\_\_\_\_ We set the example and avoid hypocrisy:** Our leaders take character-ethics seriously and pursue them intentionally. Character-building starts at the top: our actions will speak louder than our words.

**3. \_\_\_\_\_ We mentor rather than just train:** Unlike teaching a competency, character is imparted by example-setters, not trainers. It is caught more than taught. We use one-on-one and small group mentoring where our attitude is “we don’t talk about the message, we live the message.”

**4. \_\_\_\_\_ We invite; we don’t intimidate:** We cannot mandate character-ethic beliefs. Character doesn’t work that way. Our consistent character example will become irresistible over time. Building a culture of character is a marathon, not a sprint; it requires our patient persistence.

**5. \_\_\_\_\_ We are missional, not chaotic:** Many character breaches occur needlessly because they are caused by systemic flaws in the organization’s mission, strategy, systems or structure. We create order and stay on mission. An environment of chaos is toxic to the character-building enterprise.

**6. \_\_\_\_\_ We praise character over achievement:** We strive to aggressively acknowledge and praise character, which is the locomotive of productivity, innovation and excellence. Praising achievement alone is like giving credit to the caboose for the progress of the train.



**7. \_\_\_\_ We integrate, not segregate:** To keep diverse people united around a common mission requires common character. Character is not built by a “flavor of the month” program. We integrate character into every aspect of our organization and leadership at all times.

**8. \_\_\_\_ We talk it up:** We read, review and repeat the content of our character creed in one-on-one and group meetings. We keep leadership character expectations “top of mind” and “tip of tongue.”

**9. \_\_\_\_ We unite around our shared ethics:** Beliefs that prevail upon the conscience are the only thing powerful enough to create voluntary, uniform, predictable and favorable behavior (the goal of team leaders). Our leaders create cultures where unique (diverse) people are drawn to these uniting ethics.

**10. \_\_\_\_ We are one team with one character:** Our character qualities are not higher around some people and lower around others. We are consistent in demonstrating high character, *relationship to relationship*. This is our strongest indicator that authentic character formation is occurring.

**11. \_\_\_\_ We acknowledge that character-building hurts:** Like bodybuilding, character-building leverages self-denial and sacrifice. But the gratifying end result is our common legacy of character – a priceless legacy – over which we have had 100% control.

**12. \_\_\_\_ We firmly believe that character is the primary measure of our team:** Whether it is obvious to us or not, a group is not a team until it unites around a culture of character.

## Our Team’s Character- Building Action Plan

Questions to get you started:

1. If unity is an important ethic, just how united is our team?
2. What failures must we personally and honestly own up to?
3. Where is our team strong in character-building measures? What or who is contributing to this strength?
4. Where is our team weak in character-building measures? What or who is in need of strengthening?
5. What steps do we need to take to strengthen our team in each of the 12 measures?
6. How could we better help each of our leaders build character better?
7. What are our character-building goals?
8. What resources are we going to need to put our plan into action?
9. Who will hold us accountable over the long haul to get this done?
10. When do we meet next to measure our progress against our goals?

# Character Resource Tools

## Honesty Self-Assessment

(Adapted from "Honesty with Others; Spirit of Revival 1995")

*This worksheet is intended to stimulate your thinking and is confidential to you.*

How honest are you with others? Do you really know what honesty means? In the privacy of your home (or by the end of the business day), take 15 minutes to ponder and "honestly" respond to the questions below. What issues does this raise? Is your conscience convicted? What motivates you towards dishonesty? What steps can you take towards greater honesty? Who might help hold you accountable to these goals?

### EXAGGERATION

- Overstating the truth by using words like "always" and "never"
- Making sweeping generalizations about people or situations
- Overstating (or understating) the seriousness of a situation in order to make a point or to achieve a greater effect

### FLATTERY

- Giving insincere praise
- Complimenting another to enhance my own reputation in their eyes

### LYING

- Slandering-spreading false reports about another, with the intent to inflict hurt
- Answering direct questions with untruths in order to protect my reputation
- Falsifying time cards, employment applications, expense reports, or tax returns for personal benefit

### MISLEADING

- Leaving a false impression (though my spoken words may be true)
- Communicating facts selectively to influence others for my own purposes

### INACCURACY

- Failing to verify the facts before repeating a story
- Carelessness with regard to factual details of stories
- Failing to speak precisely or to make sure that my words are literally true

### DECEPTION

- Allowing people to say things that are untrue about another person and implying consent by my silence
- Attempting to create a better impression of myself than is honestly true

### HYPOCRISY

- Praising another to her face while criticizing him/her behind her back

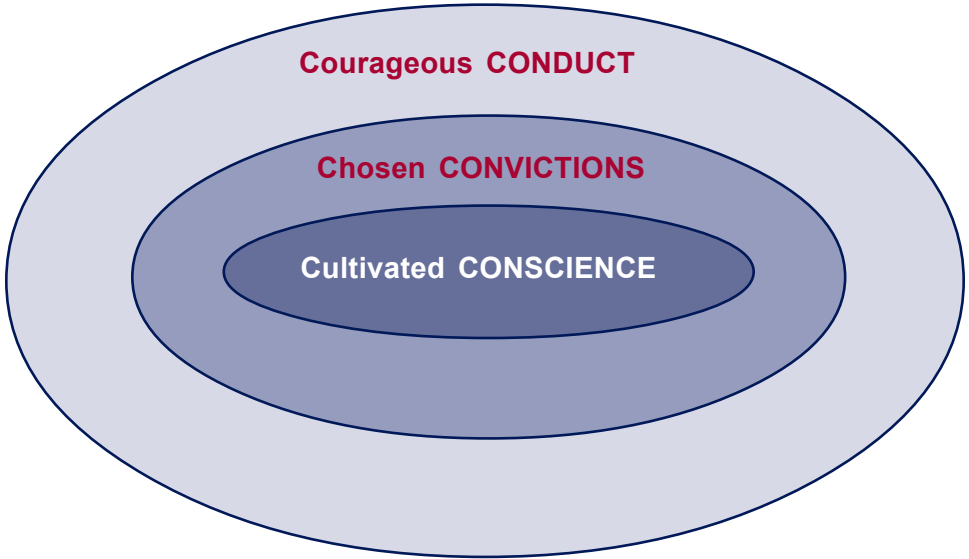
### INCONSISTENCY

- Flip-flopping on issues depending on my audience



## **Character Resource Tools**

### **Internal Character-Building Dynamics**



#### **Cultivated Conscience:**

**Conscience** is the uniquely human foundation upon which one builds personal **convictions**, which then inform personal **conduct**. One must strive, therefore, to cultivate conscience—to actually nurture and feed the ability to personally think deeply about what is true, reflect thoughtfully on what one discovers and then chronicle this thought into convictions.

#### **Chosen Convictions:**

A conviction is a conscience-affirmed *decision-default* position that informs conduct. It answers the question: "If this happened...I would do *this* (not this, this or this)." Every personal conviction can be theoretically described as either "emergent," "undergoing-testing" or "proven." They can also be further defined as "essential" (values) or non-essential (preferences).

#### **Courageous Conduct:**

Conduct is derived from convictions and conscience. Courageous conduct is choosing high character when all those around you would settle for less. Our conduct is the fruit (good, bad, right or wrong) of our set of conscionable convictions (the roots). To change behavior (the fruit) requires a change in belief (the root).

## Character Resource Tools

### The Character Competency Dilemma

*“I’ve seen the difference character makes in individual football players. Give me a choice between an outstanding athlete with poor character and a lesser athlete of good character; and I’ll choose the latter every time.”* TOM LANDRY, FORMER HEAD COACH OF THE DALLAS COWBOYS

3 High Character  Low Competency	1 High Character  High Competency
2 Low Character  Low Competency	4 Low Character  High Competency

Landry stated *intentionally* what most American leaders consider only *intuitively*. Coach sought out **Quadrant 1s** and **Quadrant 3s** and would avoid selecting or elevating **Quadrant 2s** (which is quite easy for most of us)...AND **Quadrant 4s** ...*which is extremely difficult for most of us*. Here’s why: While most Americans might agree with Landry’s wisdom, our experience is that most American institutions (and leaders) *are actually biased to reinforce, recognize and reward for competency...alone*. And this pattern is the biggest contributor to chronic dysfunctional tension among teams. Quadrant 4 people are a vexation to every team. It’s not that present-day America “disdains character;” it is that we esteem competency-building *to the neglect of reinforcing, recognizing and rewarding character-building*. *Until this cycle is broken, American leadership and “team-ship” will suffer.*

Questions:

Every person is composed of two interwoven “DNA strings:” Competency AND Character. BOTH are deeply relevant to predicting interpersonal and team functionality. Where would you plot yourself on this chart? Would this chart help you better share this point with others? How much attention do we honestly give to character building and assessment as an on-going enrichment /development goal as team leaders? What should or could we be doing?



## ***Character Resource Tools***

### **Personal Character and Organizational Culture ~Positive Change Formula**

“How can I really change for the better...how DO people change?”

$$\{TD + RV + FS\} > CP = C$$

TD = Total Dissatisfaction (with status quo)

RV = Realistic Vision (for a preferred future)

FS = First Step (willing to take the risk)

CP = Current Pain

C = Change

“OK, but how do I sustain change?”

$$\{CC+AA+GC\} > DT = SC$$

CC= Cultivating Conscience habit

AA= Authentic Accountability

GC= Good Character-Reinforcing Company

DT= Daily Temptation to do otherwise

SC=Sustain Change

## **Guidelines for Introducing UncommonSense to Others**

- 1) Make sure to introduce the document as a leadership character ethics “road map.” Make the point that such road maps are not common today.
- 2) Make sure to read the “Declaration” prior to reading UncommonSense...it is designed to anticipate and answer important questions.
- 3) Invite others to read the document in its entirety (some time in the ensuing week) and then to let you know what, if any, fault they find with it. Ask them to provide face-to-face and email feedback.
- 4) Be sure to emphasize that UncommonSense is a document that is designed to relate first to our conscience (not our political, religious or philosophical ideas). And yes it’s true... in practice we tend to breach these ethics regularly, regardless of our political, religious or philosophical ideals.
- 5) The “Big Idea” is to better agree with ourselves first, and then one another, that UncommonSense “makes good sense” and that it is a reasonable bulls-eye toward which to move all of our relationships.
- 6) Remember to indicate that while we are all flawed we can all aspire to building a culture of character.
- 7) DO NOT try to “close” others. That is not the purpose of UncommonSense. They do not need to sign anything. UncommonSense is not an ultimatum; it is a target that inspires us to “aim higher.”
- 8) With character-building movements we want people to buy-in over time as an IRRESISTIBLE response to an irresistible invitation to an irresistible preferred future, modeled by their leaders.
- 9) Make sure to point out the Forgiveness ethic. You and your team are going to stumble...we are not perfect. Forgiveness allows us to restore what would otherwise be broken...the “workhorse” of teams...trusting personal relationships.
- 10) Ask your team to think deeply about their favorite relationships and their least favorite (at work, home or socially: without naming names). Now refer them to UncommonSense and ask them to “diagnose” the worst and the best relationship. Where are the “pinch-points” in the worst relationship? How would they “character”-ize their best relationship using UncommonSense? How could they act to move the worst relationship forward?
- 11) Make sure to “unpack” UncommonSense in its four distinct sections. The *Critical Importance of Truth* (Ethic 1: Wisdom), *First Applying Truth To Ourselves* (Ethic 2: Fidelity), *Applying Truth in Our Relationships* (Ethics 3-18) and *Our Ability to Change* (Ethics 19 and 20).

# Personal Action Plan

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2.

3.

# Team Action Plan

1.

2.

3.



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of Central Ohio , Inc.**

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