

Build your Character for results

INSPIRATION FOR SUCCESS – March 08

Hope you had a great Easter. This month I am sending you an article written by Michael Josephine on character that I thought was thought provoking. Also, a link to a recording from an Oprah Winfrey show that I found very inspiring from a man of great character. It has apparently had in excess of 6 million viewings to date. Thanks Emma for sharing this.

1. The Nature of Character

Abraham Lincoln was very concerned with character, but he was also aware of the importance of having a good reputation. He explained the difference this way: "Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing."

Put another way, your reputation is what people think of you. Your character is what you actually are.

In a world preoccupied with image, it's easy to worry too much about our reputation and too little about our character. Building a reputation is largely a public-relations project; building character requires us to focus on our values and actions. Noble rhetoric and good intentions aren't enough.

What we're looking for is moral strength based on ethical principles. Character is revealed by actions, not words, especially when there's a gap between what we want to do and what we should do and when doing the right thing costs more than we want to pay.

Our character is revealed by how we deal with pressures and temptations. But it's also disclosed by everyday actions, including what we say and do when we think no one is looking and we won't get caught.

The way we treat people we think can't help or hurt us (like housekeepers, waiters, and secretaries), tells more about our character than how we treat people we think are important. People who are honest, kind, and fair only when there's something to gain shouldn't be confused with people of real character who demonstrate these qualities habitually, under all circumstances.

Character is not a fancy coat we put on for show. It's who we really are.

2. The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch

I recommend you cut and paste the following link into your browser when you have a spare 10 minutes

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=8577255250907450469>

Wishing you success always,

Chris Cooper
Managing Director

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