

CHARACTER

"I recognize that my character is what I am and my reputation is what others say I am."

STEP 1: ACHIEVED RESULTS

What specific action did you commit to doing last week? What was the results?

STEP 2: REFLECTIONS

Instructions: Take turns reading the following paragraphs with others. As you read, underline the ideas that stand out to you.

In an individual's life there will always be opportunities to choose between character and reputation. In order to choose correctly, you must understand the different virtues, which when combined create an unbreakable character.

Integrity. *"People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will be exposed. Prov. 10:9 NLT.*

To be a leader, the integrity of the person is not negotiable; because without it, no one will follow them for long. Integrity prevents a person from committing evil acts. Leaders with integrity are also criticized, but they know that people with integrity expect to be believed; if not, they allow time to prove them right. Author Mark Sanborn believes that integrity is essential and wrote: *"When integrity ceases to be the leader's top priority, when ethical commitment ceases to be necessary to do a greater good, when the achievement of results is more important than the means to obtain them; It is the moment when the leader enters the slippery tangent of failure."*

The words honorable, honest, trustworthy, obedient, and faithful describe a person with integrity. It is imperative that you constantly subject your life and work to close inspection. A father named Joshua Wooden taught his son the principle of integrity:

1. Never lie.
2. Never cheat.
3. Never steal

Imagine how simple life would be if everyone followed these principles, which are essential to becoming a man and woman of integrity and trustworthiness. The person must compare his actions with these three principles. Quite simply, no one will willingly follow a leader who violates these three principles of integrity, because people follow leaders they trust.

Never lie. *"Then keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies!" Psalm 34:13 NLT*

As the first principle of integrity, "never lie" means that the value of a person is their word. When a person tells the facts as they know them, instead of how they want them to be, or instead of exaggerating them to be what they want them to be, then they are trustworthy. Unfortunately, many people, afraid of looking bad, and more concerned with their reputation than their integrity, choose to lie. Lies deform a person's

character over time. The lie comes from the author of all lies, Satan. When the person opens the door to the lie, their conscience hardens so much that the person falls into their own web of deception.

Never cheat. *“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition”. 1 Timothy 6:9 KJV*

The second principle, never cheat, helps the person maintain their integrity, building trust. When you lie to someone, trust goes out the window and rarely comes back. Ironically, people who cheat end up cheating themselves over time, because no one trusts and follows a liar.

Cheating can be perceived as a shortcut to success; but in reality, it is a dead end road. Make no mistake, because dishonest people cannot create and maintain credibility for long.

Never steal. *“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need”. Ephesians 4:27-28 NIV*

The third principle, never steal. And it's not only talking about grabbing other people's things, but also about the theft of time. This covers deliberate acts of employees to misuse time during work hours, which causes permanent damage to productivity. Many employees who would never steal directly from their employers' wallets have no remorse about indirectly stealing time and wages.

The person who steals may gain materially in the short term, but he steals from his own character, which ultimately leads to bad consequences in the short term, in the long term, and above all, for eternity.

Commit now not to lie, to not cheat and to not steal under any circumstances. No matter what others do, don't stoop so low. Refuse to make decisions based on your convenience; instead, make your decisions based on your character.

Benefits:

1. You will be a **trustworthy person** for others. They will know that you are not going to take the shortcut of using lies to get out of an uncomfortable situation.
2. You will always be able to sleep peacefully with a clear conscience.
3. You will have an **excellent** personal, work, professional and family **reputation**, which will expand your circle of influence and friendships.
4. It will keep doors open for you.
5. First of all, you will please God.

Steps to follow:

1. **Ask for forgiveness.** If you had been living with a lack of integrity, ask God and the people you deceived for forgiveness and make the commitment to change.
2. **Live honestly and keep your promises.** Always be honest with others, even when it causes you problems.
3. **Create a personal mission statement for your life.** Assess where you are right now in your life and consider where you want to be in the future in terms of your personal integrity and moral character. Write your goals and values. Think hard about the kind of person you want to be and what you hope to achieve in your life.
4. **Stay committed to your values.** Never compromise your values. Don't sacrifice real personal value just because it suits you.

CHARACTER

STEP 3: REFLECT AND RESPONSE

Choose something that you underlined as important to you. Take a minute to share with everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

.....

STEP 4: AUTO EVALUATION

Respond the following section of self-evaluation:

In a scale of 1 to 10: How well do you demonstrate this quality in your life? _____

Why did you give yourself this score?

What benefits would you obtain from improving your score?

What people do you know that are a good example of this quality? What do you admire the most from this person?

What specific action can you take immediately to improve your score?

STEP 5: SHARE YOUR ACTION STEPS

Take a moment to share your responses from the self-evaluation section, include the action that you plan to take to improve in that area. We ask that everyone participates.

Instructions for the host:

1. **Make the calling:**

“Lord Jesus I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and my heart so that you may be my Lord and personal Savior, amen”.

2. **Impartation:** Pray and activate what you have learned today.

3. **Pray for the offering.**