

Staff Development Services

building strong businesses one employee at a time.

Consideration -- The twelfth in our series discussing the 13 job related character tendencies.

If you missed, or would like to review, the first eleven articles of this series please click on the newsletter of your choice. These newsletters cover Emotional Energy (18), Stress (19), Self-Esteem (20), Optimism (21), Work (22), Detail (23), Change (24), Courage (25), Direction (26), Assertiveness (27) and Tolerance (28).

Consideration

Consideration: Have you ever heard of the Ethic of Reciprocity -- often called the Golden Rule in Christianity? It simply states that we are to “treat other people as we wish to be treated”. Although that sounds wonderful, the truth is that I may not want to be treated in the same manner as you do. That leaves us in a quandary unless we follow another similar rule that I will introduce later in this newsletter.

Everyone is designed to fulfill their needs, whether they want to admit it or not. In our reports, we refer to consideration as how understanding, thoughtful, helpful, honest, and responsible a person is. Although this sounds like it should be straightforward, it really is not. There are two extreme positions that are part of some people’s character make-up. One is “I do not do anything for anyone unless I benefit” and the second is “I do everything for everyone so I can benefit”. Although each of these extreme positions is done for different reasons, the result is not very different.

However we behave with people is the result of how we feel about them. Emotionally intelligent people are always aware of the way they are interacting with others while those with extreme levels of consideration are doing what it takes to satisfy their own compelling needs without having any idea about how their behaviors affect those around them. Is it possible to live under a delusion? You bet, and a lot of people do exactly that every day of their lives.

We review a lot of surveys of potential employees who we often refer to as being the “overly helpful type of person” . While many other character traits are involved in this type of person’s behaviors, consideration tends to be one of their stronger motivators. Their level of consideration is at the extreme high end of the scale so they tend to be externally controlled by this character need, driving them to do things for others whether the other person wants their help or not. Have you ever had someone interject him/herself into what you are doing but, instead of appreciating their efforts, you feel they are interfering with what you are doing? Most of these people think they are being kind, helpful, sacrificing, etc., which really just helps to make them feel better about themselves while doing little to benefit the other person.



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If someone has really low consideration, they may feel guilty about taking advantage of others but do it anyway. They can find reasons to justify their actions to make themselves feel better, but it does not change the outcome. Most of those reasons come from other character traits and, if those traits are ‘out of kilter’, they may not feel any remorse for their actions at all. Although these people do not really care about the way they affect others, they can often come across as being very nice and helpful which helps them to take advantage of others.

Although I do not have any empirical evidence, I believe that a lot of physicians who are sued have poor ‘bedside manners’ and little true concern for others’ feelings, leaving the patient with a ‘bad taste’ about the care they received. Personally, I would much rather have a surgeon or lawyer who wants to be successful for their own purposes than one who needs to be liked. But, I don’t want to be associated with anyone who is ‘just in it for the money’ because that could lead to a bad result for me. Every role has an appropriate level of consideration associated with it and the wrong level can have serious consequences on how the person handles their responsibility.

Anyone with too much consideration tends to spend too much time worrying if they are doing enough for others or trying to please others rather than staying focused on their responsibilities. But, having too little consideration can lead to people hurting others. They can say offensive things or, if someone also has a low work ethic, they might take shortcuts that could hurt others in many ways, depending upon the kind of work they do. In general terms, anyone in leadership should have a moderate level of concern for others but not enough to interfere with their responsibilities. Professionals who must render opinions or perform their work on, or for, other people should have enough concern to be empathetic but not so much as to be sympathetic.

Each of us was designed to fulfill our needs but the way we go about doing that is what makes us unique. A truly emotionally intelligent and considerate person attempts to get what they need out of life without doing any harm to anyone else. However, many of our other character traits influence our consideration and increase the guilt we feel about the way we deal with people, regardless of what we do.

If you want to really strive towards being that well-balanced, emotionally intelligent person, consider The Platinum Rule as a good way to interact with people. The Platinum Rule states “treat others as they wish to be treated.” That is probably true consideration.

Also, we now have available our free downloadable toolbar for your web browser to make it easier to access the online survey site. If you are interested in downloading it visit [this site](#).

Again, to view the previous newsletters please [click here](#).
Health and Happiness!

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