



## ***Leadership Tips*** *November /* *December 2017:*

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## ***Are You Credible?*** ***How to Make Honesty*** ***Your Policy***



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***Are You Credible?***  
***How to Make Honesty Your Policy***

When you speak, do people listen? More importantly, are you believed? To command attention and respect in the workplace, you do have to be credible.

Credibility in the workplace means believability. Simply put, do people believe what you say? Is your reputation based on a track record of telling the truth? Are your estimates accurate, your forecasts realistic, and your word solid? Or are you a big talker, a storyteller, or a spin doctor? Strive to be a credible professional.

### **The Right Way to Write and Speak**

From the moment you submit a resume and interview for a job, the credibility counter is activated. Are your resume assertions accurate, your chronology factual and your affiliations, degrees, and awards correct? Whether spoken or written, our communication must withstand the test for truthfulness.

Whether or not your inaccuracies are uncovered during the interview, you could damage your career when you misstate or misrepresent your accomplishments. Even Pulitzer Prize winning authors have been undone, as have supposed war heroes and many a politician, by inflating or falsifying past accomplishments. Whenever the scrutiny arrives, your track record comes into play.

### **The Courageousness of Credibility**

At times being credible means standing alone. Or expressing ideas or points of view that are unpopular. Yet you can stand tall knowing you're acting credibly. In the long run it will build your stock!

### **Your Word is Your Bond**

People listen to what you say and how you say it. In every workplace situation you have the opportunity to become known as a person of his or her word. Conversely, you can become known for shading the truth, for telling people what they want to hear, or parsing words as a defendant might do under cross examination in a court of law.

We've all heard of the boy who cried wolf so many times that when a wolf finally appeared, people had long since stopped listening. This boy's credibility had disappeared. The same is true in the workplace. Whether someone cries racism, sexism, ageism, or favoritism, it's important that there be credence to the claims. It can be devastating and a disservice if someone falsely accuses another.

spreading half-truths can flag you as untrustworthy and ultimately not promotable material.

One of the keys to success in the workplace is engendering trust from your co-workers. If you are gossiping or betraying confidences, you destroy your own credibility - as an honorable co-worker, a safe confidant or an ally.

### **Take the High Road**

Workplaces provide ample opportunities for you to earn credibility. Every time you meet a deadline, do what you say you'll do, or are there in a time of need for others, the department or the organization at large, your credibility rises.

When you defend the honor of co-workers who aren't present, refuse to engage in gossip, or caution others to give co-workers the benefit of the doubt, you are showing wisdom and professionalism and raising your credibility in the workplace.

Similarly, when you "say the right thing" or "do the right thing" in ethical situations, your credibility is enhanced.

### **Tell It Like It Is**

Often employees avoid admitting mistakes. The credible professional can admit errors or mistakes in a forthright and direct manner. Everyone makes mistakes, but the credible professional addresses them and goes about rectifying them, restoring confidence in him or herself. Those lacking in credibility might try to cover up, ignore or minimize their folly, often compounding the error. Ultimately, it's less important that you made a mistake, than that you fixed it and can assure others it won't happen again.

### **Know When to Say "No"**

The credible professional doesn't just tell people what they want to hear. Life would be easy if we could say "yes" to every request we received. Yet agreeing to something you ultimately can't deliver on is detrimental to your reputation. Develop the fortitude to say "no" when it's the right answer, even though it may not be the popular one. Over the long term, you will be respected for the accuracy of your assessments, decisions and determinations, even if the news isn't music to the ears of all who listen. Sometimes the truth isn't popular or pretty, but a person who is a "straight shooter" is respected by all.

Sometimes being credible means...

- Turning down an assignment if your plate is already full
- Recommending a better suited colleague for an assignment you are offered
- Addressing the "elephant in the room" when groupthink is prevailing

because you see risk or impending doom in a project or initiative

- Taking a stand when you witness inappropriate workplace behavior on the part of others, be it harassment, bullying, the telling of inappropriate jokes or gossip

Your credibility rises when you reflexively say and do the right thing, without first determining which way the wind is blowing.

### **Find Your North Star...Within**

As a new employee I remember constantly taking my cues from the more popular employees in my department when it came time to offer opinions, make contributions or advance ideas. I was trying to curry favor, yet I often deferred decisions until I could 'test the waters' and poll the group.

My supervisor finally pulled me aside and reminded me I was hired for my experience, wisdom, and instincts. She explained that she expected me to use my own resources to make the right decision regardless of popularity.

From that point forward I let my own instincts guide me. And not long after our conversation I was promoted. While I wasn't always right, I slept better knowing my decisions weren't based on popularity, but on my internal compass. Whether you sleep on it, meditate or pray on it, look to your own ethical underpinnings to help you make credible decisions.

### **Putting It Into Practice**

Remember:

- √ Take the high road
- √ Tell it like it is
- √ Know when to say "no"
- √ Listen to your instincts

### **Earning Your Stripes**

Strive to boost your credibility rating at work and in your professional relationships. You'll know you're succeeding when you hear others tell you they know they can count on you, have confidence in your projections, and feel secure in their knowledge you're on the team.

Don't just be credible...strive to be incredible!

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**The Consulting Team** is pleased to introduce three new half-day training courses:

1. [Building and Cultivating Trust](#)
2. [Credibility -- How to Earn It, How to Keep It](#)

3. [Think On Your Feet: Develop Your Ability to Think, Act & Speak Spontaneously](#)

Click on the above links to learn more about each workplace offering.

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Contact The Consulting Team to learn more about training, coaching, consulting assistance and also one-to-one training for leaders and employees.

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