



SCHOOLEY MITCHELL
Telecom Consultants



Dear Tony:

To get ahead in business and stay there long-term, reconnect with and live the values you first learned as a child and which you've probably assumed no longer apply in business. For most people regardless of their culture or upbringing, the values they learned as children are the same. The following is a refresher on some of the basics.

Regards,

Glenn Gagnon

WINNERS NEVER CHEAT
Everyday Values We Learned As Children
(But May Have Forgotten)
by Jon Huntsman

"It sometimes takes great courage to follow the moral compass in the face of marketplace pressures, but no challenge alters this fact: Regardless of who is holding the compass, or how they are holding it, or what time of day it happens to be, north is always north, and south is always south. Following one's moral compass is not for the faint of heart or the cold of feet."

- Jon Huntsman

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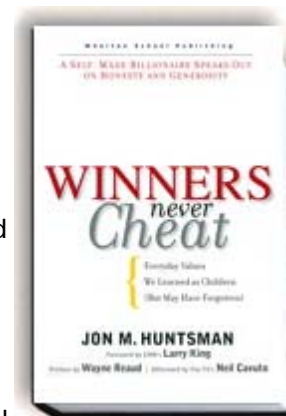
There never needs to be a disconnect between the values you have in your own life and what you do at work. You just don't have to cut corners, fudge the numbers or cheat in large ways or small to stay competitive. What's needed most is that you reconnect with and live the values you had as a child.

Everyday Values of Business

1. Before you act, always stop and check your moral compass.

It's interesting that kids naturally know what's proper behavior, even if they don't always act that way. They're honest with their observations, able to work out their squabbles without the use of a court or even a 200-page rulebook and most of their games run fine without referees or umpires.

Your gut will always tell you what's wrong and what's right. Everyone has a moral GPS or compass. Do what you know is right rather than what's expedient in any situation.



The laws of every society define the minimum course that must be followed but everyone sets their own ethics. Sometimes there is an overlap of the two, but more frequently virtuous behavior is left entirely to your own discretion. Virtue cannot be politically or legally mandated, or enforced by bureaucrats. Respect, civility and integrity come about only when you live by your own personal values and do what you know to be right, even if the rulebook doesn't specify this in great detail.

2. Compete aggressively, but always play by the rules.

Play to win but don't do anything that would compromise your values. Over the long haul, cheating and lying always lead to failure. It's just a matter of when the truth comes out, not if.

No one will begrudge you having the desire to drive a hard bargain. Put everything into what you do and enthusiastically seek every competitive advantage you are legitimately entitled to. However, the moment you introduce any dishonesty into the transaction, you lay the foundation for everything you're trying to achieve to become unraveled.

Your personal character is nothing more than the sum total of whichever rules you choose to honor and which you decide to ignore. Character determines how much your value system affects your life. You're far better off acting with integrity, even if that seems cumbersome and unprofitable in the short term. If you compromise your values by agreeing to some unethical practices such as the payment of bribes or other under-the-table payoffs, it becomes very difficult to ever reestablish your credibility or reputation.

3. In leadership roles, set a good example.

Never fall into the trap of thinking you can set your own rules just because you're in a leadership position. Instead, the complete opposite is true – you have to be a great example of the benefits of obeying the rules.

The best leaders don't exercise dominion over people. Instead, effective leadership is maintained through mutual agreement. Great leaders earn the respect of their people by being excellent role models and then use that respect to achieve worthwhile things.

It is noteworthy only humans can possess ethical standards and only humans can provide leadership to organizations. A business itself can't have ethics. Nor can an organization's physical assets – its buildings or equipment. Leadership is very much a human activity, and the greatest leaders have always been those who set the right example and obey the rules.

4. Always keep your word, no matter what the consequences.

Too many people feel it is impossible to settle a business deal with a handshake. Instead, they will get the corporate lawyers involved trying to work into any written agreement escape clauses and loopholes that can be exploited should the deal turn out to be a disappointment. This is an unhealthy trend which extends the lawyer's role well beyond what they are professionally trained to do.

It's unrealistic to expect corporate lawyers to go away altogether. However, if you trust people more and become increasingly trustworthy yourself, lawyers can go back to providing legal advice rather than being in the thick of every negotiation which takes place. For this to happen to any great extent in the real world, however, you've got to be willing to keep your word no matter what the consequences.

5. Surround yourself with advisors who will say no when needed.

If you hire someone who has different values to your own, there will be problems sooner or later. These people won't be able to alert you when things are going wrong because they won't recognize the problems as such. Nor will there be any common foundation on which a relationship of trust can be built. It's essential, therefore, that you hire like-minded advisors who share your basic values and cultures.

Ethics is all about whether we do the right thing when that act will cost more than we really want to pay. We respect those who do the right thing, even in the face of opposition or peer pressure to take a shortcut. It takes courage to do what's right rather than what is expedient, and we always respect those who exhibit this essential character trait.

In the final analysis, an organization's written regulations and standards are really less relevant than your core values and internal compass. If you have to go through the official rulebook searching for loopholes to justify what you're proposing to do, the odds are going to be high that you simply should not do what is being suggested. The same applies to the suggestions made by your advisors. If they require an exact interpretation of the rulebook for their validity, you can be confident that's the wrong way to be heading.

6. Forget about revenge. Move onwards and upwards.

Somewhere inside you, a little voice will tell you: Life is too short to hold grudges. Move on and make what you're doing today a success rather than endlessly obsessing over yesterday's failures.

The more time you spend worrying about how to strike back at those you believe have wronged you in some way, the less time you have to devote to doing more productive things today which will build a better future. What happened in the past is history. Look to the future instead.

In short, spend more time looking forward and less time looking backwards with regrets. Don't worry about addressing the injustices of yesterday. Focus on what's happening today and lay a great foundation for tomorrow.

7. Graciousness is an excellent habit to cultivate and practice.

Learn to treat everyone with respect – your customers, your peers, your employees and even your competitors. In everything you do, be kind to others.

Decency is in short supply in the competitive world of business, just as it is in the political arena and in professional sporting events. It really doesn't have to be that way. Whenever a person wins with class – meaning with grace and decency – everyone admires the accomplishment.

The true gold standard in this regard is the Golden Rule itself. Ask: "How would I like to be treated in this situation?" If you then follow through and do exactly what comes to mind, you'll do well.

8. Always operate your business as if your name is on the door.

Run your business as if it were family owned and people were going to judge your family that way. Live your values and don't do anything you would be ashamed to see published in your community's daily newspaper.

The best way to run a business is to make decisions as if you own it entirely and intend to stay in business forever. From that point of view, you would want your employees to be happy in their home environments first and foremost, since that will have a direct bearing on how productive they are at work. If you're asking employees to put off their family interests in order to be good at work, you won't be able to sustain your company over the long haul.

The reality is to be a success, you'll have to work hard, prepare thoroughly, negotiate fairly, and be determined, honest and charitable. The workplace should be an extension of your family environment where these basic values are encouraged, cultivated and practiced.

9. Give something back to the community - return the favors.

Both companies and individuals are under obligation to put back into the community more than they take out. Don't wait until you're a billionaire. Start giving something back right now, even if it's just your time.

Nobody is a totally self-made man or woman. Along our way, we all receive help from others and have an opportunity to take advantage of some lucky breaks. The only genuine way you can show appreciation for the help you've received along the way is by sharing your good fortune with others.

"Although business itself may well be amoral, its leadership is dictated by moral decisions. It sometimes takes great courage to follow the moral compass in the face of marketplace pressures, but no challenge alters this fact: Regardless of who is holding the compass, or how they are holding it, or what time of day it happens to be, north is always north, and south is always south. Following one's moral compass is not for the faint of heart or the cold of feet. Leaders worthy of the name understand and accept that they are chosen every bit as much for their values and courage as for their administrative skills, marketing savvy or visionary outlook."
– Jon Huntsman

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