Leadership Development Series: Instrument Training for Integrity and Civility Pilots

Session Four
January 25, 2017
Objectives of NACo’s Leadership Development Webinar Series

• How to discern the duties of integrity and civility
• How to balance multiple duties
• How to avoid ethical deflection by hidden self-interest and other pitfalls of perception
• How to manage public confrontation through the practice of integrity and civility
• How to take risks to fulfill the duties of integrity
Objectives for Today

• Summarizing the pitfalls of self-perception
• Refining the principles of discernment and duty
• Scoring our mistakes and mapping out our future course in the practice of integrity
Instrument Training for Integrity Pilots
Instrument check no. 1: Are you seeing all applicable duties?

• When faced with a tough decision, are you discerning only one duty? If so, self-interest may be obscuring other applicable duties.
“Right” and “Right”

- Integrity usually requires the balancing of competing duties, not a decision between right and wrong.
Instrument check no. 2: Creating false duties

• Are you viewing a decision in terms of a “duty to myself”, “loyalty to myself” or “my family’s “best interests”, etc? You may be speaking the vernacular of self-interest.
Instrument check no 3: Describing self-interest as survival

• Using the word “survival” and the “vernacular of self-interest” are signs that integrity’s duties are being ignored.
Survival

• A survival situation is one in which self preservation justifies the suspension of any competing duty.
Collusion is the process of elevating self-interest to the level of duty.
Instrument Check No. 4: The vernacular of Self-interest

- No harm, no foul.
- Charity starts at home.
- It’s only a white lie.
- The Lord helps those who help themselves.
- It is a dog eat dog world.
- Get it while you can.
- To the victor goes the spoils
- It's always been done this way.
- The only person you can rely on is yourself.
The Vernacular of Self-Interest

- Fake it till you make it.
- Fight for your right.
- The cream rises to the top.
- Nice guys finish last
- Just following orders
- I deserve it
- What difference will it make
- No one will notice
- I’m too busy to worry about it
The Vernacular of Self-Interest

- Why should I stick my neck out
- It’s just business
- I know what’s best for me
- Everyone is doing it
- Don’t rock the boat
- Can’t fight city hall
- I’m just defending myself.
- Looking out for number one
The Vernacular of Self-Interest

• What’s in it for me
• I’m too low in the food chain to care
• My boss told me to do it
• That’s just the way it is
• God helps those who help themselves.
• Survival of the fittest
• What's mine is mine
• My family comes first
• You snooze you lose
“I stand by my beliefs no matter what.”

“When you’re right, you’re right.”

“I know the difference between right and wrong”

“My instincts tell me. . . “

“My intuition never lies.”

“I trust my gut on this.”
Instrument check no. 5: Monitor the decibel level of your assertions

- The louder you assert your position, the more likely that self-interest is speaking for you.

Watch your level of certainty. If it is high, then you may be wrong.
Instrument check no. 5 (cont’d):
Take your emotional temperature.

• Follow the rule against boisterous assertion of belief
• Beliefs are breeding grounds for incivility
• It’s not about you!

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Instrument check no. 5 (cont’d): How can I verify a belief or intuition

• Ask yourself if rigorous examination can verify your intuitive certainty.
• Beliefs are merely starting points in doing one’s duty of truthfulness.
Integrity check No. 6  Do you find yourself saying it’s just a small thing

• The Illusion of Inconsequence
• The Veil of Convenience
• The Illusion of Survival
The Illusion of Inconsequence

• Too small to matter
• Everyone does it
• I can tell the big things when it matters
Small Things Don’t Matter 1

• Telling a white lie
• Tardy returning phone calls and emails
• Letting a friend pay for your dinner on his company’s expensive account
• Eavesdropping on a guide at a museum
• Buying expensive apparel at cut rate on a street corner
• Copying a DVD for a friend

INTEGRITY INTENSIVE
• Something I just have to do
• Not causing any harm
• If it’s really important I’ll do the right thing

INTEGRITY INTENSIVE
Small Things Don’t Matter 2

• Texting on a deserted road
• Using unexpired handicapped sticker after you no longer need it
• Listening to public radio without contributing
• After giving a two year commitment to your current employer, you quit after six months for a better job
The illusion of Survival

• Asserts self-interest as “survival”
• Rationalized as necessary avoidance of risk
• Subverts the duty of truthfulness
Small Things Don’t Matter 3

• Use negative campaign advertising
• Making a political contribution to a candidate you don’t support because an important client or campaign contributor requests it
• Reverse your earlier pledge and run for third term.
• Stopping at the local market in a county car, just to pick up a few things
• Keynoting your party’s state convention with a partisan political speech

INTEGRITY INTENSIVE
Integrity Check No. 7  Do you aspire to integrity to stay out of trouble or to avoid embarrassment?

• Quote from Warren Buffet:
• Ask ... whether [you] are willing to have any contemplated act appear the next day on the front page of their local paper—to be read by [your] spouses, children and friends
Instrument check no. 8: The substitute for belief? Duty!

• Duty is the shift from self-assertion to obligation
• Duty is based on a reasonable expectation of others
• Following a duty means that you are on the path toward the common good, not a self-interested path
• Civility is a duty
• The opportunity to sacrifice one's personal needs to serve others in a way that benefits the greater good.

• The gestures we make to show others that we are willing to interact with them for the benefit of the common good.
• Beware of over simplifying formulas of integrity. While useful in inspiring conduct, they can often simply endorse self-interest.
Common Integrity Definitions

• Keeping your moral compass on true north
  • prone to deflection
• To thine own self be true
  • individual not the center of moral universe
• Doing what your gut tells you
  • intuition and feelings not reliable foundation of decision-making
• Doing what you honestly believe
  • beliefs prone to boisterous assertion
Instrument check No. 10: Practice makes....

• Integrity is built in small steps
• Practice it like the future of democracy were up to you
• A few acts of integrity, or civil acts, together with those of others, can transform everything
Point Assessment

• 1-3 possible danger of breaching integrity
• 4-6 a breach is likely
• 7+ high probability that you have breached or are about to breach integrity
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