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Integrity in Effective Leadership

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Steven Kerr
University of Southern California

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Columbus was not above using devious, even deceptive, techniques to keep his crew in good spirits and devoted to the common purpose. He did not forget his crew's concern for getting home, and in good time. To be sure that he would not discourage the men, he falsified his daily journal of the voyage. In noting down his estimates of distance traveled, 'he decided to reckon less than he made, so that if the voyage were long the people would not be frightened and dismayed.' (Boorstin, 1983, p. 234).

INTEGRITY IN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

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A Personal Introduction

Upon being invited to a symposium on executive integrity and asked to speak on integrity in effective leadership, my initial thought was that the nomination made a good deal of sense. I do these days double as an executive, serving as inside dean or, if you prefer, "chief operating officer" for a large organization (nearly 300 full-time employees and a \$37 million budget), and of course, who could ever question my personal or executive integrity?

As qualified as I obviously was, it occurred to me as I began to write this paper that I would be even better qualified were I to learn something about the construct integrity, and its close companions ethics and morality. The briefest of excursions into

the appropriate literatures reaffirmed my belief in the wisdom of my selection--but for the opposite reason! Now I felt like the "before" side of a before-after marketing brochure for an ethics seminar, or like the poster boy standing sadly before a judge as the caption barks "Don't let this happen to you!" What I began to realize was that the organization I share responsibility for, and all other organizations with which I have ever been associated, consistently and continually violate virtually all the prescriptions, canons and guidelines said by the experts to constitute integrious behavior.

Let me underscore the seriousness of this last point. I am not engaging in a semantic exercise involving the word integrity, nor am I taking refuge in the occasional odd dilemma so popular in the textbooks. (Would you bribe the evil customs inspector in a country where it's expected?) The accusation being made is far more serious: that I, and almost everyone else with my sort of responsibilities, can scarcely make it through a single workday without engaging in behaviors that violate what are said to be the basic elements of ethics and integrity.

What are we to make of this assertion? It seems that there are three possibilities, and one of them must be true:

(1) I'm an unusually corrupt administrator and would-be leader, rationalizing my actions by alleging that "everybody does it." If this is the explanation my participation in a seminar on integrity is probably a mistake--except, as mentioned, as a negative example--but there's no particular learning point nor basis for further discussion.

(2) Certainly I'm corrupt, but everybody really does do it. This possibility is even more depressing than the first, but at least provides a nice take-off point for discussion. Assuming it is not merely a case of societal bad genes, what is there in the character of organizational life that makes moral bankrupts of its leaders?

(3) Suppose, for a moment, that I am not corrupt; even imagine that I, and people like me, really do possess leadership integrity when assessed intuitively rather than according to the textbook definitions. If this is true, what does it say about our working definitions of integrity? Are they still useful, or could they be made useful through revision? If they are to be rejected as not useful, what standards for ethics and integrity should be substituted for them? Such questions will occupy the remainder of this paper.

Behavioral Components of Integrity, Morality, and Ethics

With respect to identifying the set of behaviors that constitute integrity, a good place to start is with the remarks of Suresh Srivastva, whose introductory letter (November 27, 1985) served as an organizing device for the conference. According to Srivastva:

While the management literature has been relatively quiet in respect to the concept of integrity, it can be inferred that integrity is . . . a socially embedded phenomenon pointing to the unity and connectedness in all organized relations . . . Also, it is seen as a driving force in the movement toward consistency between

values and action, or between espoused theory and theory-in-use . . . Finally, integrity represents a generative concern--the concern for establishing and guiding the next generation of persons and institutions . . .

Another definition of integrity, consistent with Srivastva's, is offered in Webster's New World Dictionary, in which integrity is defined as (1) the quality or state of being complete, wholeness, entirety; (2) the quality or state of being of sound moral principle, uprightness, honesty, and sincerity.

Speaking about morality within the context of business ethics, Solomon and Hanson (1983, p. 187) described what they say are the minimal conditions necessary for organizational morality to exist. These include, among other things: (1) consistency, not in the sense defined by Srivastva, but in the sense that similar cases are treated similarly. They argue that "if two employees work equally hard for equally long, and the only difference between them is that you enjoy a drink after work with one, morality means that you should, in your position as their superior, treat them the same, give them equal raises, and give them equal consideration for promotion." (2) universality, that is, applying to ourselves the same considerations we apply to others. (3) giving reasons, backing up our actions with explanations and justifications. They say that the reasons "must fit the first two conditions; that is, they must be consistent . . . and they must be universal, applying to anyone

who might be or might have been involved in a similar position."

(4) concern for others.

To other writers and theorists, another important aspect of morality is clarity, or removing ambiguity. Wiener pointed out that, in law:

It is the first duty . . . to see that the obligations and rights given to an individual in a certain stated situation be unambiguous. Moreover, there should be a body of legal interpretation which is as far as possible independent of the will and the interpretation of the particular authorities consulted. Reproducibility is prior to equity, for without it there can be no equity (1954, p. 107).

Waters (1978) emphasized not only removing ambiguity with respect to rights and obligations, but particularly concerning the relative importance attached to organizational priorities as opposed to the general ethical standards of society. He argued that "if top management really wants to obey the law and operate according to the general ethical standards of society, it must say so unambiguously. It should state clearly that such constraints come before, and in that sense have a higher priority than, such traditional objectives as sales volume, market share, and profits" (1978, p. 14).

A useful overview of ethics has been offered by Cavanagh, Moberg and Velasquez (1981), who pointed out that ethical criteria have their roots in three basic kinds of moral theories: utilitarianism, theories of rights, and theories of justice.

Utilitarianism seeks the greatest good for the greatest number; therefore, organizational leaders "are required to estimate the effect of each alternative on all the parties concerned and to select the one that optimizes the satisfactions of the greatest number (p. 365).

Theories of rights maintain that all people have fundamental rights that may not be denied even for the greatest good of the greatest number. According to Cavanagh, Moberg and Velasquez (1981) these include: the right of free consent, such that "individuals within an organization have the right to be treated only as they knowingly and freely consent to be treated" (p. 366); the right to privacy; the right to freedom of conscience, whereby "individuals have the right to refrain from carrying out any order that violates moral or religious norms to which they adhere" (p. 366); the right of free speech; and the right to due process.

Theories of justice depend upon various distributive rules and principles for administering these rules. The most important rule of distributive justice is that "differentiated treatment of individuals should not be based on arbitrary characteristics. Individuals who are similar in the relevant respects should be treated similarly, and individuals who differ in a relevant respect should be treated differently in proportion to the differences between them" (Cavanagh, Moberg and Velasquez, 1981, p. 366). Principles of administration include that rules be clearly and expressly stated, and consistently and impartially enforced.

To O'Toole (1985), ethics is a much less complicated matter:

Ethical behavior simply means adherence to a few common-sense principles, such as: Obey the law; Tell the truth; Stick to the Golden Rule; . . . Above all, do not harm . . . ; Practice participation, not paternalism; Always act when you have responsibility (that is, when you have the capacity or resources to act, or when those nearby are in need and you are the only one who can help) (p. 349).

From all these sources, it is possible to derive a "Ten Commandments of Executive Integrity," which reads as follows:

(1) Tell the truth. Communicate fully, honestly, and openly. Give reasons and justifications for decisions reached and actions taken. Absent full and honest communications, people cannot exercise their fundamental right of free consent.

(2) Obey the law.

(3) Reduce ambiguity. Clarify organizational values and priorities, and individual rights and obligations.

(4) Show concern for others. Obey the Golden Rule, which means treating people as you would have them treat you. Be faithful to the concept of universality, which suggests that artificial rank and status differentials should be minimized (as opposed to the doctrine RHIP: rank has its privileges"). Be faithful both to the principle of utilitarianism, requiring those actions that bring the greatest good for the greatest number, and to the principle that all people have certain fundamental rights that cannot be denied.

(5) Accept responsibility for the growth and nurturing of subordinates. Respect people's unique characteristics. Allow organization members to function as distinct, whole entities ("the human use of human beings"). Adhere to the most basic canon of medical ethics: primum non nocere (above all, do not harm).

(6) Practice participation, not paternalism. This suggests not only giving reasons and justifications for decisions, but also communicating these decisions to subordinates before they become binding and irreversible.

(7) Provide freedom from corrupting influences. It is necessary to protect organization members not only from overt demands that they act unethically, but also from cultures and reward systems that subtly discourage integrity. Respect people's right to freedom of conscience.

(8) Always act. When you have the resources to act integriously, or when someone requires your help, integrity requires that you take appropriate action.

(9) Provide consistency across cases. If one person's problem is handled in a certain manner, all people with that problem should be treated in the same way.

(10) Provide consistency between values and actions, between theories espoused and theories-in-use. To act otherwise is to be a hypocrite.

The Absence of Integrity in Everyday Organizational Life

Let me next present a number of examples of organizational behaviors that are in fundamental opposition to the components of integrity mentioned above. Some of these examples violate only

one of our Ten Commandments. Other examples violate several commandments at the same time. Please note that these examples do not pertain merely to the odd, unusual event, nor do they reference decisions by impotent leaders who are powerless to act otherwise, nor do they describe decisions that must be made under great stress or time pressure, nor are they limited to organizations with shrinking markets or in collapsing industries. Rather, the examples describe immoral, unethical, unintegrious actions (according to our consensual definition) taken in the course of everyday organizational life by those at or near the top of nearly all private and public sector organizations. Several reference actions I myself have taken and expect to continue to take in the future. Those that do not reference me personally are nevertheless extremely common, and I have witnessed them many times as an employee in my current or in previous organizations, or in those I served as a consultant or researcher.

As you scan these examples, keep in mind the alternative possibilities offered at the start of the paper. Do they reflect: (1) unusually corrupt behavior by the paper's author and his colleagues, with no implications beyond the obvious unsuitability of the author to hold a position of leadership? or (2) generically immoral behavior by those who head our organizations, which speaks in some sense to the corrupting nature of leadership or of organizations in general? or (3) some weakness in our consensual definition such that the behaviors described might, through a different lens, be viewed as not necessarily inconsistent with integrious behavior?

Tell the Truth

Examples 1-4: Misassignment of Expenditures. Among the most frequent administrative falsehoods is the intentional assignment of expenditures to the wrong categories. Often a budget, or a grant, or an authorization permits money to be spent on one thing but not on another. Thus students who are funded as teaching assistants (TAs) and who are supposed to have teaching responsibilities may be carried on the books as TAs but are in fact assigned to faculty as research assistants. (Other TAs do work as TAs; this practice violates not only the principle of honesty, but the commandment of consistency across cases and, when funds come from government sources, the canon "obey the law" as well.)

Another example of a deliberately dishonest assignment of funds which may violate several of our Commandments is the subterfuge practiced by numerous organizations with respect to moving allowances. In some cases such allowances are forbidden altogether, while in others the maximum permitted is woefully inadequate to cover costs. In such cases it is often routine practice to advise incoming employees to forward a phony billing for an imaginary colloquium or nonexistent consulting, which is then paid by the organization and used by the employee to cover the costs of moving.

Another illustration of this type concerns the common practice of burying salary increases or performance bonuses in the budget by disguising them as different kinds of payment. This may be done to circumvent organizational regulations concerning

maximum salary increases, or to keep other employees from learning how much has been paid to particular individuals. (The leader can then lie to subordinates that each of them received "the top of the pool," whereas in fact some got more than the stated maximum.)

Sometimes the false category into which expenses are assigned is not a type of expense, but a calendar or fiscal year. For example, in organizations mandated to operate under a balanced budget it is often common practice to spend beyond budget, then literally throw unpaid bills into a drawer where they remain until the new year begins--while lying to creditors that "the check is in the mail."

Examples 5-6: Creating Turnover. A highly orchestrated web of deceit often accompanies the involuntary termination of an employee. First, the organization communicates to other employees that the individual has resigned, implying if not explicating that the resignation was voluntary. The terminated employee may then be invited to write not only his letter of resignation, but a letter to him, allegedly from the president or department head, thanking him for his years of highly-productive service. In keeping with the theme--blatant dishonesty and hypocrisy--a going-away party may then be arranged for the soon-to-be-departed, at which the same officers who fired him will extol his virtues and mourn his passing. The charade usually ends with a flourish, in the form of absurdly favorable references for the individual to carry with him to his next employer.

A variant upon this method, often used in settings where termination is impossible, is to offer outrageously favorable

references about a poor performer in hopes that they will fool some gullible outsider--or, in cases of transfer, insider--into making a job offer, whereon the employee leaves voluntarily. (In such cases the going-away party is optional.)

Example 7: Being a Fire Hydrant.* Among the more entertaining of charades, this one usually begins with a clandestine visit by a department head to a dean or corporate officer. The dean is warned that an unreasonable request is about to be made of him by someone in the department. The department head is unalterably opposed to this unreasonable request but, of course, must appear to be supportive because of the need to maintain intra-group harmony. The charade is then played out in predictable fashion--everyone saying his assigned lines--and ends with the department head walking from the meeting room with his arm around the aggrieved petitioner, assuring him that everything that could have been done was done, but unfortunately the dean is anti-research, anti-female, or whatever.

Examples 8-9: Remaining Mute. In stark contrast to the precept that communications should be honest and complete, and truthful reasons and justifications for action should always be given, many administrators soon come to believe that it is often better not to give reasons, that as Calvin Coolidge once argued, "you never have to explain something you didn't say." Consider for example, the following reasons for nominating a particular person to a particular committee: (1) the university requires that such-and-such committee include someone from your school;

* Lyman Porter once observed that "a Dean is to his faculty as a hydrant is to its dogs."

(2) such-and-such committee has performed no useful work during its twenty-six years of existence, and you feel confident that its best years are behind it; (3) fortunately, a perfect fit suggests itself inasmuch as you have on your staff a faculty member who has performed no useful work over his lifetime. What most executives learn to say in such a circumstance is either (a) such-and-such committee is poised on the leading edge of greatness and only your participation can bring this potential to fruition, or (b) nothing. Telling the truth in such a case would confuse the employee and seem odd to everyone else.

A more compelling reason to refuse to explain appears in the case of an employee whose contract is not to be renewed, because he is a horse's ass and no one can stand to be around him. You are uncertain, and your legal counsel is uncertain, whether being a horse's ass is job-related (in academe). You are certain that half your staff will quit if the individual's contract is renewed. In this circumstance, many executives will decide not to renew his contract, and will use as an explanation something more elegant--and more legally defensible--than the truth.

Obey the Law

Example 10: Hiring One's Cronies. Lawmakers expend considerable time and energy creating legislation to protect the right of prospective employees, particularly women, minorities and the elderly, to be fairly considered for position openings. Organization leaders expend at least as much time and energy circumventing this legislation. As one example, imagine that someone well known to an organization as a high performer becomes

available to be hired. The organization wishes to move quickly to permit this to happen. However, the law requires that the position must be publicly advertised and posted for a certain period of time. Numerous well-intentioned job seekers then appear, who are put through bogus selection and interview procedures that raise their hopes and waste their time. The law may require that this go on for quite a while. At the end of the specified period, the employee known to the organization is hired. Whose rights have been protected? Whose justice has been served? A goodly number of our Ten Commandments are violated by such procedures, but few executives are easily persuaded to employ some stranger in lieu of someone whose skills and work habits are known and valued.

Example 11: Rigging the Files. Another common, illegal practice is the intentional distortion of performance appraisal and the rigging of personnel files for the purpose of justifying current salary action or to lay the groundwork for future disciplinary action. Perhaps most common is the practice of completing performance appraisal forms from the bottom up, that is, first making a subjective determination about what summary rating or salary increase a leader wants a subordinate to receive, then working backward through the forms so that the subdimensions or components "add up" to the desired total.

An important paradox in today's litigious environment is that, to many managers, the commandments "obey the law" and "nurture subordinates" seem increasingly contradictory. This is because the law is much less insistent upon remedying employee

deficiencies than upon documenting and even perpetuating them, at least until such time as the employee's track record is sufficiently long and dreary that legally defensible disciplinary action may be taken. Many a would-be mentor has been advised by legal counsel to refrain from shifting responsibilities or work loads aimed at improving an employee's low performance, lest the record of unacceptable behavior be interrupted and the legal basis for discipline removed.

Provide Consistency Across Cases

Though they are in clear violation of the prescription that there should be consistency across cases, the following examples are extremely typical in both industry and academe:

Example 12: The Order Effect. Unfortunately, the order effect is a major determinant of which cases will be approved and which will be disapproved. Often something is approved, on an ad hoc basis, the first few times it is requested. Human nature is such that once a few people have been granted a PC, grader, extra file cabinet, or whatever, numerous requests for the same item soon follow, even from those who have no need for the item requested. Management's response is inevitably to institute some allocation policies whose net effect is to create distribution criteria that are far more restrictive than those governing the earlier cases, resulting in inconsistency across cases and within the same cases over time.

Example 13: Gossip and Rumors. Though everyone agrees that it shouldn't happen, invariably gossip, rumors, and stray bits of unconfirmed data become bases for decision making. This violates

the consistency doctrine in that some individuals are allocated resources or are found wanting as a result of a kind of "test" that others weren't subject to.

Example 14: Nepotism. It is often the case in even the best run organizations that nepotism and cronyism become bases for promotion or appointment to an attractive position. This is held to be among the least integrions of all organizational behaviors (in our society; note that in many cultures it is considered an honorable, superior basis for selection). Yet it is a simple truth that most executives feel more comfortable working with people they know and like. Nepotism is generally seen as a violation of the consistency principle, since employees with similar performance records are not treated similarly. It could, of course, be argued that the records are not similar in the important respect that one candidate enjoys the confidence of higher management while the other does not.

Example 15: Undue Influence. A final example of this type is that, in academe, children of influential alumnae and family members of wealthy donors are likely to be admitted, though other students with identical records would not be. (Note that in the so-called "good schools" this is only true at the margin, that is, prospective students with terrible records will be denied admission regardless of lineage. Also, good schools may let people in because of who they are or who they know, but will not let them out (graduate them) unless they perform at acceptable levels.)

Accept Responsibility for the Growth
and Nurturing of Subordinates

Examples 16 and 17: Creating False Career Hopes and Career Paths. It is common practice in many organizations for top management to permit employees to believe, and go on believing, that they are viable candidates for some higher-level job, while secretly interviewing other candidates for that position. Often the person being passed over is not really unqualified for the job but is considered unqualified because of unfair stereotyping or pigeonholing. For example, once someone is known to be good with computers, the only positions mentioned in connection with that individual are computer-related.

It is also common practice for organizations to assign employees to tasks that are in no way compatible with their skills, interests, or future growth potential, but rather because the organization presumes it will benefit from having the person in that position. In extreme cases, placements are made which thwart personal and professional growth, induce high physiological and psychological stress, and endanger the employee's marriage and family situation. It is also becoming increasingly common for organizations to pressure people into taking early retirement, whether or not it is in the employee's best interest, and irrespective of what the law says on the subject.

Show Concern for Others

Violation of this prescription permeates many of the previous examples. I would add to those the following:

Example 18: RHIP. In opposition to the concept of universality, rank has its privileges in most American organizations. Deans, for example, often enjoy special parking, have access to the best secretarial and office help, can obtain computers, electronic typewriters, and other equipment without the hurdles and delays experienced by others, and may even enjoy the benefit of spending the organization's money as though it were their own.

Example 19: Denying People's Individuality. It is very common for organizations to violate the principle that people should be treated as individuals. What seems to an individual employee to be a unique problem is often viewed by higher management as "situation 104," calling into motion a generalized response that leaves the individual feeling ignored and unappreciated. Individuality is, after all, contradictory to uniformity and standardization, and also threatens organizational requirements for predictability. For that matter, individuality may also be largely incompatible with consistency across cases.

Let me illustrate this point by referencing a case that, as I write, has occupied my attention within the last twenty-four hours. A holder of a USC D.B.A. petitioned the Business School to have his degree converted to a Ph.D. My first thought was to conduct a review of his thesis and other evidences of scholarship to see if such conversion was warranted--in short, to treat the case as a single event and consider it on its individual merits. My superiors at the university level soon put an end to such

foolish notions, however. Here is the actual language of their response to me:

. . . We cannot legally and ethically make a change like this for one person; we would have to review all D.B.A. degree recipients during the same time period (early 1970s) to see if their degrees should also be changed and make the same offer to them. Even if we tried to do this for just _____, I can assure you . . . that many others would demand the same treatment. And where would we draw the line? 1975 D.B.A.'s? 1960 D.B.A.'s?

The remainder of the letter dealt with the steps necessary to determine whether these students' training while at USC justified conversion of their degrees. These stated requirements were so onerous that it would be irrational for me to further pursue this matter. Thus "showing concern for others" is once again to be sacrificed to some (undefined) greater good. Even though this is the only petitioner who has ever come to me seeking a degree conversion during the nearly five years I've been a Dean, the organization has decided that it cannot "legally and ethically" treat the case on an individual basis.

Example 20: Disempowerment. Let me close with a particularly interesting example, namely the intentional, premeditated effort by an organizational leader to lower the self esteem of a subordinate. The particular situation involved an employee who continually complained about being underpaid. The

comparison group consisted of other full professors at the nation's best universities. The manager had tried to solve the problem by negotiating future performance targets, the attainment of which would trigger a merit adjustment. The subordinate was unreceptive to this approach, claiming that the only relevant data were the average salary figures of his peers at Harvard, Chicago, etc. The approach finally taken by the manager was to accumulate a number of vitae of full professors at the schools being referenced, and in a memorable session with the subordinate, to demonstrate in a most explicit fashion that the subordinate was nowhere near as productive as his colleagues at Harvard and Chicago, indeed that he would never have been promoted or tenured had he been at Harvard or Chicago. The subordinate left the session much better informed but with his ego in considerable disarray. How can such an approach be reconciled with such principles as showing concern for others, nurturing subordinates, or "doing no harm?"

Conclusion

Among the three earlier-mentioned possible ways to make sense of the preceding examples, I would, however tentatively, like to rule out the first. This suggests to me that organizations, and particularly those who lead them, tend to operate against the consensual definition of integrity in both subtle and unsubtle ways. The idea that organizations can corrupt the powerful and alienate the rest is not, of course, a new one. For example, in his review of the Marxian perspective on the sources of

alienation, Nord (1974, pp. 570-571) has pointed out that, to Marx:

The division of labor under capitalism is a source of social tensions . . . It produces people who are alienated from one another . . . Since men's activities are not voluntary, the power generated by the cooperation of individuals becomes an "alien" force which they do not control . . . In short, the capitalistic social-economic system embodies a vicious circle. The division of labor and private property generates alienation which, in turn, increases the emphasis on material products, which further accelerates the division of labor and the stress on accumulation, which results in further alienation.

For more detailed treatments of this topic see Morgan (1980) and Burrell and Morgan (1979).

A number of authors have made good suggestions about how we might modify our organizational practices so that they operate more in accordance with our definition of integrity. Thus, for example, Maier (1970) has discussed ways of reducing status differentials, and he and others (cf. Vroom and Yetton, 1973) have helped us to understand how participative management may be used to better advantage. Numerous authors have discussed ways to nurture organization members. With respect to honesty, Bennis (unpublished) suggested that "to build openness and integrity from the ground up, the organization can provide direction by making a conscious effort to reward truth telling." Waters (1978)

elaborated on this point by suggesting some concrete things organizations can do to foment a climate in which internal whistle blowers would feel free to operate. Work by Jansen and Von Glinow (1985), and my own work (cf. Kerr, in press), has described some ways by which reward systems might be altered to serve such ends.

On the other hand, there may be something to the third possibility I identified earlier, namely that there may be something wrong with, or at least seriously incomplete about our working definitions of integrity. Such statements as O'Toole's (cited earlier) that "ethical behavior simply means adherence to a few common-sense principles, such as: Obey the Law, Tell the Truth . . ." etc. may strike you as they strike me, in the wake of my examples, as perhaps a bit ingenuous. For one thing, as I hope has been illustrated to some small extent, these "common sense principles" do not appear to be particularly compatible with one another. In particular, those principles pertaining to the relatively cognitive elements of ethics and integrity often seem attainable only at the cost of jeopardizing the more affective elements. For example, consider once more our Ten Commandments, arrayed in the following manner:

Obey the law	Match values to actions
Tell the truth	Nurture subordinates, do no harm
Practice consistency across cases	Show concern for people
Reduce ambiguity	Respect peoples' freedom of conscience
Act when you have authority	Practice participation

It can be argued that each principle on the left is often incompatible with most principles on the right, and vice versa. Thus, for example, "obey the law," "tell the truth," and "practice consistency across cases" may be incompatible with "practice participation," "nurture subordinates," "do no harm," etc.

It seemed to me as I reviewed the literature that, with a few exceptions, the more confident the prescriptions about how to behave with ethics and integrity, the further removed was the author from the life of the everyday manager. A good deal of this literature derives from the work of ethicists, philosophers, and social scientists. As has been noted by Fritzsche and Becker (1984, p. 166), "little effort has been made to try to link ethical theory to management behavior."

Though woefully incomplete, this paper has attempted to widen the lens so as to consider both ethical theory and management behavior. Certainly management behavior--at least my own, and that of most other managers I have known--has been found wanting in important respects. I have also tried to suggest that our definitions of ethics and integrity may also be unsatisfactory. I think the literature would greatly benefit from a different kind of working definition of executive integrity, one that provides a greater measure of internal consistency and more fully reflects the complexity and multidimensionality of organizational life.

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