Web Exercises

# Chapter 2: Recognizing Your Traits

## Story Time

Ask students to look up several online sites that offer inspirational stories about integrity. One such source is <http://www.inspirationalstories.com/honesty-1.html>. After reading several stories, have students select one to bring to class and read out loud. After all students have read their stories, reflect together and discuss: Besides integrity, were there other common elements to these stories? What effect did they have on us? Which story was the most powerful? Why? How do stories *work*? Do they disarm us? Remind us? Teach us something new? Challenge our thinking?

## Integrity or Image Management?

Three of the leaders profiled in Chapter 2 (Mother Teresa, Bill Gates, and Oprah Winfrey) have started foundations, schools or other projects to support causes they believe (d) in. Ask students to do some online research of a favorite celebrity or professional athlete who also has set up a foundation or project for social good.

* Option 1: Have students write a two page analysis of how the foundation reflects the personal values of the celebrity or athlete. Is the foundation or project an example of leadership integrity? How so? How does the foundation or project enhance the celebrity’s image? Are integrity and image management compatible?
* Option 2: Discuss in class – (1) Why do so many athletes and celebrities start their own foundations or public service projects? (2) What is the relationship between great wealth and integrity? (3) What is the relationship between leadership traits and celebrity status?

## Five Feminine Values

Ask students to watch Halla Tomasdottir’s presentation at *TED talks* on how Icelandic women are doing business more sustainably (<http://www.ted.com/talks>). Have them reflect on the following questions, in writing or in small group discussions:

* What are the five feminine values? Do you agree that they are more commonly expressed by women than men?
* What is “emotional due diligence?” What would it look like in your workplace?
* How does having a “long term view” relate to the leadership traits covered in Chapter 2 of our textbook?
* If you had been in the audience when Tomasdottir gave her speech, what question would you have asked her?

## Leadership Camp

Ask students to search online for various leadership programs and camps. Ask them to report on one that appeals to them. What is the leadership “content” being taught at the camp or program? What “experiences” are offered to teach leadership (e.g. ropes course, wilderness trekking, silent retreat, etc.)? Discuss as a class: What are the benefits of learning about leadership in a concentrated or intense format? What effect does the price of a program have on someone’s motivation to attend and expectations of the program? How does physical activity affect one’s learning about leadership? What is the most effective way for you to learn? To change? Can you strengthen a leadership trait in a week?

## Organizational Values and Leadership Traits

Ask students to examine the websites of several corporations and identify the values these companies hold. Based on what is found, consider what leadership traits would be most important for top-ranking executives to possess.

Ask other students to research the websites of non-profit organizations and identify the values they hold and to think about the traits that would be important for their leaders to possess.

In class, have them discuss the values and leadership traits for both organizational types. In what ways do they differ? In what ways are they similar? What might we learn about leadership traits in different types of settings?

## Tweets about Traits

Ask students to follow a thought leader on social media (Twitter, blog, etc.) throughout the academic term. How is this leader using social media to influence people to achieve a common goal (e.g. electing someone to office, raising money for disaster relief, etc.)? What personality traits can be discerned in the content or tone of the leader’s online messages? Have students share periodic updates in class over the term.

## Current Events Quizzes

Instructors may wish to require students to follow current events during the term through credible online news sources such as newspapers or radio broadcasts. Some examples:

<http://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/>

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world>

Specify what topic areas you want students to focus on – politics? Finance? International affairs? Art and culture? Sports? Science? What are the major stories of the week? What are the leadership challenges involved in these events? What traits do leaders need to address these social issues effectively?

In class quizzes can be oral or written and take about 10 minutes of class time. The activity is intended to promote informed citizenship and better understanding of others.