

Professionalism, Diversity and Valuing Differences: The Above and Beyond Expectations of Servants

Presented by Mark Warren, Texas Association of Counties
April 2019

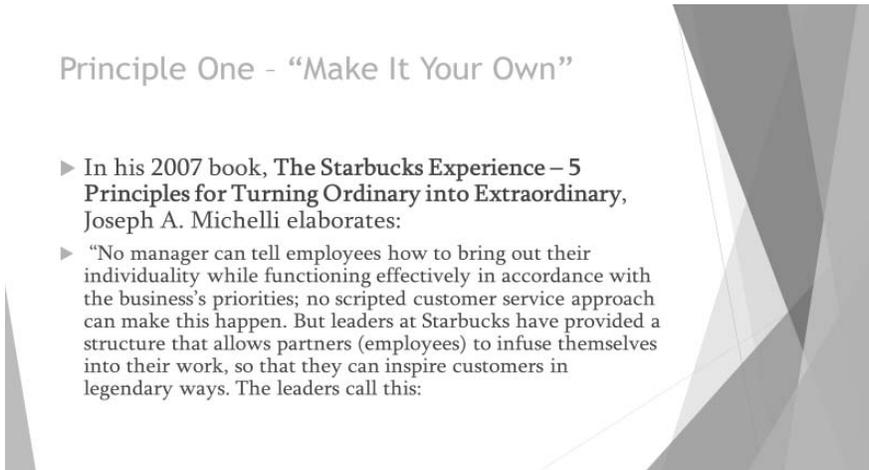
What are the characteristics of professionalism and what is a standard definition of a professional? What, besides money, separates the professional from amateur? No matter the business or industry, the standards and definition of professional conduct have varied little over decades. This presentation helps participants rediscover the deep sense of duty and obligation felt by anyone, especially younger generations in an increasingly diverse world, who have earned the title of “professional”: competent, trained and ethical.

Characteristics and Qualities of Professionalism

- **Service** to others
- **Assessment** of client needs
- A theoretical body of knowledge obtained through extended pre-service **education**.
- **Standards** for entry, practice and ethical conduct.
- Professional association to maintain standards.
- Continuing education and life-long learning.

Principle One - “Make It Your Own”

- ▶ In his 2007 book, *The Starbucks Experience – 5 Principles for Turning Ordinary into Extraordinary*, Joseph A. Michelli elaborates:
- ▶ “No manager can tell employees how to bring out their individuality while functioning effectively in accordance with the business’s priorities; no scripted customer service approach can make this happen. But leaders at Starbucks have provided a structure that allows partners (employees) to infuse themselves into their work, so that they can inspire customers in legendary ways. The leaders call this:



The Five Ways of Being: How can you use these to shape yours?

- Be Welcoming – Offer everyone a sense of belonging.
- Be Genuine – Connect, discover, respond.
- Be Knowledgeable – Love what you do. Share it with others.
- Be Considerate – Take care of yourself, each other and the environment.
- Be Involved – Connect with one another, with the company, with your community.

What are some of your “ways of being” on the job?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Explicit and implicit bias

- ▶ For years, we have worked and training to be aware of explicit bias (prejudice) and acting on it (discrimination). We have to keep up that positive and conscious work.
- ▶ The next frontier to conquer is *implicit* bias.
- ▶ Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- ▶ These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control.

More about implicit bias

- ▶ Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection.
- ▶ Implicit bias may be based on any number of obvious characteristics, ranging from race, age, social group, or appearance, it can also be associated with height, weight, marital status, children, disability, political affiliations, college attendance, and so much more.
- ▶ These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. (Massey's imprinting (birth to age 7), modeling (age 7 to 13) and socializations (age 13 to 20) periods. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations.

The references to Dr. Morris Massey are all contained within his sensational programs of *What You Are is Where You Were When*, all of which are on the internet or can be found at Enterprise Media, www.enterprisemedia.com.

Regarding the three stages of programming, Massey says: “Psychologists say we start out **imprinting**. With imprinting, we’re basically picking up simple behavioral information like a sponge”. [We absorb stimuli everywhere but mostly from our parents or elders of influence.] Then, we move to **modeling**. This is influence from our heroes – who do you want to look like, walk like, talk like, throw a baseball or swing a golf club like? “What our heroes did became ‘ok’ for us to do.”

Then, programming shifts one final time. Teenagers dive into intense **socialization** – massive peer pressure. (‘Why’d you do that? ‘Cause everyone else is doing it’.)

“Study after study concludes most adults – live their lives, operate, behave using the basic values programmed in during these three periods.”

Suggestion when confronted by a difference: **ask, listen, try**. Then repeat.



The Essence of Professionalism: The “Second Mile”

- “If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.” In other words, from now on, not only obey the law, but go even further and do it cheerfully. Go the extra or “second” mile.

- The phrase “going the second mile” has its roots in first century Palestine. During Bible times, the Romans had conquered much of the known world and ruled with an iron hand. By Roman law, a Roman soldier could compel a subject of one of the conquered lands to carry his backpack or “load” for him one mile, but only one mile. The Israelites resented the oppressive rule of the Roman occupation and would obey the law by going one, and only one mile – not one step more.
- However, going the “second mile” means living above the norm, treating people with kindness and respect, regardless of what they deserve. It’s not enough to simply do what is required; we must give generously of ourselves beyond what is expected of us.

Valuing Diversity and Inclusion in America – even before there was an America

“E Pluribus Unum”

Was the motto proposed for the first Great Seal of the United States by John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson in 1776. A Latin phrase meaning "One from many," the phrase offered a strong statement of the American determination to form a single nation from a collection of states. Over the years, "*E Pluribus Unum*" has also served as a reminder of America's bold attempt to make one unified nation of people from many different backgrounds and beliefs. The challenge of seeking unity while respecting diversity has played a critical role in shaping our history, our literature, and our national character.

E Pluribus Unum describes an action: **Many uniting into one**. An accurate translation of the motto is "**Out of many, one**" – a phrase that elegantly captures the symbolism on the shield [contained in the Great Seal.] The phrase also captures that essential characteristic of all great teams – that by working together, we can accomplish more significance than ever possible, than by working as individuals on our own.

Diversity has been a value in America, not just since the end of the Civil War, or with the signing of the Civil Rights act of 1964, but from the hearts and minds of America’s founders.

The Functions of Prejudice: What Does Living or Working Around Prejudice Ultimately Cause or Enable?

- **Ethnocentrism** - *Ethnocentrism* entails the belief that one's own race or ethnic group is the most important and/or that some or all aspects of its culture are superior to those of

other groups. Within this ideology, individuals will judge other groups in relation to their own particular ethnic group or culture, especially with concern to language, behavior, customs, and religion.

- **Stereotyping or Categorical Treatment** - *Stereotyping* is an exaggerated belief associated with a category of difference. Categorizing is grouping or identifying others based on what makes them different from you.
- **Scapegoat** - *Scapegoating* is a hostile social or psychological discrediting routine by which people move blame and responsibility away from themselves and towards a target or a group.
- **Projection** - According to Sigmund Freud, *projection* is a psychological defense mechanism whereby one "projects" one's own undesirable thoughts, motivations, desires, and feelings onto someone else. A common process that every person uses to some degree, projection, like all defense mechanisms, provides a function whereby truth about a part of themselves that may otherwise be unacceptable is shielded.
- **Authoritarian Personality** - The "will to power over others" usually emerging as aggressive over-compensation for felt and dreaded feelings of inferiority and insignificance. According to this view, the authoritarian need to maintain control and prove superiority over others is rooted in a worldview populated by enemies and empty of equality, empathy, and mutual benefit. – Dr. Alfred Adler
- **Societal Strain** - Perhaps caused by “walking on egg shells” or feeling forced to act in a way other than one’s natural desire, the resulting tension and pressure may cause affected members to “blow their top”, for example. As Emory University sociologist Dr. Robert Agnew puts it: “When people get mad, they act bad.”

Common Causes of Misunderstandings - How You’re Raised and What You’re Taught Affects Who You Are...

This part of the presentation is based on the video series by Lewis Griggs and Griggs Productions, (www.griggs.com) called “Valuing Diversity”, Part 3, “Communication Across Cultures” (1987, 1993).

Conventions For Courtesy

- Each culture has conventions for courtesy. People who don’t use the “formulas” may be perceived as rude. People who don’t know the conventions *may* feel rejected. Context also contributes to communication. **Don’t leap to conclusions about *character*, *motivation* or *integrity* of another based on a single interaction!**

Assertiveness

- In some cultures, assertiveness is appropriate. However -
- Assertiveness may be seen as aggressive, pushy or rude by others.
 - There is a nasty, unfortunate gender backlash.
 - An assertive man is seen as strong and a leader, but a woman with same is seen as ____?

Candor

- What does “candor” mean?
 - “frankness of expression: sincerity”, or “freedom from prejudice: impartiality” - Webster’s II
 - Substance over form is a value in some cultures, but not in others. In some cultures, sensitivity, loyalty and the need to save or preserve “face” are far more important than candor, or “straight talk”.

Accents

- Regardless of culture, there is always a bias against an accent. Why?
- All people have an accent.
 - “I’m going to go inside and have some ice cream”.
 - “Park the car, then tell the dog not to bark”.
- Accents influence people’s perceptions, but are not a good measure of others.

Hot Buttons

- Jokes, swearing and stereotypes.
 - Conflicts and misattribution result from words. Misunderstanding and misattribution: what’s the difference?
- Avoid hot buttons - when in doubt, ask, or avoid the word! Respond (don’t react) to hot buttons being pushed in a way that gets you what you need.

Learning from a Goose?

“While the author of the following is unknown, *Lessons From the Geese*” is a powerful illustration from nature of the rules of high-performance teamwork. As you read about the natural unity that exists among this species remember - this same unity can exist in your organization!

As geese flap their wings, they create an uplift for the bird following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if any bird were to fly alone.

If we share a common direction and a sense of community, we can get where we are going more quickly and easily because we are traveling on the thrust of one another!

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

If we have as much sense as geese, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go, and we will be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to others.

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into formation and another goose flies at the point position.

If we take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership as with the geese, we become interdependent with one another.

The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. If we "honk," we need to make sure it is positive and encouraging.

When a goose gets sick or wounded or is shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again or dies. They then launch out on their own, with another formation or catch up with the flock.

If we have as much sense as geese, we too will stand by each other in difficult times, as well as when we are strong. Let us all try to fly in formation and remember to drop back to help those who might need it!

Behold the Power of Teamwork

The greatest accomplishments in life are not achieved by individuals alone, but by proactive people pulling together for a common good. Look behind every winner and you will find a great coach. Look out in front of every superstar and you will see a positive role model. Look alongside every great achiever and you will find caring people offering encouragement, support and able assistance.

Rising to this level of interdependent thinking can be challenging and difficult. Looking beyond oneself, asking for help or accepting help can feel risky. But people are not given life to simply take from one another. We are here to give. Our mission in life is to offer our gifts to benefit one another, to create mutual gain in the world. This is called teamwork, a win/win mindset stemming from a genuine commitment to the rules that allow it to happen.” (Excerpted from ***Pulling Together*** by John Murphy)

Next: Professionalism and Ethics: Not one Without the Other

Ethics Codes:

Principles and values are imbedded in all ethics codes and codes of conduct, either implicitly or explicitly. They are the elements that usually call the public servant to a greater purpose. This is not a new phenomenon and can be found throughout antiquity in the vast majority of cultures. The notion of public service, so pervasive in the Athenian code, also led to institutional changes. Pericles created the first public service – that is persons must have merit to be appointed – and along with this Athens became the first government to actually pay public servants.

Public codes of ethics, especially in developing democracies, can play a crucial role in articulating the mission of the public service. *The foundation of all successful bureaucracies is integrity, objectivity and effectiveness.* Most public service codes emphasize these standards. Perhaps the most famous is the *Athenian Oath* written by Pericles in 5th century B.C.:



The Athenian Oath

We will never bring disgrace on this our City by an act of dishonesty or cowardice.
We will fight for the ideals and Sacred Things of the City both alone and with many.
We will revere and obey the City's laws, and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught.
We will strive increasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty.
Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

The Second Mile

When life's journey takes you down a path that seems unfair to you,
Consider this story of a young Hebrew boy who walked a mile or two;
In the village streets many years ago, he had joined two friends at play,
When a Roman soldier started coming their way;
Now these three young boys had done nothing wrong, but the law wasn't on their side,
So they scrambled in different directions looking for places to hide.
Two disappeared, but one was too slow...caught by the soldier's eye.
In a loud, gruff voice, he yelled, "You...come!"
And the boy was forced to comply.
The soldier demanded he carry his load one mile as the law allowed,
So the lad reluctantly picked it up and followed the man through the crowd.

They walked in silence the first half mile, each lost in personal thought.
The boy felt anger and bitterness that *he'd* been the one to get caught.
He struggled to hold back the tears that welled up in his eyes;
It's just not fair! He told himself; *this man is twice my size!*
The boy didn't know at that moment in time, as a chain of events began,
That his life would be changed by a lesson learned in the service of that man.
His mind began to wander a bit, to another time and place;
He recalled a man on a mountain who had spoken with wisdom and grace.
This stranger had talked about many things that were hard to understand;
One he remembered that puzzled him now was on lending a helping hand.
The man has told his followers "*If you're forced to go a mile, you should offer to go a second one too
and do it with a smile.*"

He has said that this humble act is the key that unlocks the secret of joy,
And He'd spoken with such authority; it had touched the heart of the boy.
His thoughts returned to his present task and what he'd been forced to do;
The boy began to wonder then if the stranger's words were true.
He knew he could go a Second Mile, to test it out and see;
If he did, it would be his own choice to make, a gift he would give for free.
As they reached the end, the soldier said, "This is it. I know you're tired."
But to his surprise, the young boy said he'd go *more* than the law required.

When he offered to go the Second Mile, the soldier could not believe it,
And the heart of the man was softened by this generous servant spirit.
So they walked some more, together this time, along that dusty road,
The boy was asked why he made the choice to continue to carry the load.
He described the Man on the mountain and the words He had spoken that day,
And he tried to explain just what it was that inspired him to follow His way.
As they walked, they both shared about family and friends and they would like to do;
In spite of all their differences, they even had a laugh or two.
Neither one noticed how far they walked and felt the weight of the load,
The time went more quickly the Second Mile and soon, it was the end of the road.
When they said their good-byes, the boy had discovered a valuable truth in the end;
The first miles were hard, doing what was required – the second, he made a friend.
And the choice that had made the difference was going the Second Mile,
His servant's heart and attitude had made the journey worthwhile. (Fox, 2009)

Additional references and resources that influenced this presentation include:

1. **The Starbucks Experience – 5 Principles for Turning Ordinary into Extraordinary**, Joseph A. Michelli, McGraw-Hill, New York, New York, 2007.
2. The definitions of “professional” are from the Oxford English dictionary and appear in the TCLEOSE Course 1000 (BPOC) lesson plan in the subject “Professionalism and Ethics”.
3. **The Second Mile: The Key to a Life of Purpose and Joy** by Paula J. Fox, Inspired Faith, 2009
4. **Pulling Together**, by John Murphy, Simple Truths, Naperville, Illinois., 2016
www.simpletruths.com
5. The great information on “ethics codes” and The Athenian Code appear in a presentation entitled *Ethics Codes of Conduct as Tools for Promoting and Ethical and Professional Public Service: Comparative Successes and Lessons* by Stuart C. Gilman, Ph.D., 2005.

J. Mark Warren

Is a Training Consultant with the Texas Association of Counties in his hometown of Austin Texas. Mark retired as a full-time employee on 7/31 came back as a contract trainer for TAC on 9/1/15. His presentations convey a message of inspiration, motivation and new direction and revolve around leadership, interpersonal communication and relationship skills, workplace diversity and professionalism, bridging the generations and customer service excellence.

Mark worked with the TAC Leadership Program and served as the coordinator of its Leadership training from 2002 and County Best Practices from 2009 to 2015.

After graduating from St. Edward’s University in 1977, Mark spent 23 years with the Texas Department of Public Safety, retiring in 2000 as the Assistant Commander of the Training Academy in Austin.

From December 2015 through August 2017, Mark presented a series of presentations on verbal de-escalation with the Texas Police Association for the Department of Public Safety and law enforcement and criminal justice professionals across Texas.

For more information on Mark’s presentations, please visit www.county.org, Member Services, Education and Training, Special Presentations, or www.jmarkwarren.com.

