

INFORMATION PAPER

ATZL-MCE
5 January 2015 (updated 20 April 2016)

SUBJECT: Synchronization of Expression Regarding Soldier and Army Civilian Attributes and Competencies

1. Purpose: To identify the wide range of expression of the qualities required in Soldiers and Army Civilians to meet demands of the 21st Century War Fighting Challenges of Force 2025 and Beyond.

2. Facts.

a. Army capstone doctrine, ADP/ADRP 1, *The Army*, states that our profession is built on a foundation of *Trust*. Army Professionals earn and reinforce mutual trust through professional development (education, training, and experience) and certification in *character, competence, and commitment*. Professional certification is verification and validation of an Army professional's character, competence, and commitment to fulfill responsibilities and successfully perform assigned duty with discipline and to standard (ADRP 1, para 5-11).

b. The qualities required for Soldiers, today and tomorrow, are also addressed in the Warfighting Functions, Warfighting Challenges, including: *bold, adaptive, imaginative, and culturally astute* (ADP/ADRP 3-0).

c. Proceeding from this doctrinal foundation, the Army seeks to recruit, educate, train, and assign Soldiers to duty where they can best contribute to mission accomplishment as trusted members of cohesive teams (ADP/ADRP 6-0).

d. As we prepare to meet the unknown challenges attendant to future missions, we must anticipate the professional development requirements that will prepare Soldiers and Army Civilians, and their units to be *ready and resilient*. This requires mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral ability to face and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn and grow from setbacks (<http://www.army.mil/readyandresilient/>).

e. The Army Operating Concept supports this goal, calling for development of *innovative (adaptive)* leaders seeking to "optimize human performance." Leaders are expected to foster *discipline, confidence, and cohesion*. Team members must be *committed* to each other and the Army Ethic while operating in environments of persistent danger (TRADOC Pam 525-3-1).

f. The Army Human Dimension Concept is consistent with this theme with its emphasis on preparing Soldiers and Army Civilians to meet future challenges through continuous development and certification in *character, competence, and commitment* (TRADOC Pam 525-3-7).

g. Within the Army Leader Development Strategy the attributes and competencies of the Leadership Requirements Model are identified as "Ends" of the developmental process. Attributes include: *character, presence, and intellect*. These attributes require qualities such as: *empathy, discipline, bearing, fitness, confidence, resilience, mental agility, sound judgment, innovation, tact, and expertise*. The corresponding competencies are: *leads, develops, and achieves*. These are amplified to include: *building trust, communicating, setting the example, extending influence, creating a positive climate, exercising stewardship, and getting results*.

Confident, competent, and informed leadership intensifies the effectiveness of the other elements of combat power. (ALDS; ADP/ADRP 6-22)

h. The Army Learning Concept (TRADOC Pam 525-8-2) states: "Soldiers and leaders must master a set of *critical core competencies* that provide a foundation for operational adaptability." These are identified as: *character and accountability; comprehensive fitness; adaptability and initiative; lifelong learning* (includes digital literacy); *teamwork; thinking and problem solving; cultural, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational competence; and tactical and technical competence* (full spectrum capable).

i. Under the auspices of HQDA G-1, the Army Research Institute (ARI) is developing and testing a resource to assess qualities of recruits and Soldiers in the domains of: *conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness, openness to experience, extraversion, commitment, courage, situational awareness, and teamwork*. While each of these qualities can be related to one or more of the other qualities listed above, both the words and their operational definitions are dissimilar.

3. Discussion:

a. Logically, the Army's recruiting and professional development process (i.e., education, training, and experience) should be designed to provide present and future Soldiers, Army Civilians, and leaders with essential attributes and competencies.

b. However, with a diversified and inconsistent list of qualities required of a Soldier (or Army Civilian) and leaders, the ability to develop a synchronized and coherent strategy for recruiting and developing Army Professionals is compromised.

c. This issue is further complicated when both the generic and operational definitions of these qualities vary among Army strategic concepts and doctrine.

4. Conclusion: The fundamental qualities for all members of the Army Profession are inherent within the identity of *Trusted Army Professional*, who are *Honorable Servants, Army Experts, and Stewards* of the Profession. Professional development must therefore address *character, competence, and commitment*, within which all required attributes and competencies reside in our future Soldiers and Army Civilians. These qualities are discussed in ADP 1, *The Army Profession*, including the Army Ethic (Ch 2). Specific details regarding the competencies required in any career management field or level of responsibility should be determined by the proponent.

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Enclosure: Fact Sheet, Subj: Future Soldier (and Army Civilian) Attributes and Competencies, 19 June (Updated 23 November 2015)

19 June 2015 (Updated 23 November 2015)

Fact Sheet

SUBJECT: Future Soldier (and Army Civilian) Attributes and Competencies

Cited below are extracts from Army documents that identify required (or desired) attributes, traits, qualities, or competencies of future Soldiers and Army Civilians. There are both commonalities and wide variations in various Army documents. The list may not be inclusive and there is no clear “order of precedence.”

Army Regulations have precedence over concepts and doctrine. Within doctrine, ADP 1/ADRP 1 and ADP/ADRP 3-0 are CAPSTONE doctrine, and ADP/ADRP 6-22 are KEYSTONE doctrine. TRADOC Pamphlets are not yet implemented in doctrine. White Papers are intended to generate dialog regarding a problem and a concept for its solution.

CSA Priorities: Marching Orders – Trust; Warrior Ethos – every Soldier is a **Warrior** and lives by our ethos...”; Comprehensive Fitness, we must build and maintain **resilience** across all five dimensions of strength (physical, emotional, social, family and spiritual); **Way Point #1** “Leaders at all levels capable of **critical thinking** and **strategic vision**.” **Way Point #2: Adaptive Army Leaders** for a complex world, Soldiers **Committed** to the Army Profession (individual **toughness**, battlefield **skill**, and fighting **spirit**)”; “We need leaders with **vision**, who are not afraid of **innovation**; leaders who can quickly **adapt** to changing situations and environments; “[Mission Command] empowers **agile** and **adaptive** leaders to successfully operate under conditions of uncertainty....” **Thoughts on the Future of the Army: “Trust, Discipline, Fitness”**

Army Posture Statement: “Soldiers and Army Civilians Committed to our Profession”- **Trusted Army Professionals** ...of **character, competence, and commitment**.

AR 600-100, Army Leadership: The Army develops leaders to be **life-long learners** who are **adaptive, innovative, bold, situationally aware, problem solvers**. Leaders must demonstrate **character**, be **decisive**, accept prudent risk and **effectively** manage, lead and change organizations. They must be **resilient, agile, empathetic, self-aware, confident, independent communicators** and **coordinators**.

ADP/ADRP 1. Army Professional: Soldier or Army Civilian who meets the certification criteria in **character, competence, and commitment**. (para 1-11, p 1-2)

Character: dedication and adherence to the Army Ethic, including Army Values, as consistently and faithfully demonstrated in decisions and actions.

Competence: demonstrated ability to successfully perform duty with discipline and to standard.

Commitment: resolve to contribute honorable service to the Nation and accomplish the mission despite adversity, obstacles, and challenges. (para 3-4, p 3-2)

Trusted Army Professional: honorable servant in defense of the American people; Army expert in the conduct of the mission; and faithful steward of the Army Profession, people, and resources as entrusted by the American people. (Introduction page vii)

ADP/ADRP 3-0. The Army Warfighting Functions (ADRP 3-0) and Army Warfighting Challenges 9, 10: “**resilient Soldiers, adaptive leaders**” - “**agile, adaptive, and innovative leaders**.”

ADP/ADRP 6-22. Army Leadership and Army Leadership Requirements Model: Leader **competencies:** **Leads** (Leads Others, Builds Trust, Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command, Leads by Example, Communicates), **Develops** (Creates a Positive Environment/Fosters esprit de corps, Prepares Self, Develops Others, Stewards the Profession), and **Achieves** (Gets Results). Leader **attributes:** **Character** (Army Values, Empathy, Warrior/Service Ethos, Discipline), **Presence** (Military and Professional Bearing, Fitness, Confidence, Resilience), and **Intellect** (Mental agility, Sound Judgment, Innovation, Interpersonal Tact, Expertise).

Army Leader Development Strategy: “Leaders must understand the strategic environment, be able to **think critically**, and **creatively**, **visualize** solutions, and describe and **communicate** crucial information to achieve shared understanding, **collaborate**, and build teams.... Leaders must possess and demonstrate traits such as being **adaptable**, **agile**, **flexible**, **responsive**, and **resilient.**” **Leader Qualities – Competent** in their **core competencies**; **broad** enough to operate with a global mindset and across the spectrum of conflict; able to operate in Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) environments (which requires: **innovative** and **adaptive** leaders to the lowest level, joint commanders who are **masters** of the operational art, senior leaders who are **experts** not only in the operational employment of the joint force but also in the development and execution of national strategy, greater language and cultural **capabilities** and **capacities**, improved service and institutional **adaptability** to deal with rapid change), and leverage other **capabilities** in achieving their objectives; **capable** of operating and providing advice at the national level; culturally **astute** and able to use this awareness and understanding to achieve an intercultural edge; **courageous** enough to see and exploit opportunities in the challenges and complexities of the operational environment; and grounded in **Army Values** and the **Warrior Ethos. Leader Characteristics – essential leadership attributes (character, presence, and intellect)** and **core competencies (lead, develop, and achieve)** which continue to mature through life-long learning.

TRADOC Pam 525-3-0 The Army Capstone Concept: Future Army forces require the capability to train and educate leaders, Soldiers, and Civilians...[to develop] initial, functional and professional **skills, knowledge, and attributes** to provide fundamental and technical and tactical **competencies** necessary to conduct decisive action in support of unified land operations...leaders at all echelons who are **critical** and **creative thinkers** with highly refined **problem solving skills** that can process data and information into usable knowledge... requires increased military and social **competence** by its leaders and Soldiers, raising physical and **cognitive excellence**...requires a foundation in cross-cultural **competence.**”

TRADOC Pam 525-3-1 The Army Operating Concept: “Develop **resilient** Soldiers, **adaptive** leaders, and cohesive teams **committed** to the Army professional ethic that are capable of accomplishing the mission in environments of uncertainty and persistent danger. Develop **agile**, **adaptive**, and **innovative** leaders who **thrive** in conditions of uncertainty and chaos, and are capable of **visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing** operations in complex environments and against adaptive enemies.... Human performance **optimization**...**innovative** leaders and optimized human performance...cross-cultural **competencies** and advanced cognitive **abilities**...Leaders and Soldiers are committed to each other and the Army professional ethic. They remain **resilient** and preserve their **moral character**....”

TRADOC Pam 525-8-2 The Army Learning Concept (2015) – [21st Century Soldier Competencies]: “Soldiers and leaders must **master** a set of critical **core competencies** that provide a foundation for operational **adaptability**. All Soldiers and leaders must **master** the

fundamental **warrior skills** supporting tactical and technical **competence**....The life-long continuous learning environment must develop critical 21st Century Soldier **Competencies** such as **initiative, critical thinking, teamwork, and accountability**. The learning environment and instructional strategies must simultaneously integrate and reinforce **competencies** that develop **adaptive** and **resilient** Soldiers and leaders of **character** who can **think critically** and **act ethically**. The nine 21st Century Core Soldier Competencies:

- **Character** and **accountability**
- Comprehensive **fitness**
- **Adaptability** and **initiative**
- **Lifelong learner** (includes digital literacy)
- **Teamwork** and **collaboration**
- **Communication** and **engagement** (oral, written, negotiation)
- **Critical thinking** and **problem solving**
- Cultural and joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational **competence**
- Tactical and technical **competence** (full spectrum capable)

TRADOC Pam 525-3-3 v3.0 **Soldier as a System – Bold, agile, and innovative leaders of character....**”

Force 2025 and Beyond: TRADOC Pam and Force 2025: Critical Factors White Paper, 5Feb2014: “Agile and adaptive Leaders... with an Expeditionary Mindset.”

CAC Human Dimension White Paper: Army leaders are **trusted professionals of character** and part of a trusted team, who demonstrate comprehensive improvement of **knowledge, skills, and attributes** in education, training, and experience to optimize and sustain the ability to succeed at any assigned mission.

Unified Quest 2011: “Future leaders must be **ethically grounded, adaptable, competent** in negotiation, **effective** in JIIM environments and **comfortable** in decentralized environments....requires leaders who are **adaptable** and **comfortable** with uncertainty.....Soldiers and leaders who embody **width** (Soldiers who exhibit flexibility and operational adaptability) and **depth** (Soldiers who are experts in a particular area [of knowledge]) in the proper context (applying each Soldier’s unique **ability** where it is most applicable).”

CG TRADOC Priorities: “Develop **Innovative, Agile Leaders**” (June 2014).

The Army Civilian Education System (22Jan2007) goal: “Prepare **agile** and **innovative** Army Civilians who can lead during times of change and uncertainty; are prepared for the rigors of service as **multi-skilled** leaders; and are armed with the values, **skills**, and mindset to serve as **competent, resilient** supervisors and managers.”

Select for Success: A Toolset for Enhancing Soldier Accessioning

Special Report 70, March 2011 U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences Characteristic Description: Table 2. Temperament Dimensions Measured by TAPAS, page 7

- **Achievement:** ambition, confidence, resourcefulness, and industry.
- **Cooperation:** agreeableness (easy or difficult to get along with), trust, skepticism, suspicion.
- **Dominance:** assertiveness or submissiveness and propensity to "take charge."

- **Even Tempered:** anger, hostility, calmness and stability.
- **Attention Seeking:** shyness - need for social attention; boastfulness - diffidence.
- **Selflessness:** giving, charitable – egotistical, greedy.
- **Intellectual Efficiency:** ability to analyze and process information, astuteness or obtuseness.
- **Non-Delinquency:** tendency to be lawful, comply with authority, follow rules and regulations.
- **Adjustment:** reaction to new situations, nervousness, apprehension, anxiety, and certainty.
- **Physical:** proclivity for sports, physical and outdoor activities - sedentary tendencies.
- **Self-Control:** patience, deliberateness, caution, impulsiveness, and rashness.
- **Sociability:** interest in social interaction, gregariousness, talkativeness and introversion.
- **Tolerance:** acceptance or bias regarding others' customs, viewpoints, etc.
- **Optimism:** cheerfulness and emotional outlook; positivism, negativism, depression, contentment.

MCCoE: White Paper – Grit, June 2015 -- a recognized desirable personality trait identified as “passion and perseverance for long-term goals.” [Executive Summary] Passion is defined as “a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity that one loves, values, and in which one invests a substantial amount of time and energy.” Perseverance is “to try to do or continue to doing something in a determined way, despite difficulties.” Grit is a narrow facet of “**conscientiousness**” – one of the “Big Five” personality traits – along with “**openness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.**” [p 6]

Talent Management in the Army Review, Comment, and Recommendation on Talent Management Models White Paper - Human Dimension Capabilities Development Task Force Capabilities Development Integration Directorate Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE) April 2015 PRINCIPLES AND FUNCTIONS FOR THE ARMY'S TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY Version 4.1 as of 6MAY15 DRAFT // PRE-DECISIONAL Talent: [Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA)] “...the unique intersection of **skills, knowledge, and behaviors** in every person. ‘**Experience:** work and accomplishments.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) - The attributes required to perform a job and are generally demonstrated through qualifying service, education, or training.

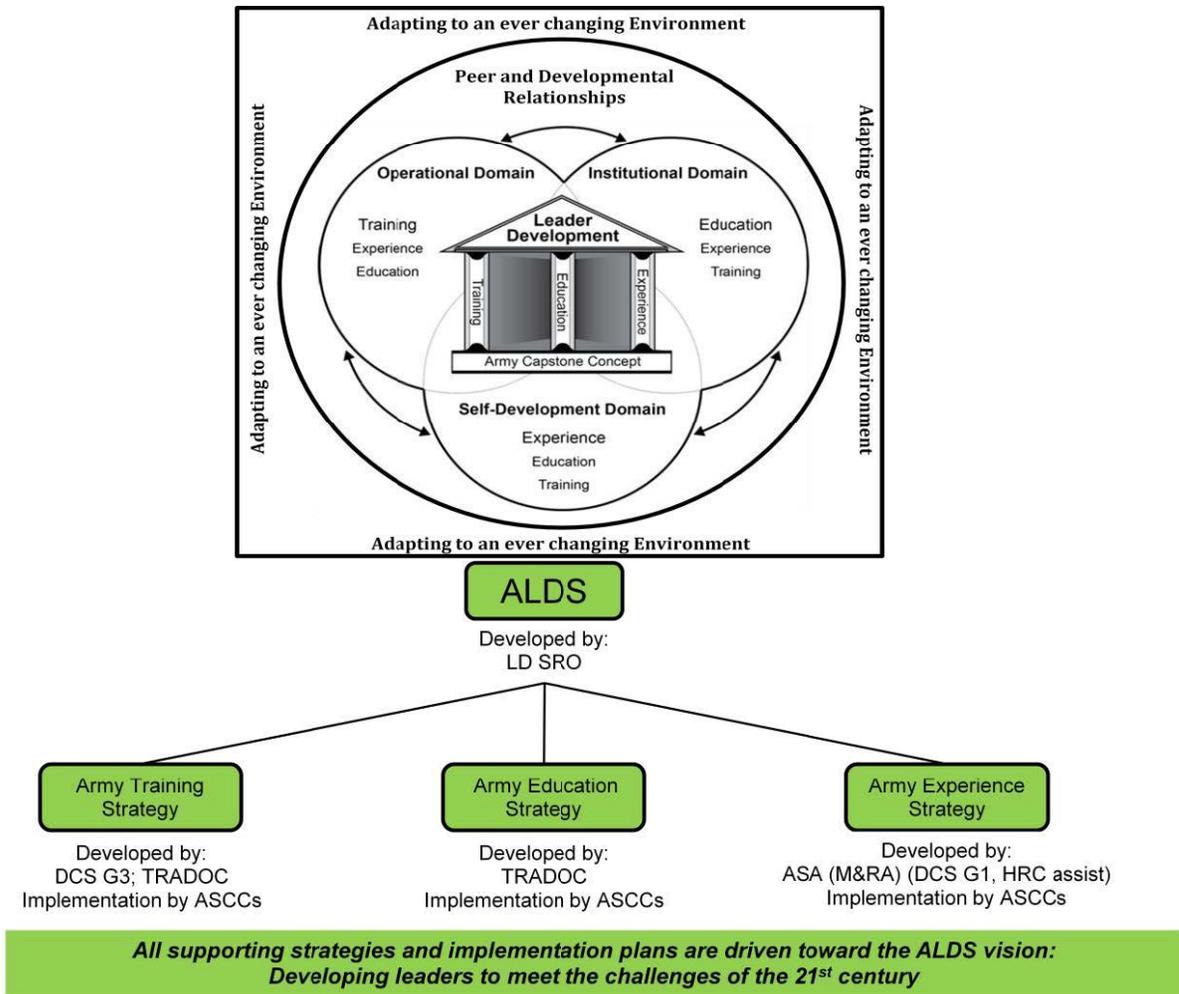
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge,_Skills,_and_Abilities

- **Knowledge** - Is a body of information applied directly to the performance of a function.
- **Skill** - Is an observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act.
- **Ability** - Is competence to perform an observable **behavior** or a **behavior** that results in an observable product.
- **Behavior** - observable activity in a human or animal; responses to stimuli. [http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/behavior?s=t]

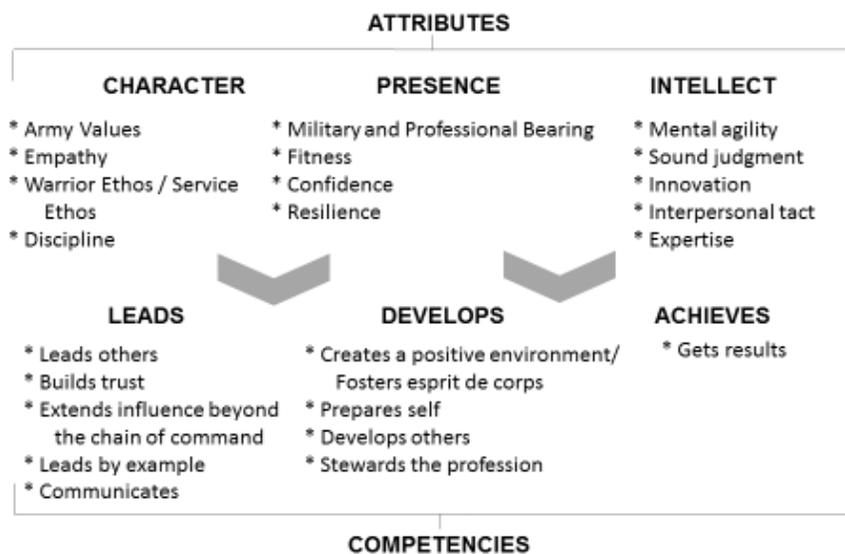
Resilience: The mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral ability to face and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn and grow from setbacks.

Note: Commitment and Resilience are logically linked, the former is “resolve” or the desire to persevere, the latter is the demonstrated “ability” to do so.

<http://www.army.mil/readyandresilient/>.



Leadership Requirements Model



Trust:

- Trust is “assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.” [ADP 1, The Army, Chapter 2, The Army Profession, para 2-1, p 2-2, 17 Sep 2012]
- As trusted Army professionals—Soldiers and Army Civilians—we are honorable servants of the Nation, Army experts, and faithful stewards of the people, other resources, and profession entrusted to our care. By our oath, we are morally committed to support and defend the Constitution. This duty requires a foundation of trust with the American people, reinforced as the Army Profession contributes honorable service, military expertise, and stewardship with courageous esprit de corps. Within the Army Profession, Army professionals earn and sustain trust by demonstrating character, competence, and commitment. We make right decisions and take right actions that are ethical, effective, and efficient. [ADRP 1, Introduction]
- **[external]**
The confidence and faith that the American people have in the Army to serve the Nation ethically, effectively, and efficiently. [ADRP 1, Glossary]
- **[internal]**
Reliance on the character, competence, and commitment of Army professionals to live by and uphold the Army Ethic. [ADRP 1, Glossary]
- Trust encompasses reliance upon others, confidence in their abilities, and consistency in behavior. Trust builds over time through mutual respect, shared understanding, and common experiences. Leaders need to be competent and have good character to be trusted. [ADRP 6-22, para 6-49,50]
- **Character**, in an operational sense, is an Army professional’s dedication and adherence to the Army Ethic, including Army Values, as consistently and faithfully demonstrated in decisions and actions. Intrinsicly, character is one’s true nature including identity, sense of purpose, values, virtues, morals, and conscience. [ADRP 1, para 5-14.] Character – the sum total of an individual’s personality traits and the link between a person’s values and his behavior. It allows a person to behave consistently according to individual values, regardless of the circumstances. [FM 22-100 Military Leadership, 1983, Glossary]
- **Competence** is an Army professional’s demonstrated ability to successfully perform duty with discipline and to standard. Requisite competence varies based on level of responsibility (rank or grade) and the duties associated with specific force structure positions within career management fields. [ADRP 1, para 5-15.]
- **Commitment** is an Army professional’s resolve to contribute honorable service to the Nation and accomplish the mission despite adversity, obstacles, and challenges. To be an Army professional is to answer a calling that is much more than a job. It means to be motivated primarily by the intrinsic value of service rather than material benefits such as pay and vacations. At senior levels of leadership, this includes responsible stewardship of the Army Profession. Demonstrating commitment requires the resilience to cope, recover, and learn from setbacks. [ADRP 1, para 5-16.]

- **Certification** is verification and validation of an Army professional's character, competence, and commitment to fulfill responsibilities and successfully perform assigned duty with discipline and to standard. [ADRP 1, para 5-11.]

Respect: Treat people as they should be treated. [Army Values]

- In war and peace, we recognize the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people, treating them with respect. [ADRP 1, p 2-6]
- As stated in the Declaration of Independence, the human rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are inalienable and universal. Accordingly, we treat all people with respect, recognizing their intrinsic dignity and worth, demonstrating consideration for all. Even those who threaten the rights of others are entitled to just treatment according to law, regulations, and rules of engagement. We lead by example and do what is right to prevent abusive treatment of others. We protect those who are threatened or suffer disregard for their inherent dignity and worth. We do not tolerate mistreatment of people or their property. [ADRP 1, para 2-18, p 2-7]
- The Nation's political sovereignty is a collective responsibility of the American people. As their trusted guardians, we restrain our actions and fight with virtue, respecting the inalienable rights of all people. If we are to maintain legitimacy as a profession while protecting the interests of the American people, we cannot violate the rights of others when using lethal force to protect our own rights. [ADRP 1, para 3-14, p 3-4]
- Army professionals understand that they are part of the institution that protects the Constitutional rights of every American. Therefore, any failure to respect basic rights and adhere to the law of war diminishes the trust of the American people and the respect of the international community. Such failure can cause great harm to the legitimacy of our profession and our Nation.
- We assume and accept the moral principle that all people are of intrinsic dignity and worth. Accordingly, we treat everyone with respect. [ADRP 1, para A-5, p A-1]
- Respect for the individual is the basis for the Geneva Convention; this body of law codifies the ideal that Soldiers, even in the most trying of circumstances, are bound to treat others with dignity and respect. Army leaders must work with people from a wide range of backgrounds. An Army leader should prevent misunderstandings arising from cultural differences. Actively seeking to learn about different cultures and being sensitive to other cultures will aid in mentoring, coaching, and counseling subordinates. Leaders must actively seek opportunities to better understand other cultures, see other perspectives, and appreciate what others find important. [ADRP 6-22, para 3-8]
- Army leaders should consistently foster a climate that treats everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, or religious belief. Fostering a positive climate begins with a leader's personal example. [ADRP 6-22, para 3-9]

Cohesion:

- The mental, emotional, and spiritual bonding of unit members that results from respect, confidence, caring, and communication. It is intertwined with discipline and is necessary for a unit to work as a smoothly functioning team. [FM 22-100 Military Leadership, 1983, Glossary]
- Unit cohesion and morale is the best predictor of combat resiliency within a unit or organization. [FM 6-22.5, para 2-3]
- Unit cohesion:
 - Loyalty to buddies
 - Loyalty to leaders
 - Identification with unit tradition [FM 4-02.51, p 1-6]
- It is the binding force that keeps Soldiers together and performing the mission in spite of danger and adversity.
 - Cohesion is a result of Soldiers knowing and trusting their peers and leaders and understanding their dependency on one another.
 - It is achieved through personal bonding and a strong sense of responsibility toward the unit and its members.
 - The ultimate adaptive stress reactions are acts of extreme courage and almost unbelievable strength. They may even involve deliberate heroism resulting in the ultimate self-sacrifice. [FM 6-22.5 para 1-18]

Motivation:

- The combination of a person's desire and energy directed at achieving a goal. It is the cause of action. Influencing people's motivation means getting them to *want* to do what you, as a leader, know must be done. [FM 22-100 Military Leadership, 1983]

Military Review:

- Motivation can be defined as that which compels a person to act with determination, or that which gives rise to an inclination that manifests itself through a specific behavior. p 93
- "the determination that induces Soldiers to fight, in spite of the adversities and the inherent dangers of war." p 94
- If [she] he is imbued with a sense of duty, believes in the legitimacy of his nation's cause, and trusts in the efficiency of his forces (to include his comrades and his leader), the Soldier will be highly motivated to fight. p 96
http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20061231_art016.pdf

Adaptability:

- Adaptability reflects a quality that Army leaders and forces exhibit through critical thinking, their comfort with ambiguity and uncertainty, their willingness to accept prudent risk, and their ability to rapidly adjust while continuously assessing the situation. They accept that no prefabricated solutions to problems exist. Army leaders adapt their thinking, their formations, and their employment techniques to the specific situations they face. [ADRP 3-0, para 2-65, pp 2-13]

- Agile leaders are comfortable with uncertainty and understand that disciplined initiative is an important part of being adaptive. Successful Army leaders adapt their thinking, their formations, and their employment techniques to the specific situation they face. Adaptive leaders realize that concrete answers or perfect solutions to operational problems are rarely apparent. They understand that there may be periods of reduced uncertainty as the situation evolves. Agile and adaptive leaders use initiative to set and dictate the terms of action. They accept they will often have to act despite significant gaps in their understanding. Agile and adaptive leaders make timely adjustments in response to changes in their operational environment. [ADRP 6-0, para 1-6, pp 1-2]

- Adaptability for the purpose of performance is an effective change in behavior in response to an altered or unexpected situation. [FM 6-22 Leader Development, June 2015, para 5-30]

- Adaptability for an individual means having broad and deep knowledge and a good mix of skills and characteristics (see table 5-3). Critical and creative thinking skills are needed when new situations are encountered and the team does not have existing knowledge to use in adaptation. [FM 6-22 Leader Development, June 2015, para 5-31]

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Quickly assess the situation. Recognize changes in the environment. Identify critical elements of new situation. Apply new skills in unanticipated contexts. Change responses readily. Use multiple perspectives through critical and creative thinking. Avoid oversimplification.	Open-minded. Flexible, Versatile, Innovative. Sees change as an opportunity. Passionate learner. Comfortable in unfamiliar environments. Comfortable with ambiguity. Maintain appropriate complexity in knowledge.

Table 5-3. Skills and characteristics of adaptability

Adaptability for a team means having a variety of skills within the team to enable adaptation. [FM 6-22 Leader Development, June 2015, para 5-32]

- Effective units adapt. Adaptability is essential to seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative based on relevant understanding of the specific situation. For example, leaders demonstrate adaptability while adjusting the balance of lethal and nonlethal actions necessary to achieve a position of relative advantage and set conditions for conflict resolution within their areas of operations. Transitions between operations, whether anticipated or unanticipated, also demonstrate adaptability as leaders cope with changes in an operational environment. These leaders enable adaptive forces through flexible, collaborative planning and decentralized execution. Adaptability results in teams that—

- Anticipate transitions.
- Accept risks to create opportunities.

- Influence all partners. [ADRP 3-0, para 2-66, pp 12-13]

- **Operational adaptability:** Possessing the ability to adjust oneself readily to different conditions, operational environments, unexpected changes, new challenges, and dynamic situations. [TRADOC Pam 525-3-7, US Army Concept for the Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations 2015-2024, 11 June 2008, Introduction]

Self-Awareness: [ADRP 6-22: no longer a formally defined term. p vi].

- Self-awareness. Since strategic thinking involves unknowns, multiple paths, trials of what might exist in a situation, and possible results of a solution, an ability to manage personal thought processes is important. Metacognition is being aware of what oneself is thinking, what one knows, progress toward a conclusion, and in testing strategic approaches and conclusions about them. [FM 6-22 Leader Development, June 2015, para 5-28]

- Influential leaders are authentic. Authentic leaders are competent, confident, and optimistic people of high moral character who are aware of their own thoughts, conduct, abilities, and values. In short, they are *self-aware leaders*. They are also attentive to these characteristics in others and the situational context in which they operate. This collective awareness assists them in adapting their leadership to the conditions inherent in the combat setting. [TRADOC Pam 525-3-7, US Army Concept for the Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations 2015-2024, 11 June 2008, para 2-8]

- Character development affects an individual's leader identity. Leaders lacking self-awareness will have difficulty influencing others or attaining goals related to leader growth and development. Leaders lacking a clear sense of leader identity will not want to develop or improve their leadership skills. An incomplete or inaccurate sense of identity hinders the growth of leaders. The ability to lead and inspire others begins with an understanding of oneself, which ultimately determines a leader's character. [ADRP 6-22, para 3-29, p 3-5]

- Seek self-improvement. To master the profession at every level, a leader must make a full commitment to lifelong learning. Self-improvement requires self-awareness and leads to new skills necessary to adapt to changes in the leadership environment. [ADRP 6-22, para 7-4, p 7-1]

- Developing self-awareness [see ADRP 6-22, para 7-42 -- 7-48 and Table 7-2 p 7-8]

- *Situational Understanding* (SU) is the product of applying analysis and judgment to the COP to determine the relationships among factors of METT-TC (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, time available, and civil considerations). It enhances decision making by identifying opportunities, threats to the force or mission accomplishment, and information gaps. However, SU is imperfect, particularly with respect to the enemy situation. [FM 3-21.20, 13 Dec 2006, para 2-15]

- Operational Security. The single most proactive measure for survivability is individual awareness by Soldiers in all circumstances. Soldiers must look for things out of place and patterns preceding aggression. Commanders should ensure Soldiers remain alert, do not establish a routine, maintain appearance and bearing, and keep a low profile. [FM 3-21.20, 13 Dec 2006, para 6-84]

<http://www.humanperformancetools.com/situational-awareness-understanding-self-aware/>

Self-Development: [ADRP 6-22: no longer a formally defined term. p vi]

- The self-development domain includes planned and goal-oriented learning that reinforces and expands the depth and breadth of an individual's knowledge base and self-awareness. Self-development bridges learning gaps between the operational and institutional domains and sets conditions for continuous learning and growth. There are three variations: structured self-development, which are mandatory learning modules to meet specific learning objectives and requirements; guided self-development, which is recommended, but optional learning that is intended to enhance professional competence; and personal self-development which is self-initiated learning to meet personal training, education, and experiential goals [Army Leader Development Strategy, June 2013, p 11].

- Successful self-development concentrates on the key components of the leader: character, presence, and intellect. While refining abilities to apply and model the Army Values, Army leaders maintain high levels of fitness and health, not only to earn the respect of others, but also to withstand the stresses of leading and maintaining their ability to think clearly [ADRP 6-22, para 7-33].

- Successful self-development is continuous and begins with the motivated individual, supplemented by a concerted team effort. Part of that team effort is quality feedback from multiple sources, including peers, subordinates, and superiors to establish self-development goals and self-improvement courses of action. These improve performance by enhancing previously acquired skills, knowledge, behaviors, and experience. Trust-based mentorship can help focus self-development efforts to achieve professional objectives [ADRP 6-22 para 7-36].

Self-Discipline:

- Army Experts—Competent Professionals. We do our duty, leading and following with discipline, striving for excellence, putting the needs of others above our own, and accomplishing the mission as a team [ADRP 1, para 2-20, p 2].

- The Army Value of duty charges us with the responsibility to contribute our best efforts to accomplish the mission as members of the team. In performing our duty, we make right decisions and take right actions to the best of our ability. This does not mean that we will always succeed or avoid all mistakes. Setbacks and error will occur in any human endeavor. We learn from experience, both good and bad, develop in wisdom and leadership, and strive for excellence [ADRP 1, para 2-21, p 2].

- We continuously advance the expertise of our chosen profession through life-long learning, professional development and our certifications. Within the Army Profession, progressive development and certification in character, competence, and commitment for Soldiers and Army Civilians is a continuous, life-long responsibility. Knowledge, discipline, and leadership require education, training, experience, coaching, counseling, and mentoring. Situational understanding requires our individual and collective wisdom and judgment, often under demanding, chaotic circumstances, to discern what is actually so—the truth. With shared understanding and intent, we evaluate our options, decide what is right, and work as a cohesive team to accomplish the mission [ADRP 1, para 2-22, p 2-8].

- Disciplined initiative fosters agile and adaptive forces. Throughout operations, unexpected opportunities and threats rapidly present themselves. The nature of military operations requires responsibility and decision-making at the point of action. Leaders and subordinates who exercise initiative, within the commander's intent, create opportunity by taking action to develop the situation [ADRP 6-0, para 1-6, pp 1-2].

- What is discipline? Military discipline is founded upon self-discipline, respect for properly constituted authority, and the embracing of the professional Army Ethic with its supporting individual values (see AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, p. 22). Discipline at the individual level is primarily self-discipline, the ability to control one's own behavior. Discipline expresses what the Army Values require—willingly doing what is right. Discipline is a mindset for a unit or an organization to practice sustained, systematic actions to reach and maintain the ability to perform its military function (ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, p 3-5). Discipline is the accepted practice of our Army Profession in the conduct of duty, effectively and ethically performed to standards.

- Discipline often requires attending to the organizational and administrative details that are essential for efficiency and effectiveness. Army professionals must exercise stewardship of the Army Profession and its members, recognizing that maintenance, supply, training management, property accountability, coaching, counseling, and mentoring are essential to sustaining and developing the disciplined practice of our duty.

- Often, members of our profession associate discipline only with regulations and the consequences for errors in judgment. However, it is important to understand that our professional discipline is fundamentally about "why and how" we practice our profession – not just about punishment for wrong-doing. Leaders should teach and inspire an understanding of and appreciation for both the meaning and importance of standards and discipline in practicing our profession. Discipline and adherence to standards are hallmarks of Army professionals. [These 3 paragraphs (above) are extracts from the CY13 America's Army – Our Profession Education and Training Program, quarterly theme of Standards and Discipline]

<http://cape.army.mil/repository/aaop/sd/Standards-Discipline-Info-Paper.pdf>

- Discipline is essential for a Soldier and leader. While it is the responsibility of all Soldiers to maintain self-discipline, it is the responsibility of leaders to ensure unit discipline. Self-discipline allows individuals to make sure their behaviors match the Army Values, make certain that Army standards are met (physical as well as behavioral), and properly accomplish tasks in a timely manner. All of the specified attributes and competencies of an Army leader are based in self-discipline and the ability to put the needs consistent with support and defense of the Constitution of the United States ahead of one's own needs. Unit discipline helps to keep a sense of camaraderie, builds a positive climate, and confirms that units are properly equipped and trained. Table 7-17 presents indicators that leaders can use to identify their strengths and developmental needs in displaying discipline. This document also presents potential underlying causes in failing to model discipline and resources for further development. [FM 6-22 *Developing Leaders*, June 2015, Para 7-16]

Activities for Competency Development

Table 7-17. Applies discipline *Strength Indicators*

Applies disciplined initiative in absence of orders.
Maintains standards for both self and subordinates.
Displays proper time management.
Encourages positive behaviors and disciplines negative behaviors.

Underlying Causes

Inability to assess one's own behaviors accurately.
Failure to internalize Army Values and traditions.
Failure to practice time management.
Self-indulgence rather than placing Army priorities first.
Lack of understanding of how favoritism undermines authority.
Lack of understanding of how to properly communicate and enforce standards.

Need Indicators

Displays favoritism and inequality in enforcement of standards.
Fails to complete tasks in a timely manner.
Fails to execute the Uniform Code of Military Justice properly.
Displays non-professional demeanor.

Feedback

Select a role model and watch how they demonstrate discipline. Ask how discipline is important to them, what are the pitfalls of slipping standards, how they maintain their self-discipline. Compare how you manage time to others. Do you get as much done as they do or more? Are you prioritizing and getting the most important tasks done on time?

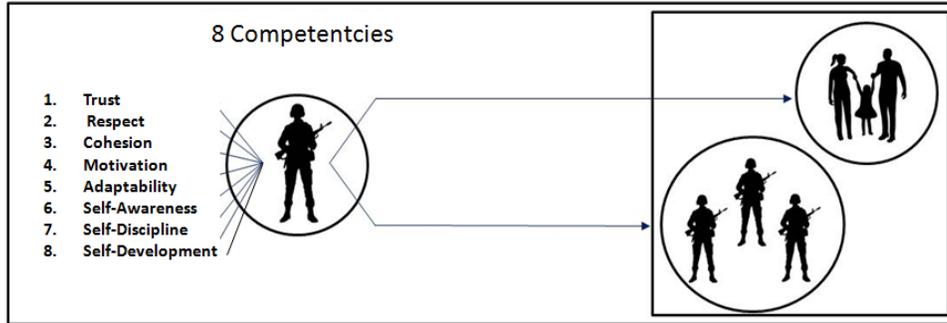
Study

Consider how different types of discipline affect the individual and the unit.
Study time management techniques and implement methods to use time efficiently.
Review psychological constructs that get in the way of self-discipline (such as ego, restraint defense mechanisms, or delayed gratification).
Think about your behaviors and how others might view your self-discipline if they knew what you know about yourself. How would you change your behavior then?

Practice

Consider how others would view your discipline if they were aware of your thoughts/actions; design a plan to fix shortcomings.
Establish and stick to a regular exercise routine.

FM 6-22, p 7-19



501 Integrated Training Model **Qualities** Competencies



TRUST	Having confidence in self and group members' intent and ability to sustain commitment to each other and mission
RESPECT	Recognizing everyone's right to be treated with fairness and dignity
COHESION <small>formerly "connection"</small>	Developing and managing quality relationships with others
MOTIVATION	Staying committed to mission and purpose, even during difficult times, leveraging values and goals
ADAPTABILITY <small>formerly "mental agility"</small>	Processing information to make sense out of situations and take purposeful action
SELF-AWARENESS	Accurately perceiving one's own needs, values, emotion, habits, and behaviors
SELF-DEVELOPMENT <small>formerly "self-investment"</small>	Taking care of oneself to function effectively in life domains
SELF-DISCIPLINE <small>formerly "self-regulation"</small>	Monitoring, evaluating, and regulating emotion and behavior to accomplish a goal

- Trust:
 - Internal - Interpersonal (Mutual): Reliance on the character, competence, and commitment of Army professionals to live by and uphold the Army Ethic.
 - Cohesive Teams: Confidence that the team will accomplish the mission in the right way (ethically, effectively, efficiently).
- Respect: Recognition of the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people -- treating all people accordingly.
- Cohesion: Relational or team bonding based on shared mission, identity, values, and experiences.
- Motivation: Intention to accomplish a task, achieve an objective, or pursue a goal based on incentive or inspiration.
- Adaptability: The skill and agility to recognize and adjust to changing circumstances in order to advance or improve one's situation.
- Self-Awareness: Understanding one's identity, motivations, situation or circumstances including strengths and weaknesses.
- Self-Development: Commitment to life-long learning through pursuit of education, training, and experience; proactive reading; and offering and seeking coaching, counselling, and mentoring.
- Self-Discipline: Practicing one's profession -- making decisions, taking actions (conduct) -- in accordance with moral principles, established protocols, accepted procedures, and cultural norms; striving for standards of excellence and being committed to life-long learning (education, training, experience).

SERIES: [Social Mobility Memos on Character and Opportunity](#) | Number 13 of 13« [Previous](#)

Richard V. Reeves and Joanna Venator | December 19, 2014 11:05am

Jingle-Jangle Fallacies for Non-Cognitive Factors

Terminologically speaking, scholarship on “non-cognitive factors” is a mess. This is a field where words count, too. Are we examining behaviors, skills, strengths or traits? Are we promoting “character,” “socio-emotional learning,” or “soft skills?” Two fallacies in particular are impeding progress: [the “jingle” and the “jangle”](#).

The Jingle Fallacy

The “jingle fallacy” refers to the use of a single term to describe a multiplicity of quite different things. In this case, the phrase “non-cognitive skills” lumps together a vast range of skills, traits, strengths, or attributes: essentially, as the term implies, anything that is not cognitively based. This could include social manners or personal confidence; but it may also refer to the capacity to defer gratification (sometimes referred to as prudence or “grit”), focus on a task, weather difficult times (labeled, sometimes, “resilience”), or empathize with the troubles of another person.

When a term is being used to cover so much ground, it gets in the way of understanding. Researchers working on wildly different dimensions can falsely believe they are working in the same space, when in truth they are no closer than astrophysicists to astronomers. It is time to retire the phrase “non-cognitive” from active duty.

The Jangle Fallacy

But there’s another potential problem, one that also bedeviled early research on cognitive factors: the “jangle fallacy,” which occurs when people use different terms to describe the same thing. This can get in the way of cross-disciplinary collaboration and the adoption of common measurements. The problem is often compounded by the different vocabularies of various disciplines. A particular attribute may be labeled a “skill” by an economist, a “personality trait” by a psychologist, a certain kind of “learning” by an educationalist, or a “character” dimensions by a moral philosopher. Each may have the same concept in mind, but miss each other’s work or meaning because of the confusion of terms.

Even Heckman Struggles

Anybody finding it difficult to make their way through this thicket of words and meanings can take some comfort from the fact that even the best in the field are struggling. Listen to Nobel prize-winner (and our adviser and friend) James Heckman being challenged in [this NPR interview for “This American Life”](#) for the different terms he has used to describe these often ephemeral factors. Heckman is the father of the field, certainly within economics, and has given a great deal of thought to the language and labeling issue. He now refers to “character skills.”

Character Traits, Character Skills and Character Strengths

A “trait” typically refers to a largely fixed, often genetically-influenced, attribute. Introverts don’t become extroverts, even if they learn to demonstrate some extrovert behaviors. But skills – including the capacity to focus on a task at hand, or defer gratification - are changeable, may vary through a lifetime, and can be both taught and learned.

Heckman’s use of the term skills is therefore helpful in terms of narrowing the focus of his research and suggesting malleability. (Paul Tough, another advisor, [takes a similar line](#)). But something is lost here, too. Skill doesn’t capture some important factors. Is curiosity, to give one example, a skill to be learned, a fixed personality trait, or somewhere between the two? In our own work (including in [our report “The Character Factor”](#)) we tend to use the term “character strength” as a compromise between skills and traits. Strength calls to mind athletic abilities – a person may have a predisposition towards a certain level of physical strength, but with enough work at the gym anyone can build up the muscles to do 100 pushups. Similarly, a person’s innate ability to focus on a task may vary, but focus can be taught as well.

Of course the term character is not without its own problems. As Heckman put it in the ‘This American Life’ interview, “The trouble is ‘character’ sounds very moralistic. It sounds like we’re running a Sunday School.”

But his solution is the right one: don’t back away from using the term character, which is the clearest overall label: just be specific what you mean when you talk about it. In particular, we need to be on our guard against both the “jingle” (using the same term for different concepts) and the “jangle” (using different terms for the same concept) in this debate.



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<http://living.msn.com/life-inspired/new-year-new-you/article?cp-documentid=251218500>

Retrieved 3 Jan 14 0730

Everyone wants to be happy. And successful. Trouble is, happiness and success are so amorphous, so hard to define, that it can be tough to know how to make them happen. But what if you could focus on doing a few easy things that would let you be the best, most upbeat version of you? We talked to experts and came up with a list of eight crucial character traits, whittled down from a longer roster of 24 traits devised by [Christopher Peterson](#), Ph.D., and [Martin Seligman](#), Ph.D., leaders in the field of positive psychology, the study of what makes people happy. We call them the great eight, and each one will help you reach your potential in a slightly different way, whether by having deeper relationships or by zeroing in on your work strengths. Try the tips on these pages to bring them out in yourself, then prepare yourself: Your life is about to get better, happier and more fulfilling than ever.

SELF-CONTROL

What it is: Doing what's in line with your most fundamental goals, even when you're tempted to stray.

Why it matters: Self-control pushes you to make the difficult choice (go to the gym) over the immediately appealing option (sleep) for a result that will eventually pay off (a better bod). College students who scored high on self-control not only earned better grades but also were less depressed and anxious, had stronger personal bonds and harder self-esteem, and had fewer struggles with food, the Journal of Personality notes.

How to get more: "Think, talk or blog about what you're ultimately aiming for and why," says Kelly McGonigal, Ph.D., author of *The Willpower Instinct*. "The more it's top of mind, the more automatic doing the right thing will become." Plus, studies show that when you consistently make hard choices in one area of life (for example, your diet), you'll feel more willpower in others. (Suddenly, going for runs and tackling that work project feel easier. Go figure.)

GRIT

What it is: The raw endurance, perseverance and passion that keep you going despite obstacles.

Why it matters: Realizing big dreams takes work. When researchers at [the University of Pennsylvania](#) asked people in various fields, from banking to art, to describe star performers, grit came up over and over. (It's also closely linked with a higher college GPA.) Being gritty isn't always fun. Says [Peterson](#), professor of psychology at [the University of Michigan](#) in Ann Arbor: "It can mean working 24/7 if that's what it takes." That's why grit requires passion. It's easier to plug away at a goal if you're fired up.

How to get more: You can develop grit by taking what Peterson calls long cuts rather than shortcuts. "Build up your grit gradually, like a muscle," Peterson says. For instance, if you're psyched about cooking, make a homemade version of your favorite take-out dish. Love politics? Crack an in-depth article about your favorite candidate, instead of scanning headlines. "Engaging fully takes extra time, and that's the point. You'll develop mental stamina."

CURIOSITY

What it is: A penchant for seeking out the new and different.

Why it matters: People who describe themselves as intentionally curious report greater life satisfaction and a deeper sense of meaning. They're also apt to push themselves to learn and meet their goals, Motivation and Emotion reports. Curious folks are also better problem solvers. "If you cast about for diverse solutions, you're less liable to go with the first thing you come up with," says Todd Kashdan, Ph.D., author of *Curious? That's good*, because if you focus solely on finding the right answer, you'll miss a chance to hit on something truly original. At the least, you'll have fun exploring kooky ideas and have amazing conversations along the way.

How to get more: "As soon as we think we're an expert in something, we usually stop paying attention and switch into autopilot," Kashdan says. So when you're doing something you've done a thousand times, like asking a sibling how work is going, make it your goal to see what's different this time. "Rather than starting with a rote 'What's going on at the office?' find out what weird or funny or interesting thing happened that day," Kashdan suggests. "You'll both end up being more engrossed in the discussion, and the result is a stronger relationship."

OPTIMISM

What it is: Believing that the best may lie ahead.

Why it matters: If you have faith that good things are likely to happen, you may be more open to opportunities when they arise. Research from Duke University found that optimistic MBA grads got jobs faster, despite being pickier. "When you think you've got a shot, it makes sense that you'll prep more and come across as more confident. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy," adds Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D., author of *The How of Happiness*. Optimists also tend to see setbacks as temporary rather than as a sweeping negative judgment on their abilities—which makes it easier to persevere.

How to get more: Each day, think of three things that went well and why (for example, you got a raise—and you worked for it—or the deli guy gave you a free soda because you're nice to him). Research finds that people who took stock for a week felt happier. If they kept it up, the good mood lasted a full six months. Small effort. Big payoff.

LOVE

What it is: Close, caring relationships where the good vibes flow both ways.

Why it matters: Love makes it easier to get through tough times and reach your peak potential. According to the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, when people were standing next to a friend, they perceived a hill as less steep than did those who were alone, and the longer they had known the friend, the less steep the hill seemed. Even cooler, merely thinking of ways a loved one had supported them had the same effect.

How to get more: Nurture your friendships, in person, during bad times and good. Most of us are ready to rush to someone going through a hard time. But that's not enough. "Too often, when something great happens for a friend, we don't feel the same urgency to be there for her," Kashdan says. So whether a pal wants to spill the news of her fabulous date or the new apartment she scored, ask for deets. You'll attach positive energy to the bond and help it flourish.

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

What it is: Your gray-dar—how well you pick up on the gray areas of a situation and intuit the things that people don't say out loud.

Why it matters: When you're dealing with tricky office politics, navigating a tense family dinner or trying to decode any interaction in which someone isn't expressing exactly what she means, being able to read people and situations accurately will win you allies and make everyday encounters a lot more fun.

How to get more: Think of yourself as a spy bent on figuring out what your coworker, sister, boss or whoever is feeling but not saying. So if you're pissed at a friend for canceling yet again, hold off on shooting her a snarky text and run through possible reasons she might have flaked. Does she always cancel? Has something changed in her life? How did she act when you saw her last? Then approach her the way you'd want her to talk to you: "I miss hanging out. Is something up?" By letting your pal know you're trying to understand what's going on, you'll avoid a rift and create an opportunity to have a closer friendship.

GRATEFULNESS

What it is: Fully appreciating and noticing the good in yourself, other people and the world at large, then giving that appreciation back in spades.

Why it matters: We all say thank you countless times a day, usually automatically. "But when you express true gratitude, you motivate others to be generous, which we know produces joy," says Robert Emmons, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of California in Davis. And unlike self-control or grit, which tends to require a goal, gratitude can exist on its own: "You can be grateful to be alive," Emmons says. The rest is gravy.

How to get more: Add details to your thank-yous: Tell your boyfriend you appreciate his walking the dog because you love not having to rush before work. Or let your sister know how thrilled you are about the playlist she downloaded on your iPod, being sure to mention a few of the songs you rocked out to most. You'll get an added lift from taking pleasure in the little things. Plus, when you express thanks sincerely, you're more likely to get support back.

ZEST

What it is: Tackling life with energy, excitement, enthusiasm and eagerness.

Why it matters: People filled with positive energy tend to see their work as a calling—and end up more satisfied with what they do and with life in general, the Journal of Organizational Behavior reports.

How to get more: Some people are naturally zestful, but attitude, life goals and health can play a big part. “Someone with autonomy at work, who fills her time with activities she loves and is close with others, is likely to score high on zest scales,” says Richard Ryan, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of Rochester. “Zest is contagious, so surrounding yourself with active, interested and enthusiastic people helps, too,” Peterson adds. And when the blahs do hit, listen to your body and take mini-breaks to recharge. Calling a pal or getting outside for a walk can be enough to get your juices flowing again.

By Beth Janes ©Self

Psychology Today



When Virtue Becomes Vice

The nature of a virtue is that a vice is almost always hidden inside.

By Mary Loftus, published on September 02, 2013 - last reviewed on September 05, 2013

After being shot at close range by saloonkeeper John Schrank, a serious fan of term limits, Theodore Roosevelt continued with his scheduled campaign speech, the bullet still lodged in his chest. "It takes more than that to bring down a Bull Moose," he said, speaking for an hour before consenting to medical treatment.

Self-confidence, resilience, and fearlessness produce bold leaders who perform well on the job, whether as presidents, CEOs, or war heroes. But the very same virtues are also just a few degrees from antisocial behaviors with decidedly negative consequences. Lack awareness of your own fears and limitations and it's easy to become reckless, impulsive, and callous, ignoring other people's fears and limitations as well.

"Some traits may be like a double-edged sword," says psychologist Scott Lilienfeld, developer of the Psychopathic Personality Inventory and an Emory University professor. "Fearless dominance, for example, may contribute to skillful leadership in the face of a crisis, or to reckless criminality and violence," he reports in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. In his personality assessments of 42 presidents, Teddy Roosevelt ranked highest in fearless dominance.

The nature of a virtue is that a vice is almost always hidden inside.

In the newest view of personality, our traits are no longer seen as binary—you are either conscientious or you're not—but as dimensional, existing on a continuum. Not only does each characteristic fall on a spectrum, each holds the grain of its own destruction:

Organized becomes obsessive. Daring escalates to risky. Modest slips to insecure. Confident turns to arrogant, cautious to anxious, persuasive to domineering, friendly to ingratiating.

The seven deadly sins might very well have started out as ambition, relaxation, awareness of one's good work, righteous anger, a healthy sexuality, and enjoying a good meal. It's all a matter of degree.

In their recently published book, *Fear Your Strengths*, executive developers Robert Kaiser and Robert Kaplan say that in their collective 50 years of business consulting and executive coaching, they've seen virtually every virtue taken too far. "We've seen confidence to the point of hubris and humility to the point of diminishing oneself. We've seen vision drift into aimless dreaming and focus narrow down to tunnel vision. Show us a strength, and we'll show you an example where its overuse has compromised performance and probably even derailed a career."

Human nature, social norms, and the culture of the workplace generally pull us toward virtues. But virtues are not always what they seem. Not only can they conceal vices, they are not invariably virtuous. In a world where rapid change is the one constant, all received wisdom, including what is virtuous, must be regularly re-examined. Nothing is a blanket prescription in a highly dynamic universe. Change requires, above all, adaptability, the ability to stretch beyond the status quo, get beyond what you were taught or see beyond what has worked in the past.

Even when, on the surface, they seem to be one of the best things about an individual or organization, deeply held, unquestioned strengths can be destructive, says Jake Breeden, a faculty member of Duke Corporate Education and author of *Tipping Sacred Cows: Kick the Bad Work Habits that Masquerade as Virtues*.

Take the Air Force colonel who, for decades, had made sure to greet each recruit personally with a handshake. After he retired, the incoming colonel replaced his greeting with a video, assigning the personal welcome down the ranks to the sergeants, although it caused him to be perceived as colder and more distant than his predecessor. When someone finally summoned the nerve to ask the new colonel about his video greeting, he replied, "I'm giving the sergeants a little bit of sunshine. I get enough as it is."

The new colonel was well aware of the implications of his decision. He didn't do it out of laziness or disregard. By raising the profile of his senior enlisted men, the new C.O. banished an unsustainable cult of personality that depends on a single, charismatic individual. "The beloved C.O. had retired completely unaware of the unintended consequence of what he perceived to be his greatest virtue," Breeden points out. Sticking to preconceived ideas of the virtues that make a "good parent," "loyal employee," "inspiring boss," "productive workplace," or "loving spouse" may often sell ourselves or others short. What's more, commonly accepted values such as personal involvement, high standards, and meticulous preparation can all backfire. Involving yourself personally in every project and every decision can lead to micromanaging, burnout, and resentment from those under the all-too-constant supervision, whether you're a corporate VP or a hovering mom.

Demanding excellence across the board can shut down creativity and risk-taking and indicate a lack of priorities—everything doesn't have to be done perfectly; some things just need to get done. And too much preparation, especially if done in isolation and without feedback, can delay the final outcome or product without actually improving it. We are prone to "falling in love with a script we've worked hard to prepare, at the expense of being flexible," says Breeden.

This is not a call to immediately give up your best qualities and firmly held values. "It's likely the virtues you hold most closely are there for deep and personal reasons," says Breeden. "The goal is to stay true to yourself while avoiding the ways your unexamined beliefs and automatic behaviors can backfire." Even your most engaging traits can be overused, or trotted out at the wrong time, or go too far in degree.

How do you know when a virtue is wearing out its welcome? Only self-awareness can keep core values in check. Taking personal inventory can lead to a realization of which virtues are constructive and beneficial in your life, and when, and which are actually holding you back, making you miserable, or sabotaging work and relationships. And never assume that a virtue that served you well in the past will always continue to do so.

Excellence—or Paralyzing Perfectionism?

Striving for excellence has its payoffs—good marks, approval, awards, a sense of a job well done. But pursuing excellence across the board reflects rigidity and can lead to perfectionism, an inflexible devotion to high standards, and an inability to set priorities. Psychologist Simon Sherry and colleagues at Canada's Dalhousie University decided to turn the microscope on their peers by examining levels of perfectionism, conscientiousness, and academic productivity among psychology professors. They found that conscientiousness is associated positively with total publications, but perfectionism is associated negatively with the number of journal publications. It restricts productivity. What's more, the perfectionists' papers tended to have little impact.

"There really is a fine line between striving for excellence and striving excessively for perfection," says Gordon Flett, professor of social sciences and humanities at Toronto's York University and co-developer of the widely used Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. Perfectionism doesn't just impact work performance. It takes a toll on health as well. Perfectionists, Flett says, exhibit high levels of chronic illnesses.

Perhaps the most destructive part of pursuing excellence at all costs is that it can destroy creativity, risk taking, and experimentation. Innovation, argues Harvard Business School's Clay Christensen, demands occasional failure. Companies that go under, he says, are often companies that are doing everything right—they just didn't see that new, disruptive idea or technology that made them obsolete coming down the pipeline.

Excellence, meet good enough. The evolution of any organism is more a branching out to see what happens than a streamlined, linear path toward perfection.

To Breedem, the pursuit of excellence is one of those sacred cows that need to be carefully re-examined. Excellence in all matters overlooks the fact that life is often messy. And it fails to discriminate between what is important and what is not. What's more, there's a need to distinguish between process excellence and outcome excellence.

It is much more necessary to seek excellence of outcome than excellence of process. Mistakes (and their corrections) are often the best teachers, and a push for excellence in all things obscures their contribution to success, especially in a world demanding innovation.

For Harvard's Christensen, disruptive innovation isn't restricted to the business world, where flexible start-ups encroach on established firms. It has value in private life, too. In a recent speech, he issued "a call for disruption in parenting. I fear that we have parents who have raised a generation of children who don't have the courage to deal with difficult issues."

If children are never allowed to cope with failure, he says, then "when they reach adulthood and see daunting tasks, they just choose not to address them." When children are allowed to overcome obstacles, experience failure, and persevere, they develop determination. Instead of giving up after a try or two, they will search for ways to succeed with the resources available to them—finding workable if not "perfect" solutions. It's impossible to guarantee children's success or safety, but they can be

allowed to discover the traits of resourcefulness and tenacity—values that trump a drive for excellence in many real-world pursuits.

Fairness to Everyone Isn't Fair to Anyone

Who doesn't desire a fair shot, an equal opportunity, and equitable treatment?

We are scorekeepers by instinct. So deep is the need for fairness that when we feel we've been treated unfairly, primitive instincts can compel us to bring others down to the same level. Breeden remembers telling his daughter he was going to miss her birthday due to a rare business opportunity. When she dried her tears, she told him it was OK—as long as he missed her sister's birthday, too. Not much different, he says, from "workers fretting over relative office size, bonus packages, or mentions at the annual meeting."

We want to be treated fairly, and we want to work for people and places that treat others fairly. "Employees seem to have a universal concern for fairness that transcends the self," says Purdue University psychologist Deborah Rupp, who studies organizational justice, the psychological process by which employees come to judge their workplace as fair or unfair. When they witness their employer treating others unfairly, Rupp finds, employees file complaints, warn others, look for alternative employment, and engage in counterproductive work behaviors.

Breeden again makes a distinction between process and outcome. In this case, fairness of process is far more important than fairness of outcome, where every child gets the same treatment or every employee gets one conference a year, a \$1,000 bonus, and a 10-foot cubicle. Pursuing fairness of outcome easily creates a nightmare of competing demands. "It's a leader's job to make sure everyone, including herself, has a fair chance," he says. Exceptional workers should be treated exceptionally; it's only fair. Otherwise motivation is extinguished.

Attempting to create fairness of outcome not only fosters a culture of obsessive scorekeeping, it is actually filled with an array of psychological traps. It assumes that everybody values all rewards the same. In reality, some want higher salaries; others want more vacation time; still others want verbal praise or acknowledgment.

Fairness is more than treating employees or children or friends "exactly the same"—it means taking into consideration individual needs and personal motivations. When, as in a family, treatment is more customized to the needs of individual children, everyone feels special—and happy.

Yes, fairness is still an admirable quality. You just have to make sure you're keeping your eye on the right scoreboard.

Purpose: Passion Without Obsession

Passionate people are mesmerizing. They embody purpose and meaning in life and work, and often the two merge seamlessly into their life's work. "The more elusive the boundaries between your work and life, the more successful you probably are in both," reports Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, a professor of business psychology at University College London. He encourages people to find "work-life fusion."

Being passionate about things feels good, too. It boosts energy, stamina, drive. It means you care deeply about something beyond yourself to the point of full immersion, which is likely the only way vaccines are invented, symphonies are written, or middle schools acquire good teachers.

But passion can also crowd out other things of equal importance, place emotion above logic, and lead to burnout. At its darkest, it can turn into obsession, a pursuit that dominates all else and occupies the mind to an alarming degree.

Robert Vallerand, a professor of psychology at the University of Quebec, contrasts healthy passion (what Breeden calls "harmonious passion") with obsessive passion. Individuals with harmonious passion, Vallerand says, engage in an activity because they want to. Those with obsessive passion engage in an activity because they feel they must—say, to prove themselves to an overly critical parent or to capture the market before anyone else does.

While harmonious passions coexist with other aspects of life, obsessive passion is a compulsion that blinds individuals to risks, produces tunnel vision, and ignores the needs of others (or even oneself). Researchers studying professional dancers found that those who are obsessively passionate about dancing are most likely to suffer chronic injuries. They push themselves too hard, losing track of their own health and stability (and probably passing on their destructive brand of obsessive passion when they became teachers).

"Harmonious passion isn't about lowering standards or wimping out," Breeden says. It's about finding a level of passion that is sustainable.

The Cost of Being Agreeable

Agreeable people, in the nomenclature of personality psychology, are softhearted, trusting, and helpful. They tend to be modest and altruistic, willing to compromise, generous in spirit. Happiness and optimism come easily to them, even when circumstances are rough.

They don't make waves very often. And therein lies the problem. There are times when everyone would be better off if they did.

Conflict is inevitable in work and life. There will be honest disagreements, actions taken that do not please everyone, hard decisions to be defended, territorial claims to be held. Assertiveness is a necessary trait, and it is often lacking in people who are overly accommodating, making them easy prey for those who would take advantage of another's trust or generosity. If you can't say no, offer constructive criticism, or stand firm in your decisions, you won't be an effective worker, supervisor, partner, or parent. And being a nice guy at work can actually diminish your paycheck and decrease your odds of promotion. Being agreeable has a particularly strong impact on men's salaries, find Beth Livingston of Cornell, Timothy Judge of Notre Dame, and Charlice Hurst of the University of Western Ontario. In a study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, they explored three questions: Does being nice affect your success at work? Does being nice affect your happiness at work? And do the effects of being nice differ for men and women?

Overall, they found that men made more money than women (no surprise here). Also, men who scored high on agreeableness made substantially less money (as much as \$10,000 per year) than men rated low in agreeableness. While there was also a tendency for women high in agreeableness to make less money than women low in agreeableness, the difference was small. Employees high in agreeableness, however, rated themselves as happier at work than did those who were low in agreeableness.

Agreeable people are less likely to push themselves forward for recognition or advancement," suggests Art Markman, professor of psychology and marketing at the University of Texas at Austin and author of *Smart Thinking: Three Essential Keys to Solve Problems, Innovate, and Get Things Done*. "They tend to do more selfless things at work. Unfortunately, doing things for the good of the group may not always get them noticed when it comes time to give out raises and bonuses." A happier life, however, may compensate for a dip in income.

Despite the stigma, nice guys also do pretty well in love. In two surveys of college women, Geoffrey Urbaniak and Peter Kilmann of the University of South Carolina found that niceness and physical attractiveness were both positive factors in women's choices and the desirability ratings they assigned to men as potential dating partners. Niceness was most important when a woman was considering a serious, long-term relationship, while attractiveness was more important when considering a casual, sexual relationship. Once a relationship is established, however, the emotional power dynamic becomes more complex. Being nice, agreeable, and quick to compromise may be alluring at first but can lead to dependent or clingy behaviors that become a burden to a partner, who must do more decision making. Also, the agreeable partner may be suppressing negative emotions that manifest in passive-aggressive behavior, affairs (virtual or otherwise), or bottled-up resentments that eventually end the relationship. Expressing genuine emotions and standing one's ground are valuable skills in love and work. Both can coexist within the virtue of being an agreeable personality.

Collaboration, With Clarity

Some people are natural collaborators. They welcome input from others and aim for consensus on decisions large and small. It's an empowering quality in a supervisor, and on the whole, it increases diversity, fosters relationships, and creates "buy in" and engagement from all parties.

Buzzwords like "breaking down silos," "synergy," and "cross-pollination" have emerged from the value of collaboration, and as clichéd as such concepts have become, they've largely changed the workplace for the better. Redundancies have been reduced, new ways of thinking introduced, and the energy that comes from "mixing it up"—working toward a common goal with colleagues having different perspectives and skills—is invigorating.

But collaboration can also lead to diffused accountability. Decisions take longer, and are made collectively. Everyone feels the need to weigh in, even in the absence of anything to contribute. And if things go wrong, who can really be held responsible?

Further, says Breeden, "Automatic collaboration leads to underperformance and low productivity for the sake of playing well with others." Extraverts, he observes, have a special tendency to engage in wasteful collaboration because they draw their energy from others, and they often feel the need to talk through their thoughts with partners. "Extraverts," he adds, "can become workplace vampires who suck the productivity out of their coworkers."

Not to mention that there are some people for whom collaboration is totally nonproductive. It devalues those who prefer to work in isolation, or even need a bit of alone time to spend inside their own heads—the very employees who might be about to come up with the next innovative leap, as long as it doesn't get killed in committee. "Our

companies, our schools, and our culture are in thrall to an idea I call the New Groupthink," argues Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. "Most of us now work in teams, in offices without walls, for managers who prize people skills above all. Lone geniuses are out. Collaboration is in." Even when we think we're working alone these days, we're actually not, says Breeden. With your smartphone next to your laptop with easy access to search engines, we are more likely to be compiling a remix rather than producing something new or revolutionary. And constant distraction spells the death of creativity. His fix? Collaborate only with intention, clear boundaries and expectations, and an understanding of individual responsibilities, and leave plenty of time for unplugged, independent thought. That way lies inspiration.

The Myth of a Balanced Life

Whether you're talking with business consultants, parents, or yoga instructors, no virtue seems to rank higher than balance these days; it's an ideal championed by the earliest philosophers and the most modern citizens. Creating balance among all the elements of life—work and home, self and others, self-discipline and enjoyment—seems to be the goal.

Buddhist physician Alex Lickerman of the University of Chicago says balance "at once describes a feeling of being in control of multiple responsibilities as well as the sense that several important areas of one's life aren't being neglected in favor of only a few. A balanced life, most would agree, feels less stressfully lived than a non-balanced life, which feels overwhelming and unsatisfying."

But the pursuit of balance is itself the cause of much imbalance. We are left to achieve it in lives that change, quite literally, moment to moment. Balance operates through a constant stream of choices. Too often it leads to constant compromise and mediocrity in all things.

Work-life balance, today's preoccupation, is probably the greatest mirage. It is achievable, as in almost all other domains, only in summation, not in the conduct of everyday life, where projects and deadlines demand bouts of concentrated commitment. Balance, then, is more a long-term goal.

The danger of achieving "perfect" balance and sticking to it no matter what? A cloistered, overly controlled life. Breeden champions what he calls "bold balance." It respects moderation but also accommodates the kind of dynamism seen in the flow of tides and the cycles of the seasons. "The ocean is anything but bland, and the four sometimes extreme seasons point to a continuing and complex balance among many natural cycles," he says. Balance, then, is not a static system, but one that requires constant attention and awareness. It's why yoga doesn't consist of only the tree pose. Finding balance is more an internal matter than a superficial allotment of time. You need to know what is most important to you right now, what you need to build on for the future, which tasks or habits are draining your time and attention, and how much recovery time you need. The most important virtues today may in fact prove to be nimbleness and adaptability.

"Achieving balance ultimately rests on having courage," Lickerman says. "The courage to make difficult choices, to exclude other possibilities in order to choose the one that

suits you best, to let go of fearing the disapproval or disappointment of others." Mary Loftus is associate editor of Emory Magazine in Atlanta.

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/opinion/sunday/dont-grade-schools-on-grit.html?login=email&_r=0

NY TIMES

Don't Grade Schools on Grit

By ANGELA DUCKWORTH MARCH 26, 2016

Philadelphia — THE Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once [observed](#), “Intelligence plus character — that is the goal of true education.”

[Evidence](#) has now accumulated in support of King’s proposition: Attributes like self-control predict children’s success in school and beyond. Over the past few years, I’ve seen a groundswell of popular interest in character development.

As a social scientist researching the importance of character, I was heartened. It seemed that the narrow focus on standardized achievement test scores from the years I taught in public schools was giving way to a broader, more enlightened perspective.

These days, however, I worry I’ve contributed, inadvertently, to an idea I vigorously oppose: high-stakes character assessment. New federal [legislation](#) can be interpreted as encouraging states and schools to incorporate measures of character into their accountability systems. This year, nine California school districts will begin doing this. Here’s how it all started. A decade ago, in my final year of graduate school, I met two educators, Dave Levin, of the KIPP [charter school](#) network, and Dominic Randolph, of Riverdale Country School. Though they served students at opposite ends of the socioeconomic spectrum, both understood the importance of character development. They came to me because they wanted to provide feedback to kids on character strengths. [Feedback](#) is fundamental, they reasoned, because it’s hard to improve what you can’t measure.

This wasn’t entirely a new idea. Students have long received grades for behavior-related categories like citizenship or conduct. But an omnibus rating implies that character is singular when, in fact, it is plural.

In data collected on thousands of students from district, charter and independent schools, I’ve identified three correlated but distinct clusters of character strengths. One includes strengths like grit, self-control and optimism. They help you achieve your goals. The second includes social intelligence and gratitude; these strengths help you relate to, and help, other people. The third includes curiosity, open-mindedness and zest for learning, which enable independent thinking.

Still, separating character into specific strengths doesn’t go far enough. As a teacher, I had a habit of entreating students to “use some self-control, please!” Such abstract exhortations rarely worked. My students didn’t know what, specifically, I wanted them to do.

In designing what we called a [Character Growth Card](#) — a simple questionnaire that generates numeric scores for character strengths in a given marking period — Mr. Levin, Mr. Randolph and I hoped to provide students with feedback that pinpointed specific behaviors.

For instance, the character strength of self-control is assessed by questions about whether students “came to class prepared” and “allowed others to speak without interrupting”; gratitude, by items like “did something nice for someone else as a way of saying thank you.” The frequency of these observed behaviors is estimated using a seven-point scale from “almost never” to “almost always.”

Most students and parents said this feedback was useful. But it was still falling short. Getting feedback is one thing, and listening to it is another.

To encourage self-reflection, we asked students to rate themselves. Thinking you’re “almost always” paying attention but seeing that your teachers say this happens only “sometimes” was often the wake-up call students needed.

This model still has many shortcomings. Some teachers say students would benefit from more frequent feedback. Others have suggested that scores should be replaced by written narratives. Most important, we’ve discovered that feedback is insufficient. If a student struggles with “demonstrating respect for the feelings of others,” for example, raising awareness of this problem isn’t enough. That student needs strategies for what to do differently. His teachers and parents also need guidance in how to help him.

Scientists and educators are working together to discover more effective ways of cultivating character. For example, research has shown that we can teach children the self-control strategy of [setting goals and making plans](#), with measurable [benefits](#) for academic achievement. It’s also possible to help children manage their [emotions](#) and to develop a “[growth mind-set](#)” about learning (that is, believing that their abilities are malleable rather than fixed).

This is exciting progress. A 2011 [meta-analysis](#) of more than 200 school-based programs found that teaching social and emotional skills can improve behavior and raise academic achievement, strong evidence that school is an important arena for the development of character.

But we’re nowhere near ready — and perhaps never will be — to [use feedback](#) on character as a metric for judging the effectiveness of teachers and schools. We shouldn’t be rewarding or punishing schools for how students perform on these measures.

MY concerns stem from intimate acquaintance with the [limitations](#) of the measures themselves.

One problem is reference bias: A judgment about whether you “came to class prepared” depends on your frame of reference. If you consider being prepared arriving before the bell rings, with your notebook open, last night’s homework complete, and your full attention turned toward the day’s lesson, you might rate yourself lower than a less prepared student with more lax standards.

For instance, in a [study](#) of self-reported conscientiousness in 56 countries, it was the Japanese, Chinese and Korean respondents who rated themselves lowest. The authors of the study speculated that this reflected differences in cultural norms, rather than in actual behavior.

Comparisons between American schools often produce similarly paradoxical findings. In a [study](#) colleagues and I published last year, we found that eighth graders at high-performing charter schools gave themselves lower scores on conscientiousness, self-

control and grit than their counterparts at district schools. This was perhaps because students at these charter schools held themselves to higher standards.

Every weekday, get thought-provoking commentary from Op-Ed columnists, The Times editorial board and contributing writers from around the world.

I also worry that tying external rewards and punishments to character assessment will create incentives for cheating. Policy makers who assume that giving educators and students more reasons to care about character can be only a good thing should take heed of research suggesting that extrinsic motivation can, in fact, displace intrinsic motivation. While carrots and sticks can bring about short-term changes in behavior, they often [undermine](#) interest in and responsibility for the behavior itself.

A couple of weeks ago, a colleague told me that she'd heard from a teacher in one of the California school districts adopting the new character test. The teacher was unsettled that questionnaires her students filled out about their grit and growth mind-set would contribute to an evaluation of her school's quality. I felt queasy. This was not at all my intent, and this is not at all a good idea.

Does character matter, and can character be developed? Science and experience unequivocally say yes. Can the practice of giving feedback to students on character be improved? Absolutely. Can scientists and educators work together to cultivate students' character? Without question.

Should we turn measures of character intended for research and self-discovery into high-stakes metrics for accountability? In my view, no.

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