



TriMetrix®HD Attitude toward Honesty

Attitude Toward Honesty

A person's view of honesty, and of structure and order in society, the level of self-esteem available to accept the consequences of their own actions, and toward reporting the dishonesty of others.

Why is this skill important?

People with good scores in this capacity have a positive image of the concept of honesty and a belief that there is structure and order in society. They have sufficient self-esteem to accept the consequences of being honest and the condemnation associated with reporting the dishonesty of others. They will not become so involved with others that they fail to report any inappropriate actions.

A person with a poor Attitude Toward Honesty may have an unclear view of honesty; they may have negative feelings about structure and order in society. He or she may get so involved with others that he or she becomes overly reluctant to report any dishonorable actions.

Whether we like it or not, we are all part of multiple subcultures, particularly groups within society. You may be part of a religious subculture, an economic subculture, or a political subculture. If you are a middle-class Republican who attends a Jewish synagogue, you belong to different subcultures than a wealthy Democrat who attends an Episcopal church. All of the subcultures we belong to, in some way, shape us; the challenge we each face is maintaining our own unique value system under the influence of peers within our subcultures.

To have a good Attitude Toward Honesty, you have to choose and live by your own values. It's always easier to let the group do your thinking for you; to let others decide what does and doesn't really matter in your life. But just because you accept one or a few of the values of a subculture does not mean that you have to be guided by ALL their values. The important thing is for you to know clearly what you believe and are acting upon.

People very quickly identify you and ascribe certain capabilities and values to you. As a result, you may (a) underachieve or feel rotten about yourself because you can't live up to their expectations, or (b) you may consistently perform below your capabilities or outside of your value system because you let the group determine what you should do or are capable of doing.

You see people all the time who use the cop out by saying, “everybody does it.” If all the others who work show up late, they show up late. If all the others cheat on their tax returns, they cheat. But life’s winners compete against themselves, not everybody else. And they function in a manner that is consistent with the way they see themselves. Having a good Attitude Toward Honesty involves these two concepts: believing in your own values, and living your life according to them— not competing against other people, but against your own best efforts.

What are skills associated with a good Attitude Toward Honesty?

Someone who has mastered skills associated with a good Attitude Toward Honesty:

- Believes there is structure and order in society.
- Believes in the concepts of honesty and integrity.
- Has a high level of self-esteem.
- Acts according to a strong value system.
- Accepts the consequences of their own actions.
- Reports dishonesty or inappropriate actions in other people.

How do you develop your own skills and develop a better Attitude Toward Honesty?

- Choose and live by your own values. Know clearly what you believe and are acting upon.
- Forge your own self-expectations.
- Function in a manner that is consistent with the way you see yourself.
- Don’t “cop out”: if you believe in something, follow your belief, not “what everyone else is doing.”
- Compete against yourself, not anyone else.
- Make honesty a guiding principle in your life.
- Choose to react negatively toward dishonesty or inappropriate actions. You can and always do choose how you react toward what comes along.
- It’s important to fit in, or belong, to the group you work with and for. But don’t let your need to belong prevent you from blowing the whistle on unethical or inappropriate behavior.

- If someone asks you to do something you feel is wrong or dishonest, DON'T DO IT.
- Seek support and friendship from people who share your values and beliefs.
- Never let other people's opinions of you outweigh your OWN opinion of you.
- Be confident in your own self-assessment.
- Be honest with YOURSELF.
- Develop a daily affirmation ritual in which you reaffirm to yourself your core values and beliefs.
- Encourage others to behave honestly and with integrity. If someone comes to you with an ethical dilemma, encourage behavior you believe in.
- Think carefully about the subcultures to which you belong. Distance yourself from any cause that causes you to behave in ways you are not comfortable with.
- Don't give in to peer pressure! It doesn't just affect teenagers; we all feel pressured by others to act a certain way or do certain things.
- Support whistle-blowers, don't shun them. Give them credit for acting on what they believe in and behaving with integrity.

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Activities

Activity 1: Hindsight is 20/20

Think of a time in which you observed dishonest or unethical behavior in another person.

- How did you find out about it?
- What did you do about it?
- What didn't you do about it?
- How did you feel about the behavior?
- How did you feel about the person before you knew about the behavior?
- How did you feel about the person after you found out about the behavior?
- What could the person have done differently? Has there been a time when you behaved dishonestly? Think carefully about this—did you think it was a harmless “white lie”?
- Why did you lie or behave dishonestly?
- How did you feel about behaving that way?
- Did you get caught?
- What do you think other people would think if they knew about your behavior?
- How would you feel about someone else if he/she acted as you did?
- What could you have done differently?

Activity 2: Creating Affirmations

One of the best ways to keep an Attitude Toward Honesty at the forefront of your mind is to create daily affirmations to remind you of your beliefs and values. First, think carefully about the following questions:

1. Why is it important to be honest?
2. What do you think about people who are consistently dishonest?
3. What do you want other people to think about you?
4. What do you think about the old adage, "If everyone jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge, would you?"?
5. What would you do if you saw someone stealing from your employer?
6. What would you do if someone caught YOU doing something dishonest?

Now, turn your answers to the above questions into affirmations for yourself. Post your affirmations somewhere you will see them daily, in your planner, on your computer monitor, on your bulletin board, etc.

Examples:

"I am honest because I believe in treating other people with integrity and honesty."

"I will make efforts to support other people's efforts to be honest."

Now do your own:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Activity 3: Whistle Blowing

In recent years, there have been a number of news stories about “whistle blowers” people who have turned in their companies for unethical behavior. Individuals at major companies such as Arthur Andersen Consulting have stood their ground against the power of their companies and said, “What my company is doing is wrong.” Take some time to investigate the concept of whistle blowing. Look on the Internet or at the library for news articles or journal articles about whistle blowing.

As you read them, keep the following questions in mind:

1. Who was the whistle blower? What level of the company did he or she work in?
2. What was the unethical or dishonest behavior he/she reported?
3. How did he/she report the behavior?
4. Did he/she have a role in the unethical or dishonest activity?
5. Why did he/she decide to report it?
6. How did other people treat him/her when he/she reported it?
7. What do you think you would have done in the same situation?

Activity 4: Role Models

Seek out at least two individuals you work with or interact with in your personal life, people who seem to have wonderful integrity and a strong sense of self. Ask for their advice about developing your Attitude Toward Honesty. What do they do to behave with honesty? What motivates them? How do they respond to people who are behaving unethically? See if you can incorporate the lessons you learn from these individuals into your daily experiences.

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