

Types of Character

From the four fundamental temperaments, various classifications of character have been adopted by different psychologists. The intellectual, the emotional, and the volitional or energetic are the chief types with A. Bain. M. Pérez, based on the phenomenon of movement, distinguishes characters as lively, slow, ardent, and well-balanced. M. Ribot, with more subjective division and excluding indefinite types as 'characterless', recognizes the forms as:

- (a) the sensitive (humble, contemplative and emotional,
- (b) the active (great and the mediocre), and
- (c) the apathetic (purely apathetic or dull), and
- (d) the intelligent.

Ethics and Character

Whilst psychology investigates the growth of different types of character, ethics considers the relative value of such types and the virtues which constitute them. The problem of the true moral ideal is a question of the relative value of different types of character. The effect on the person's character of a particular form of conduct is a universally accepted as a test of its moral quality. Different systems of ethics emphasize different virtues in constituting the ideal moral character. With the utilitarian, who places the ethical end in the maximum happiness for the whole community, *benevolence* will form the primary element in the ideal character. For the stoic, fortitude and *self-control* are the chief excellences.

In all conceptions of ideal character, firmness of will, fortitude, constancy in adhering to principle or in pursuit of a noble aim are held important. A man of character is frequently equivalent to being capable of adhering to a fixed purpose. Another essential is the virtue of justice, the recognition of the rights, duties, and claims of others. The richer the culture of the mind, the larger the intellectual horizon, the broader the sympathies, the more will the character approximate to the ideal of human perfection.

Education and Character

The aim of education is not only the cultivation of the intellect but also the formation of moral character. Increased intelligence or physical skill may as easily be employed to the detriment or benefit of the community, if not accompanied by improved will. It is the function of ethics to determine the ideals of human character. The theory and science of education are to study the processes by which that end may be attained.

Building Character in the Workplace

Managers have to influence and employ creative means of stressing the importance of good character in the workplace, in the following ways^{6,7}:

1. **Employee Hiring, Training, and Promotion Activities**

- (a) Institute and adopt an organization policy statement to positive character in the workplace. For example, commitment to civility pledges. This may be communicated through printing on the back of the business cards of the employees.
- (b) Prominently and explicitly include character considerations in recruiting procedures, during interviews and in the hiring deliberations.
- (c) Emphasize the importance of character and adherence to the 'six pillars' of character in orientation, initial job training, and during in-service training. The six pillars of character are the ethical values, such as: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Respect means showing high regard for self, others, authority, property and country. It includes showing appreciation for cultural diversity by valuing all people as human beings. Responsibility is
 - (i) being accountable for one's actions,
 - (ii) being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties,
 - (iii) being reliable and consistent in word and action, and
 - (iv) being committed to community development. Integrity or fairness means showing the inner strength and courage to be truthful, trustworthy, fair and honest in all things. It includes acting justly and honorably. Caring means being kind, considerate, courteous, helpful, friendly and generous to others, and being compassionate by treating others as you would like to be treated. Citizenship means accepting and adopting civic rights and duties as a citizen of the country.
- (d) Include evaluation of fundamental character values such as honesty, promise keeping, accountability, fairness, and caring, in appraisals/reviews.
- (e) Institute recognition and reward system for the employees who exemplify the positive character. for example, awards and medals.
- (f) Think of your employees, especially the younger ones, as people whose personal and work values will be influenced by what you expect of them and how you treat them.

2. Internal Communication

Use internal communication channels to create a friendly environment that praises positive role modeling at the workplace and in the community by encouraging voluntarism, and mentoring, e.g., through

- (a) Internal newsletters,
- (b) Workplace posters in canteens and recreation rooms,
- (c) Mailers, and
- (d) Electronic mails.

3. External Communication

In relations with customers, vendors and others, consciously communicate affirming messages about character and ethics, such as

- (a) Advertise and market honoring consensual values (the six pillars),
- (b) Assure that none of your products and services undermines character building,
- (c) Include positive messages about voluntarism and celebrate, and
- (d) 'Character counts' week in advertising, billings and other mailers.

4. Financial and Human Resources

- (a) Support local and national 'character' projects and the activities of the members by encouraging staff members to get involved. Offer incentives such as paying employees for the time they contribute at a local youth-service organization.
- (b) Sponsor 'character' movement through financial support.

5. Community Outreach

- (a) Use public outreach structures to encourage mentoring and other character-building programs.
- (b) Encourage educational and youth organizations to become active in character building.
- (c) Use corporate influence to encourage business groups (chambers of commerce, conference boards, and Rotary clubs) and other companies to support 'character' building.

