

15 Ethics and Legal Issues

There is no doubt that individual character is a foundation for all that we do. Individual character establishes our integrity and proves an ethical anchor for how we behave at work and in life overall. People of high character can always be confident in the self-respect it provides, even in the most difficult of situations. John Shermerhorn, Jr. suggests these Six Pillars of Character:

- ❖ **Trustworthiness**—Honesty, integrity, reliability in keeping promises, loyalty
- ❖ **Respect**—Civility, courtesy and decency, dignity, tolerance, and acceptance
- ❖ **Responsibility**—Sense of accountability, pursuit of excellence, self-restraint
- ❖ **Fairness**—Commitment to process, impartiality, equity
- ❖ **Caring**—Concern for others, benevolence, altruism
- ❖ **Citizenship**—Knowing the law, being informed, volunteering



Beyond personal ethics, social responsibility is a business's concern for the welfare

Honesty: consistency between word and deed; strongly tied to ethics.

of society as a whole. While some organizations willingly take on the challenge of contributing to society through their business activities, the wrongdoing by others has focused public attention and government involvement to encourage more acceptable business conduct. Any business decision may be judged as right

or wrong, ethical or unethical, legal or illegal.