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Warren Buffett Says You Can Spot a Great Leader by Simply Looking for This 1 Trait A trait so often overlooked in identifying true leaders.

BY MARCEL SCHWANTES, INC. CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AND FOUNDER, LEADERSHIP FROM THE CORE

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Warren Buffett, chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, has wise hiring advice for companies seeking good leaders.

While you may think his advice is firmly entrenched in the common sense camp – I mean, it should be a non-negotiable requirement when

hiring for top leadership positions, right? – it's often not common practice. Buffett once said,

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We look for three things when we hire people. We look for intelligence, we look for initiative or energy, and we look for integrity. And if they don't have the latter, the first two will kill you, because if you're going to get someone without integrity, you want them lazy and dumb.

Why integrity

First, an honest question for my readers: Do you hire for integrity? You should, because a person's character, which is so often overlooked in interviews, can be costly later on as crucial business decisions are made.

A leader with integrity has an orientation toward the truth. In essence, this is someone who will operate from honesty, embrace change, reject wrongdoing, and get real results.

They also practice what they preach. Leaders walking the talk of integrity follow through on their commitments and deliver on their promises. Of course, they allow room for mistakes and failure (they're human, after all), but they hold themselves accountable to a high standard absent of outside influences.

A leader with integrity shows up with her best and most authentic self; she'll face difficult people and situations with unfettered, emotional honesty and transparency.

Now that I've given you some reasons why you should make the value of integrity a hiring requirement for shaping your leadership culture, here are three business benefits that you will see:

1. Integrity ultimately builds trust

So many micromanaged companies create an atmosphere of distrust and

fear. In cultures where leaders model integrity and lead by example, people can be trusted; you rarely worry about their actions. This makes it very attractive to those seeking companies and brands that align with their own values.

2. Integrity saves you money and time

In environments of distrust, you'll find too many processes, systems, and policies in place. Leaders with integrity work hard to remove the roadblocks of distrust, which speeds up your company's ability to respond and adapt to change. Simply stated, integrity lowers costs and is good for your company's bottom line.

3. Integrity outperforms the competition

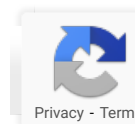
There are other tangible financial benefits integrity can deliver. For example, Ethisphere's 2021 World's Most Ethical Companies honorees – companies recognized for their "unwavering commitment to business integrity" – outperformed a similar index of large-cap companies by 7.1 percentage points in a span of five years.

Leadership integrity is extremely rewarding but sometimes tough to pull out. On a grand scale, it means ensuring your interactions with your primary stakeholders are aligned with your stated aims and purpose. And, obviously, making sure that organizationally you behave in an upstanding way, even when nobody is watching.

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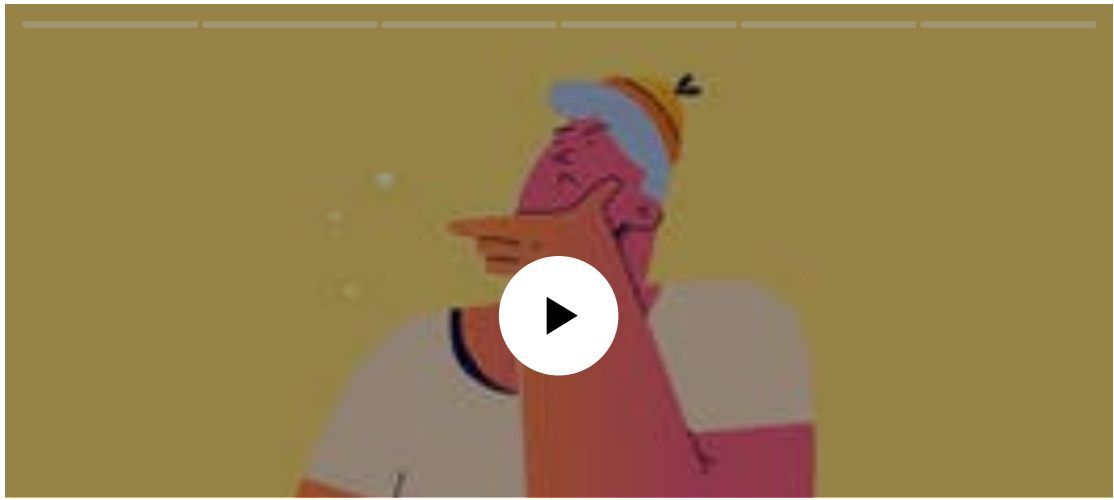


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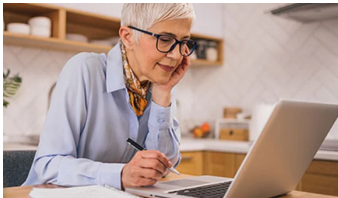
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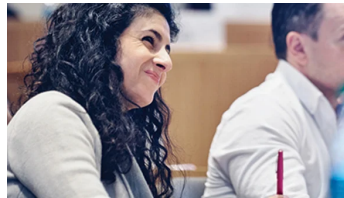


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