

Leading with Character

What can we learn from a recent federal government human capital survey that found that many employees hold their leaders in low regard and feel they do not generate high levels of motivation and commitment?

DONALD G. ZAUDERER

Leaders who possess qualities of high character stand out from the rest. The phrase "high character" conjures up images of luminaries such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King, Harry Truman, Gandhi, Winston Churchill, and Mother Teresa. Each of these icons of history lived lives of service, dedicated to transcendent causes such as social justice, poverty, and the establishment and preservation of democracy. Most of these men and women were not morally pure, yet they had a compelling drive to contribute to the larger good.

While most leaders in organizations have smaller domains of influence, they can exhibit qualities of high character and make an important difference in their communities. We can all think of leaders in the federal service such as David O. Cooke (fondly remembered as the Mayor of the Pentagon), who earned enduring reputations for high character and exceptional leadership. Unfortunately, the results of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) *2002 Federal Human Capital Survey* seem to indicate that the prevalence of such individuals is limited. The survey reveals that federal leaders received low marks on several items that relate to the quality of character:

- 47.2 percent believe their leaders "maintain high standards of honesty and integrity."
- 55 percent believe they can "disclose a suspected violation of law without fear of reprisal."
- 43 percent "hold their leaders in high regard."
- 34.6 percent indicate that leaders "generate high levels of motivation and commitment."

If only 47.2 percent of respondents believe their leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity, then it would be understandable as to why so many hold their leaders in "low regard" and feel they do not generate high levels of motivation and commitment. If this is true, then one implication of this study would be to examine the

criteria by which individuals are qualified for the Senior Executive Service (SES).

Executive Core Qualifications

Many federal agencies have put in place initiatives to identify and develop the next generation of leaders. These efforts typically focus on helping candidates meet the OPM's Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs). The ECQs are criteria used to assess readiness for the SES and are organized into five competency fields: Leading Change, Leading People, Driving Results, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions/Communications. The assumption underlying this competency model is that when managers acquire these competencies, they are prepared to perform effectively as senior executives. I am proposing in this article that the ECQ criteria would be strengthened substantially if "high character" were added to the list of criteria. Perhaps if this took place, a pool of candidates with both high character and managerial competence would emerge from the competitive selection process.

Character Framework

By drawing on the history of ideas in philosophy, religion, and the management sciences, I define the attitudes, sensibilities, and beliefs that determine how leaders with character see, act, and live. Nancy Sherman, in her book, *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue*, indicates that people of character are contemplative, just, and decent in ways of living as social beings. Following Aristotelian thought, she further indicates that they use

Donald G. Zauderer is Adjunct Professor, University of Maryland, Professor Emeritus, American University, and Principal, Zauderer & Associates, LLC. He thanks Anita Alpern, Bernard Rosen, Lisa Levy, Rabbi Joseph Meszler, Brad Myers, Judith, Karin, and Laura Zauderer for their comments and suggestions during the preparation of this article.

both emotion and reason to ground the moral response. Using this broad definition as a point of departure, I have created a framework that attempts to specify what "leading with character" means in actual practice. The elements of this framework follow.

People of Character

People of character do the following:

1. Serve as responsible deputies working for the interests of others, much like a father or mother cares for their family.
2. Display integrity and possess a serviceable framework of values honored in personal behavior.
3. Seek to moderate personality deficiencies such as mean, petty, or dubious behavior.
4. Display humility by keeping their own importance in perspective and devoting energy to serving others.
5. Display fierce resolve to build something larger and more lasting than themselves.
6. Constrain destructive impulses to under- or over-react in challenging circumstances.
7. Exhibit caring and concern for individuals, the organization, customers, and citizens.
8. Foster an environment of civility at the workplace.

These eight dimensions constitute a character framework that can be used in assessing, developing, and selecting the next generation of leaders for the public service. From this point forward, I use the term "character" instead of "high character" in discussing these dimensions. Before describing them, however, I reflect on why we cannot assume that those who possess ECQs also possess qualities of character.

The Inherent Fallibility of Humans

Concerns about character flaws and unethical behaviors are not new—or unique to contemporary America. They form a theme going back to ancient times. The book of Genesis states that, "the wicked stand in subjection to their hearts, but the righteous have their hearts under their control." From a biblical perspective, people are born with two inclinations—one good and one evil. Some Old Testament scholars see these inclinations as biological drives woven into the psychological fabric of every human being.

In making decisions, leaders are often faced with opposite and compelling inclinations, and find themselves in an internal struggle between modern versions of good and evil. The newspaper is full of stories where the "inclination toward evil" is expressed in destructive behavior. The transgressions of human rights at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq reflect such inclinations. The Federal Bureau of Investigation shielded an informant from murder charges in the 1965 killing of Edward Deegan, a small-time

criminal. Four innocent men went to jail for more than 30 years. A high-ranking Air Force procurement official was recently sentenced to nine months in federal prison after admitting she approved excessive prices on contracts awarded to Boeing to enhance her job prospects with the company. These examples of fallibility suggest that human beings have a strong inclination to pursue self-interest, often at the expense of other individuals or the aggregate interests of society.

The concept of the human being as self-interested played a role in the formation of the Constitution of the United States. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay wrote the *Federalist Papers* in 1787 to convince the people of New York to ratify the revised Constitution of the United States. Because they believed human beings are self-interested, they developed a form of government where power is fragmented and where checks and balances constrain the harmful effects of these impulses. In *Federalist 10*, Madison wrote, "No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity." In *Federalist 6*, Hamilton wrote, "Has it not, on the contrary, invariably been found that momentary passions, and immediate interests, have a more active and imperious control over human conduct than general or remote considerations of policy, utility, or justice."

Harmful Self-Interested Behavior

If policymakers and interest groups are inherently self-interested, as Hamilton, Madison, and Jay suggest, then it would be fair to assume that executive-level leaders, both political appointees and those in civil service, share this fallibility. An organization, after all, is a microcosm of the larger society. How would organizational leaders express such abuse of power? When raising this question in ethics workshops that I have led over the past twenty years, career federal employees quickly came up with their own examples. The following are just a few cases of harmful, self-interested behavior by agency leaders:

- Pursuing personal gain at the expense of the organization
- Creating organizational dependency by hoarding information and failing to develop staff
- Distorting information up and down the organization
- Focusing on protecting their organizational turf without regard to other important organizational interests
- Limiting the visibility of talented subordinates
- Diminishing the reputation of potential rivals
- Withholding cooperation from potential rivals
- Taking credit for the achievements of others
- Punishing and isolating risk takers

- Making decisions without involving legitimate stakeholders
- Considering the needs and interests of superiors while totally neglecting those of subordinates.

Participants indicated that unfortunately these kinds of behaviors are more commonplace than we would like to believe.

Nonetheless, some leaders do rise above self-interest to serve as stewards of the public interest. To achieve this noble end, they may reach back to parental lessons, gain perspective by reading the biography of esteemed leaders, seek guidance from religious or spiritual sources, or reflect upon the ethical lessons learned from personal experience. The quality of their character may also be reinforced by guidance from mentors and leaders who personify these admired traits. Such individuals are constantly mindful of their duty as stewards of the public interest and embrace the obligation to live with character in every aspect of their lives. Those leaders who provide negative examples can also teach aspiring leaders what not to do. What, then, are the attitudes, sensibilities, and beliefs of people who lead with character? The discussion below describes each dimension of the character framework, both as it is demonstrated in the wider world and as it can be used as part of the ECQ criteria.

The Character Framework

I. Leading a Responsible Life of Deputyship

In general, a responsible life focuses on service to others and on purposes that transcend self-interest. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the distinguished German theologian who died at the hands of the Nazi regime, argued in his book, *Ethics*, that people living a responsible life are driven by the proposition that "the world should be made better by their actions." To achieve a better world, they serve in "deputyship," working for the interests of others much like a father or mother acts for his or her children, "working for them, caring for them, interceding, fighting and suffering for them." He believed that self-interest must be subservient to the highest social values. Mike Krzyzewski coaches the highly successful Duke University basketball team. His teams have earned ten NCAA Final Four appearances in his twenty-year tenure at Duke. Creating a family-like environment is at the heart of his coaching philosophy. His "deputyship" is reflected in the following quote from his book, *Leading with Heart*:

In general, I'd like to think that what my mom felt about me, I can feel about the players on our Duke basketball team. If I can provide that kind of support system for our team—where the managers feel good, the assistants feel good, the freshmen feel good about the seniors, and the seniors about the sophomores, and so on—then we're going to be that much stronger as a team.

Many leaders with character exhibit an intense dedication to their staffs. Employees recognize and

appreciate leaders who serve in the spirit of deputyship—and the reciprocation is expressed in a passionate commitment to achieving results. Given Bonhoeffer's theory and Coach Krzyzewski's example, senior executive selection boards might ask whether candidates have a history of working for the interests of others much like a father or mother acts in support of a family.

2. Displaying Integrity

Leading from character involves making enlightened ethical choices in perplexing circumstances. The word integrity is derived from the Latin word *integri*, meaning wholeness. It is defined as a "state of being whole or undiminished." It is also defined as a state of "soundness of and adherence to moral principle." Since integrity is an aspect of one's character, the definitions are highly related. Gabriele Taylor, a twentieth century ethicist and philosopher, asserts that one's character cannot become whole and integrated unless it is grounded in a solid infrastructure of moral values. Contemporary philosopher Mark Halpin further emphasizes the importance of intention in defining integrity. In his view, a person of integrity "maintains a consistent commitment to do what is best—especially under conditions of adversity." In attempting to do what is best, people of integrity embrace noble ideals and just principles, and acknowledge and confront all relevant moral considerations when faced with ethical dilemmas. Integrity, then involves a process of reflection to determine the right decision, and the courage to follow through on that decision—even when pressured from others to pursue a more expedient path.

When Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich in 1938 with an appeasement deal with Hitler, the English people were delirious with joy. It took integrity for Winston Churchill to tell the House of Parliament that they had suffered a total and unmitigated deception. He was thunderously booed. Using the example of Churchill, then, integrity involves having the courage to stand up, and follow a course of principled action, even under attack or severe criticism.

Paradoxically, a leader with integrity might also move away from the course of action that has not proven to be fruitful. Doing the right thing is not always staying the course. We now understand, for example, that Lyndon Johnson continued to pursue the Vietnam War after it became evident that the United States could not win. His decision to continue has diminished his standing among presidential historians and the American people. Thus, integrity may involve the tenacious pursuit of a goal or a decision to reverse strategic direction. The test of integrity is whether choices are analyzed in the context of a commitment to do the right thing. If decisions are driven by political expediency or a prideful stubbornness, there is little basis to consider them an act of integrity. The same dynamics often influence the executive suite of organizations.

Principles of Integrity

In a previous article in *The Public Manager*, I discussed thirteen principles of integrity that leaders should embrace in their daily conduct. I asserted that leaders should do the following:

- Evaluate moral considerations when faced with a complex problem.
- Safeguard the public trust by promoting an ethical work environment and placing loyalty to the law and ethical principles above private gain.
- Take risks by opposing unjust acts.
- Exhibit humility by keeping self-importance in perspective.
- Communicate truthfully, especially on matters about which individuals have a right to know.
- Deal fairly to avoid providing special advantage or disadvantage because of affiliations or positions.
- Honor agreements by following through on commitments.
- Accept blame by acknowledging personal responsibility.
- Respect the dignity of individuals by giving earned recognition, inviting and giving genuine consideration to suggestions, and exhibiting courteous behavior.
- Suppress envy by celebrating the ability and good fortune of others.
- Support employee development by helping the next generation of professionals reach their full potential.
- Forgive individuals for mistakes or wrongdoings.
- Extend self for others by providing help in times that matter.

John Gardner, a distinguished public servant, scholar, and activist, reinforces this perspective on values by contending that leaders should have "a serviceable framework of values honored in personal behavior." The phrase suggests that people of character are committed to both "right thinking" and "right action."

One of my executive students was saddened by the awareness that staff members no longer stand up for peers treated unfairly by leadership. However, she indicated that one senior colleague stood out in the sense that when he saw such unfairness, he would meet with senior leadership to ensure that they understood the facts and context of a complex situation. He didn't simply espouse the value of fairness, he lived it. His thoughtful interventions saved the careers of a number of very talented professionals. These professionals and the entire institution were strengthened by the actions of this caring manager.

In considering who should be promoted to the SES, then, selection boards might ask whether candidates function within a serviceable framework of values honored in behavior. Have they incurred a personal cost in standing by those values? Have they pursued a controversial course of action after carefully assessing ethical and nonethical considerations? Have they reversed a course of action when doing so was in the public interest? Do they practice what they preach? Have they built trusting relationships with others?

3. Moderating Personality Deficiencies

Another way of looking at character is to examine negative personality traits. A person of character would likely have few serious personality flaws or be able to constrain destructive impulses associated with such flaws. Manfred DeVries in his book, *Unstable at the Top: Inside the Troubled Organization*, suggests that some leaders possess character flaws such as excessive narcissism, aggressive and passive-aggressive dispositions, a paranoid or detached disposition, or an excessively controlling disposition. Such flaws are often expressed in conduct that is mean, petty, or dubious. These types of behaviors, often subtle and difficult to identify in selection interviews, will undermine employee motivation and commitment and erode a leader's effectiveness over time. A workshop participant revealed this story of an ineffective boss with strong narcissistic tendencies:

When my new boss took over operations, we had high hopes about his leadership. Our expectations were shattered when he took over the only conference room for his own purposes and forbade others to use it. We had no other place to meet. During meetings with outside stakeholders, his picture adorned every entrance to the meeting rooms. He wore impeccable Armani type clothing, and always commented on what we were wearing. He networked broadly inside the agency and at outside professional associations, and put a lot of effort into being nominated to prestigious commissions and social clubs. We had to wait three weeks or more for an appointment. During these infrequent meetings, he never seemed interested in our concerns, unless it would enhance his image and reputation. He never discussed concrete goals, a strategic direction, or assessed the quality of our work. We all felt that the last thing on his mind was the welfare of staff, the organization, or the citizens we serve. Just when it became apparent that the organization was falling apart, he moved on to his next position—one that offered higher pay and rank.

This individual appeared to be narcissistic, detached, and committed primarily to his own self-aggrandizement. A person of character would attempt to become aware of such flaws and moderate behavior to enhance effectiveness. Given this example, selection boards for SES candidates should ask whether the candidate has any serious personality flaws that could inhibit staff motivation and commitment. Do candidates have a history of being petty, mean, or dubious? Have they worked on their deficiencies to enhance personal and organizational performance?

4. Displaying Humility

One way of gaining perspective on the concept of humility is to first explore its opposite—arrogance. Christopher Phillips suggests, “arrogance is an extreme and pervasive self-absorption.” Francine Klagsbrun suggests that arrogant people get puffed up with their own importance and often overestimate their true skills or worth as leaders. John Gardner weighs in by saying that, “We cannot approve a leader who betrays shared values or the common good in the interest of his own aggrandizement or profit.” Stephen K. Bailey has argued that the power leadership confers should “evoke a degree of selflessness and nobility on the part of the public servants beyond the capacity of cynics to recognize or to believe. Man’s feet may wallow in the bog of self-interest, but his eyes and ears are strangely attuned to calls from the mountain top.” Humble leaders, then, may pursue enlightened self-interest, but never lose sight of their obligation to create a record of extraordinary service to the public.

Nelson Mandela in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, introduces listening as an aspect of humility. The following comments on the death of a revered village leader illustrate the point:

The passing of the Regent (village chief) removed from the scene an enlightened and tolerant man who achieved the goal that marks the reign of all great leaders; he kept his people united. Liberal and conservatives, traditionalists and reformers, white-collar officials and blue-collar miners, all remained loyal to him, not because they always agreed with him but because the Regent listened to and respected different opinions.

Humble leaders recognize that enlightened solutions to complex problems evolve when leaders listen and engage in active inquiry with different stakeholders. Listening with an open mind is an act of respect that engenders loyalty and followership.

Members of selection committees might ask whether a candidate is puffed up with his or her own importance. Does this candidate have a record of selfless commitment to others and to larger goals and purposes? Does the candidate have a record of seeing beyond hyperbole so as to identify contradictions between espoused performance and actual performance? Does the candidate listen with an open mind to staff and outside stakeholders?

5. Displaying Fierce Resolve

Humility could easily be seen as a sign of personal weakness. One might ask whether a humble person could find the courage to make difficult decisions, that is, fire unproductive staff, realign operations, move unproductive managers back into technical positions, or constructively disagree with political executives who are about to take a regrettable action. Can an individual possess both a compelling humility and the courage to make difficult and controversial decisions?

Jim Collins’s research on private-sector companies brings light to this question. His research team looked for companies that, after a transition point, shifted from good performance to great performance—and sustained it. They searched for companies with cumulative returns at least three times the market value over fifteen years. Beginning with an analysis of 1,435 companies, the research revealed that only eleven companies met the criteria. They then explored a variety of factors that could explain the success of the eleven companies: corporate strategy, external industry forces, executive compensation, patterns of management turnover, organization structure, acquisitions and divestitures, and the nature of leadership at the top. The surprising conclusion was that a single factor explained sustained high performance. Each of the eleven companies had a chief executive who possessed a paradoxical mixture of personal humility and fierce resolve. These leaders, according to Collins, “were a study in duality: modest and willful, humble and fearless.” He compares these men to Abraham Lincoln, who “never let his ego get in the way of his primary ambition for the larger cause of an enduring great nation.” In Collins’s words, “Those who mistook Mr. Lincoln’s personal modesty, shy nature, and awkward manner as signs of weakness found themselves terribly mistaken.”

Describing these leaders as “Level 5 performers,” he states, “they channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company.” They “demonstrated an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long term results, no matter how difficult.” They “looked into the mirror, not out the window, to apportion responsibility for poor results, never blaming other people, external factors, or bad luck.” The personal quality that separates these leaders from others is that they “could never in a million years bring themselves to subjugate their egoistic needs to the greater ambition of building something larger and more lasting than themselves.” It is instructive that none of the leaders were charismatic or were particularly skilled at delivering great call-to-action speeches. They were humble people with a tenacious desire to create a great organization.

I find little reason to believe that the lessons drawn from Jim Collins’s study could not be applied to the public sector. Using the quality of fierce resolve, selection boards might ask whether candidates have a history of pursuing goals with humility and a tenacious professional will. Do they have the kind of tenacious drive and perseverance to build something larger and more lasting than themselves? A strong will to succeed, however, may not be enough if leaders cannot regulate their feelings and behaviors in challenging circumstances.

6. Aiming at the Mean

Aristotle, writing circa 335 BC, argued, “It is in the field of action and feelings that virtue operates.” In his view, “right conduct is incompatible with excess or deficiency in feelings and actions.” Daniel Goleman’s

conception of emotional intelligence bears a striking similarity to Aristotle's statement. He contends that self-awareness and regulating one's feelings are the hallmarks of character and an important factor in professional success. Richard Nixon, for example, could not contain the impulse to spy on and get even with those who did not embrace his policies. It is reasonable to suggest that his inability to regulate his destructive impulses led to flawed decision making and ultimately impeachment. In contrast, some leaders are too patient and forgiving of those who oppose them. They may take no action to defend themselves or minimize the impact of behavior designed to diminish their effectiveness. This may be equally destructive to a leader operating in a challenging political environment.

How, then, should one behave in extremely challenging circumstances? Aristotle provides guidance when he writes that virtuous behavior often lies at the mean between excess and deficiency. The mean, for example, between cowardice and rashness is courage. The mean between passive acceptance and confrontation is directness. Maimonides, a 12th-century Jewish philosopher wrote, "If a man continually weighs his actions and aims at the mean, he is in the highest of human ranks." A leader who lacked the courage to confront poor performance, but built resentment to the point of condemning a staff member in public, would not be aiming at the mean as Maimonides suggests.

In assessing candidates for leadership positions, then, selection boards should ask whether the individuals under consideration can moderate impulses, regulating behavior toward the mean in many of the challenging circumstances they face.

7. Caring

Active concern for the welfare of others finds many expressions in organization life. Caring leaders, in the interest of fairness, take the time to gather facts before making selection and promotion decisions; they take risks in creating a new strategic direction for the organization; push up against peers and superiors when they are about to take regrettable action; incorporate new skills and insight into their leadership practice; reach out to stakeholders to ascertain their interests and expectations; develop a change management strategy and follow through on every aspect of implementation; question their self-interested motives before making an important decision; and may even care enough to know when they can no longer play a useful role and need to move on.

Caring supervisors coach their staff for career enhancement and help them perform better on the job. David Maister in his book, *True Professionalism* states, "What [employees] need, and will accept, in a leader is a friendly skeptic, a loving critic, a challenging supporter—someone not afraid to give both positive and critical feedback, and is involved enough to know when either is due." Maister contends that leaders earn followership by caring deeply about developing people and building strong organizations. Caring leaders also support people during times of high personal stress and loss. During a discussion about caring

leadership, one of my executive students indicated that her husband was fighting a serious form of cancer. Her boss called her into his office and said, "I want you to know that we are here to support you. If you need to take time off, we will find a way to cover your work. If you need to come in here and cry, I will be here for you. We are all here for you. We are a family." She then turned to me and said, "I cannot even describe how important these words were to me."

When assessing candidates for leadership positions, then, selection boards might ask whether candidates have cared enough to support staff in times of need. Have they directed their attention to the "real" needs of customers or citizens, and repositioned the staff and total organization to create enhanced value for internal customers and the public?

8. Fostering Civility

During a course I was conducting for government executives, one participant offered this incident from his work history:

When I was a young Presidential Management Fellow, my boss asked me to read three newspapers each morning and identify any stories which might have a bearing on the work of the agency. I followed orders for several weeks. One day the director of the division walked by and observed me reading the New York Times. He went immediately to my supervisor and said, "We should not be paying employees to read the paper. This is not in the public interest." My supervisor simply said, "I'll take care of it."

The supervisor chose to preserve his own reputation at the expense of the young employee. This young person's reputation was damaged by the incident, which might have affected his prospects for meaningful assignments or promotion potential in the future. In a previous article in *The Public Manager*, I defined incivility as "Disrespectful behavior that undermines the dignity and self-esteem of employees and creates unnecessary suffering. In general, behaviors of incivility indicate a lack of concern for the well-being of others and are contrary to how individuals expect to be treated."

Given this definition, selection boards might want to consider whether the SES candidates have a history of creating an environment of civility; whether in their role as supervisors, they respected individual rights and fostered the dignity and self-esteem of staff, peers, superiors, internal customers, and citizen stakeholders.

Conclusion

Government organizations do possess leaders who embrace the character framework, but unfortunately they aren't the norm. What concerns me most is not that many of today's leaders are imperfect in leading with character, but rather that many of them are not even aiming at it. If "character" were specified as a selection criterion, we would begin to see improvements in the type of people selected for developmental programs. Through structured interviews and thorough background checks with bosses, peers, and staff, selection committees can discern patterns

of behavior that reveal information about a candidate's character. The following checklist of questions (mentioned earlier) can be used in interviewing and assessing candidates. Selection boards can ask whether the candidates have a history of the following:

- Working for the interests of others much like a father or mother acts in support of a family
- Functioning within a serviceable framework of values honored in behavior
- Incurring a personal cost in standing by important values
- Reversing a course of action when doing so was in the public interest
- Practicing what they preach
- Building trusting relationships with others
- Working to turn around personality flaws that inhibit staff motivation and commitment
- Restraining the inclination toward being petty, mean, or dubious
- Restraining the inclination to be puffed up with one's own importance
- Selfless commitment to others and to larger goals and purposes
- Seeing beyond hyperbole so as to identify contradictions between espoused performance and actual performance
- Listening with an open mind to staff and outside stakeholders
- Pursuing goals with a tenacious drive and perseverance to build something larger and more lasting than oneself
- Moderating impulses, regulating behavior toward the mean in many of the challenging circumstances they face

- Caring enough to support staff in times of need
- Creating an environment of civility that fosters individual rights and the dignity and self-esteem of staff, peers, superiors, vendors, internal customers, and citizen stakeholders.

If these questions were utilized in the SES selection processes, emerging leaders might begin to reflect on how they can elevate the quality of their character as leaders. Organizations will begin to recognize and reward these qualities. OPM survey results will, in all likelihood, show an upward trend. Most important, great results are achieved when people trust each other and interact in constructive ways to create purposeful action. Staff members are more likely to follow a person of character and to fully apply their intelligence and discretionary energy, even their passion, to the workplace. Given the domestic and international challenges we face today, the quality of the character possessed by our leaders should be a high priority in every government agency. Putting people of character into positions of power is one way to preserve our democracy and improve the quality of life for both public-sector employees and the citizens they serve. ■

REFERENCES

- Gardner, John. *On Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).
- Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995).
- Halfon, Mark S. *Integrity: A Philosophical Inquiry* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).
- Maister, David H. *True Professionalism* (New York: Touchstone, 2000).
- Sherman, Nancy. *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue* (Oxford University Press, 1991).
- Zauderer, Donald G. "Workplace Incivility and the Management of Human Capital." *The Public Manager*, Spring 2002.

Strategic Change

continued from page 43

Recognizing the Participants

The information and insight in this article was the product of a short session with a small group of public service and private industry professionals who have dedicated themselves to achieving positive strategic change within

their organizations. The common characteristic of this diverse group was their willingness to share their experience with others and their eagerness to listen and learn from the efforts in other organizations. They made time in their busy schedules for no more reward than the opportunity to make a difference. We thank them for their time, insight, and active participation. ■