

“Leadership Integrity”*

By Bob Krone, Ph.D. ASQ Fellow Member

Two weeks before his death on 18 August 2001, Philip B. Crosby said, *“Quality boils down to one word - integrity.”* He made that comment to my Aerospace Technology Working Group colleague, Hylan Lyon, who shared it with me in Arizona April 9th of this year . When the Father of Zero Defects, Do it right first, Quality is Free, The Price of Nonconformance with a full career of Quality Management leadership, practice, teaching and consulting makes that one of his last thoughts we should take it seriously.

That Phil Crosby 2001 remark after his life’s dedication to quality struck a harmonious chord with me. For three years Dr. and Pastor Larry Downing and I have been designing and making slow progress on a Moral Leadership book. A principle that led us to that project was our conviction that leadership is the most important function of management; and moral leadership is the most important component of leadership. That conviction for each of us has developed from more than theory or ideology. Dr. Downing has been studying, preaching and teaching moral leadership for thirty-five years. He has also been living it. During my three careers, one in the Air Force and two in academia I have learned the criticality of integrity from personal experience and observation.

Leadership integrity and moral leadership are not completely the same. Immoral leadership always lacks integrity but there are integrity failures that would not be considered immoral ... just dishonest, deceitful or self-serving. The word integrity has two dictionary definitions. The first is wholeness, being complete, unbroken, soundness. The second is the quality or state of being of sound moral principle, uprightness, honesty and sincerity. Phil Crosby has included both in his writings and in his Philip Crosby Associates global work that continues today five years after his death. There is the personal integrity of leadership and organizational integrity. Today let’s focus on why personal integrity is so important for achieving quality of any enterprise.

Achieving integrity, honesty, openness and moral leadership are not simple tasks. It’s common to prescribe it in strategic plans and ethical codes. It’s essential to include it in design efforts. But four phenomena exist as we begin the 21st Century that make practice difficult. Those phenomena are complexity, novelty, uncertainty and adversity. Those produce the stresses, overloads, change and environments that

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divert attention and create decision making dilemmas. Leadership may deal with the dilemma by knowingly violating integrity principles when system decline or failure is a probable outcome. And what also happens in those situations is what America's policy scientist Herman Kahn called "The Butch" - an error in assumptions or calculations.

The quality program that has achieved the greatest global universality is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA). Originating in the United States in 1987 it has spread to Europe, Asia, The Pacific and North and South America as the preferred set of criteria for performance excellence for business, health care and education to use in creating and evaluating the quality of their products and services The United States 2006 Baldrige National Quality Program, "*Criteria for Performance Excellence*" has three words on the title page - Ethics, Leadership and Competitiveness. However the scoring system to calculate winners for 2006 gives a max of 120 points for *Senior Leadership and Governance and Social Responsibilities* out of a total of 1,000 possible points. *Business Results* are rated almost four times higher at 450 points. So the 2006 MBNQA Criteria for Performance Excellence judges leadership to count 12% of total performance. (www.quality.nist.gov/business_criteria.htm).

One failure of Leadership Integrity can destroy a career of successful achievements, an organizations successful history, even a nation or group of nations. The list of Moral Leadership failures from Enron, to Sudan's political leadership to the United Nations over the past decade provides repeated evidence of huge cost of quality (in the Taguchi sense of "*Cost of Poor Quality*") happening throughout the world. The jury decision May 25th to send the Founder and CEO of Enron to prison is the latest most visible example. I believe leadership integrity deserves a much higher rating for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award program. When a company is destroyed by leadership the outcome is no employment, no products and no services.

Can quality be achieved or sustained in an immoral , corrupt or dishonest system? I'm convinced that if that question were submitted to any population or group of quality professionals there would be a very high "NO" response.

With regard to public leadership one of the worlds leading Policy Scientists, Professor Yehezkel Dror of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem wrote the following in his classic 2001 *CAPACITY TO GOVERN* book:

"The qualities demanded of senior politicians and governance elites should be radically revised, with emphasis on virtues and character. These requirements should become a basic canon of democratic theory and political culture ."

My major project over the past year has been the editing of a book published just one month ago titled *Beyond Earth: The Future of Humans in Space*. Forty-two contributing authors produced the first attempt to identify the variables involved in

the next space epoch – the permanent migration of humans to live and work in space. There are thirty-six chapters in the book including ones on Governance, Leadership, Law and Code of Ethics. My personal opinion is that failure of global leadership integrity – in both its systems wholeness and moral principles definitions -- will create a future for humans in space that resembles the Star Wars science fiction more than the continual improvement of the quality of life for humans everywhere that we know science and technology can achieve. Survival or destruction of humanity could hinge on that issue.

In the Research Appendix of the book I included the hypothesis that:
“Quality Control and Management has been a continual emphasis for space missions. A formal merging of Quality Sciences and Space Sciences will occur for the Human-to-Space Migration”

I presented a paper at the March 2006 Quality Management Division Conference in Irvine containing that recommendation along with one to create an ASQ Space Division.

In conclusion, here are my recommendations for you attendees at our 2006 Region 7 Leadership Training:

- 1. Accept Phil Crosby’s final advice and make Leadership Integrity your highest priority in business, government, health, education, non-profit and personal conduct.**
- 2. Leadership is a privilege awarded you by others. Be a leader characterized by research and collaboration first, before decisions and directions.**
- 3. Be fully aware of the implications of novelty, complexity, uncertainty and adversity. Carefully judge the applicability of quality classics from past experience for the challenges of today and the future.**

Peter Drucker gave us the most concise ethical principle for which leadership is responsible: *“Above all, do no harm.”*

*Bob Krone
ASQ Inland Empire Section 0711
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