



Lead with Ethics

Differentiate Your Company in a Changing Market

Presenter: Karl W. Palachuk

Moderator: Steve Kazan

“Your personal core values define who you are, and a company’s core values ultimately define the company’s character and brand. For individuals, character is destiny. For organizations, culture is destiny.”

– Tony Hsieh

AI Transparency Notice



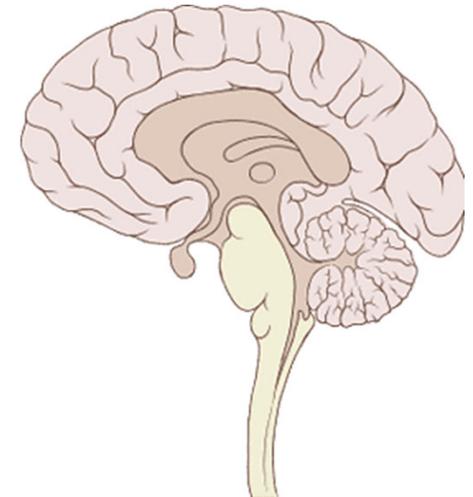
- I use licensed graphics
 - Some of these might be AI-generated
- I do not use any AI tools for generating content, writing, or text in any way
- I do use AI assisted research tools (primarily Gemini from Google)



Exercise: What Do People See?



1. Google your business
2. Go to LinkedIn and search for yourself, your business, or both
3. Go to your web site
 - a) Read the About page
 - b) Then read the front page without scrolling
 - c) Then poke around and read more



For a primer on the Reticular Activating System, see <https://relaxfocussucceed.com/2018/07/priming-your-brain-part-1/>

Handout at <https://relaxfocussucceed.com/reading-list>

Of-Repeated Advice

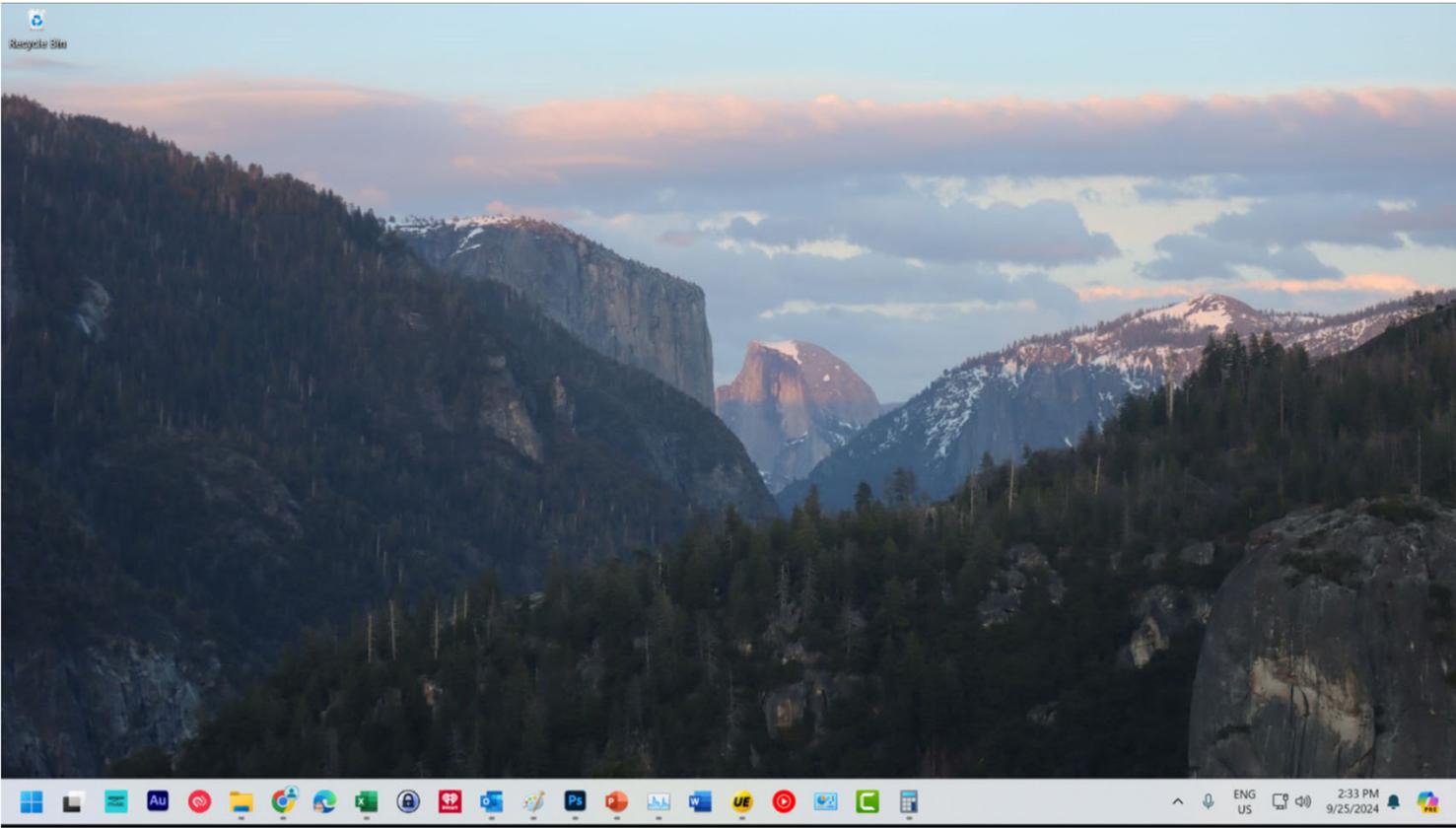
- Build good relationships with clients.
- We do business with people we know, like, and trust.



What does that look like in the real world?



A Little Background



Step into my time machine



1990's-2000's

- Keeping secrets
 - Little or no documentation
 - Don't give clients their passwords
 - Hoarding of knowledge
- Common practice
 - Only sell the tech you know
 - (No ongoing education)
- Rampant license violation
 - Pirated software
 - Used equipment
- Ongoing maintenance was RARE



Step into my time machine



Common Jobs

- Clean up messes from incompetent technicians
- Document existing installations
- Get clients legal re: software
- “Break into” a new client’s system to give them access denied by previous consultant
- Come in after “the big job” and set up backups and ongoing maintenance



Is it Any Better today?



and today ...



Bloomberg
Live TV Markets Economics Industries Tech Politics Businessweek Opinion More
US Investigating SAP, Carahsoft for Possible Price-Fixing
• DOJ investigating billions in purchases from
• Other companies under scrutiny

United States Secret Service
About Us Protection Investigations Mission Support Newsroom Careers Employee & Family Support
Information on the 2024 Campaign is available now. [Click here to find out more.](#)

Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Department of Justice
Justice.gov Office of Public Affairs News Press Releases Former Computer Privacy Cons
Former Computer Privacy Consultant Convicted of Cyberstalking
Monday, March 25, 2024
For Immediate Release
Office of Public Affairs

Cybersecurity consultant arrested after allegedly extorting IT firm
By Bill Toulas
May 2, 2024 09:41 AM 0

r/ITCareerQuestions • 2 hr. ago
How guilty should I feel about working on my resume and applying for new jobs while on the clock?
You probably saw my post from earlier this week

and today ...



(Aside from just plain evil people)

- Some consultants have abusive (often unenforceable) contracts
- Some consultants still hold client data hostage
- Some consultants sell “managed services” but provide no maintenance – so it’s break/fix on a flat fee
- Some consultants treat employees like disposable tools
- Some consultants lie to clients, mislead clients, and sell things that are not needed

etc.



Ethics is Easy. And Difficult.



- We are not one world
- We each maximize specific values
- Download Brene Brown's "Dare to Lead" list of values
 - <https://brenebrown.com/resources/dare-to-lead-list-of-values/>
 - Or see appendix in *Relax Focus Succeed*

dare to lead

List of VALUES

Accountability	Ethics	Kindness	Self-respect
Achievement	Excellence	Knowledge	Serenity
Adaptability	Fairness	Leadership	Service
Adventure	Faith	Learning	Simplicity
Altruism	Family	Legacy	Spirituality
Ambition	Financial stability	Leisure	Sportsmanship
Authenticity	Forgiveness	Love	Stewardship
Balance	Freedom	Loyalty	Success
Beauty	Friendship	Making a difference	Teamwork
Being the best	Fun	Nature	Thrift
Belonging	Future generations	Openness	Time
Career	Generosity	Optimism	Tradition
Caring	Giving back	Order	Travel
Collaboration	Grace	Parenting	Trust
Commitment	Gratitude	Patience	Truth
Community	Growth	Patriotism	Understanding
Compassion	Harmony	Peace	Uniqueness
Competence	Health	Perseverance	Usefulness
Confidence	Home	Personal fulfillment	Vision
Connection	Honesty	Power	Vulnerability
Contentment	Hope	Pride	Wealth
Contribution	Humility	Recognition	Well-being
Cooperation	Humor	Reliability	Wholeheartedness
Courage	Inclusion	Resourcefulness	Wisdom
Creativity	Independence	Respect	
Curiosity	Initiative	Responsibility	<i>Write your own:</i>
Dignity	Integrity	Risk-taking	_____
Diversity	Intuition	Safety	_____
Environment	Job security	Security	_____
Efficiency	Joy	Self-discipline	_____
Equality	Justice	Self-expression	_____

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Disclaimer



Having values . . .

And talking about them in public . . .

Does not mean you're arrogant . . .

Or that you think you're better than anyone else.

It does mean you're willing to post a measure . . .

And be publicly evaluated on that measure.



Examples*



VALUES

Our values articulate how we work together as a team and with our members and partners. As our environment changes, our strategy may change, but our values stay consistent to help us meet any challenges we face as an organization.

The professionalism and integrity of our industry are our passion. 

Communication is the cornerstone of our integrity. 

We choose to communicate openly and honestly. Our clients and colleagues always deserve the truth. 

We embrace change and education as the foundation of our industry. 

We are devoted to operating a highly successful member-driven organization. 

<https://nsitsp.org/about/mission-vision-values/>

* You need to go through YOUR process

Examples



Code of Ethics

Small Biz Thoughts (Great Little Book, IT Service Provider University, SBT, SMB Community Podcast, etc.) is fundamentally a company designed around the concept of helping others to be successful. We literally exist to help as many people as possible to be successful. To that end, we have adopted the following Code of Ethics to drive our behavior and interactions inside and outside of our company.



We are honest

In our work with clients, prospects, and strangers, we are committed to honesty at all levels. This drives several elements of our behavior.

We are competent

That means we know what we're doing, or we don't do it. It also means that we are constantly dedicated to learning new things. We are committed to never-ending education in a world that is always changing.

<https://www.smallbizthoughts.org/about/>

Examples



Not sure where to start?

<https://nsitisp.org/code-of-ethics/>

NSITSP Code of Ethics	
COMPETENCE	We will always represent our skills and abilities accurately. We will maintain our capacity to provide wise counsel for those areas we represent having expertise through education, and experience.
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	We advise our clients of conflicts of interest that exist and will always present the options we genuinely believe are in the best interest of the client. We shall not knowingly make recommendations or provide advice that serves the member and not the recipient.
CONFIDENTIALITY	We treat all client information as confidential unless we know it's not. We will not take advantage of proprietary or privileged information, either for use by ourselves, our client's firm, or another client, without the client's permission. We have documented measures for maintaining the confidentiality of our clients' data as well as our own.
COMMITMENT TO CLIENTS	We compete by consistently acting in our client's best interest and employing the highest levels of honesty, competence, transparency, and professionalism. We expect our vendors and other IT Service Providers to operate within the same Code of Ethics we hold ourselves to, and will not tolerate unethical behavior.

Okay. Now What?



Once you HAVE a public position
on values and ethics,

How do you LEAD with values and ethics?

→ NOTE: Please enter questions as we go along!

COFFEE



1. Implementation

- Add or update Code of Ethics on your web site
- Add a Satisfaction Guarantee Statement
- Add or update an owner bio with photo
- Update the home page with a statement about your values (e.g., integrity, professionalism)
- Add a link to COE and Guarantee in our newsletter
- Create a blog post or LinkedIn article highlighting your values/COE

Handout at
<https://relaxfocussucceed.com/reading-list>

2. Go-To-Market Messaging



- You can hold us to a higher standard
- “Honesty and Integrity First”
- Your data is your business!
 - We sign non-disclosure agreements with all clients
 - All of our employees sign non-disclosure agreements. If you need a copy for your records, just ask



Most importantly: LIVE your code of ethics

Is This Realistic?



WORLD'S MOST ETHICAL COMPANIES ETHISPHERE Home New Companies **Honorees** ▼ FAQ ▼ Contact Us

The 2024 World's Most Ethical Companies® Honoree List

In 2024, 136 organizations are recognized for their unwavering commitment to business integrity. The honorees span 20 countries and 44 industries, and include 15 first-time honorees and 6 organizations that have been named to the honoree list 18 times, marking every year since its inception.

Companies that value ethics and integrity love to work with each other!



<https://worldsmoethicalcompanies.com/honorees/>

Prep those Questions . . .



Homework



Download the Worksheet.

Here are the highlights:

1. Review and evaluate your public presence (web site, LinkedIn, other social media, etc.)
2. Explore and document your personal guiding principles/values
3. Define and write down your company guiding principles/values
4. Define and write down your company Code of Ethics (Consistent with personal and company values)
5. Implement education internally
6. Update your public presence and ongoing communication





Links mentioned

Handout at – Handout at <https://relaxfocussucceed.com/reading-list> → Bottom of the page

- <https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/legal/cybersecurity-consultant-arrested-after-allegedly-extorting-it-firm/>
- <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/former-computer-privacy-consultant-convicted-cyberstalking>
- <https://www.secretservice.gov/newsroom/releases/2022/03/computer-consultant-sentenced-prison-access-device-fraud-scheme>
- <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-09-25/us-probing-tech-firms-sap-carahsoft-for-potential-price-fixing>
- <https://therecord.media/ftc-says-it-will-go-after-companies-that-change-privacy-policy-ai>
- <https://brenebrown.com/resources/dare-to-lead-list-of-values/>
- <https://smallbizthoughts.org/about>
- <https://relaxfocussucceed.com/2018/07/priming-your-brain-part-1/>
- <https://nsitsp.org/code-of-ethics/>
- <https://worldsmoethicalcompanies.com/honorees/>

Questions . . . Comments?



NSITSP.org

Steve Kazan

President, NSITSP

InnerOnion

stevekazan@inneronion.com

Karl W. Palachuk

Founder, NSITSP

Small Biz Thoughts

karlp@smallbizthoughts.com

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