

Building CHARACTER

January 2004 Edition

Global Challenges

An international company faces many of the same challenges that other organizations face, but sometimes on a larger scale. The sheer immensity of employees, buildings, tasks, and responsibilities is often both impressive and overwhelming.

For instance, how should team members in a global company interact with each other? How can an organization build good working relationships across cultures? How should people from different countries go about developing good communication, respect, and understanding? How can a large organization ensure that its commitments are fulfilled in a timely manner?

Spraying Systems Co., located in Wheaton, Illinois, faces many of these challenges every day. As a global company with locations all over the world, each employee interacts with those from different locations, backgrounds, and beliefs.

Their character emphasis even began in an international way. A general manager in China heard about *Character First!*, and began focusing on character at his location. After witnessing his great success in the endeavor, Spraying Systems expanded their emphasis across the board.

According to Jim Yehling, Vice President of Human Resources for the company, Spraying System views their character emphasis as vital. It has been of great value, “especially as we expand to more international manufacturing, and have different groups of employees from different cultures,” he says.



Spraying Systems hasn't forgotten about building internally as they expand externally.

“Our main goal with a character emphasis as a global organization is to provide an ethical value set that is uniform to our operation in the many different countries where we have a presence. Being perceived by our customers as providing the best quality product in the market while being treated with fairness and respect is important to us.”

“*Character First!* has offered many ideas and practical applications for how we respect each others' differences and celebrate each others' strengths,” Yehling declares. And through a character emphasis, Spraying Systems is sure to overcome those challenges, and move toward success.

Persuasiveness vs. Contention

Guiding vital truths around another's mental roadblocks

Aspects of persuasiveness:

- Point others in the right direction.
- Do not stretch the truth to make it more attractive.
- Appeal to a person's conscience in terms of character.
- Wait for the best time.
- Do not argue.

The Power in Persuasion

The world is made up of billions of people with millions of differing ideas. Properly applied, these ideas can bring life, unity, and success. Used selfishly, however, ideas will bring division, destruction, and death.

People are constantly being pulled or pushed into believing they should join, buy, vote for, or change something. The sad reality is that most persuasion taking place is based on *getting*, rather than *giving*. When someone asks you to do something, carefully evaluate the motive behind their request and consider whether it is rooted in good character.

What about you? What is your motive behind your ideas or proposals? Do you desire selfish gain, or are you working toward a common goal with others in mind? Read over the following points, and endeavor to implement them into your daily interactions with others. As a result, you will add power to your persuasiveness.

- Keep the big picture in mind (*Wisdom*)
- Maintain transparent motives (*Sincerity*)
- Look for root causes (*Discernment*)
- Cover all the bases (*Thoroughness*)
- Approach the issue head on (*Boldness*)
- Communicate accurately (*Truthfulness*)
- Watch your words, attitudes and actions (*Discretion*)
- Allow for time change (*Patience*)
- Do what is right regardless (*Determination*)
- Know good character brings the best possible outcome (*Faith*)

By properly approaching each need or opportunity from a perspective of good character, you will be far more successful.

By Larry Rhoads, Executive Director of the Character Training Institute

What Character Means

A few months ago, *Character First!* representatives trained 30 Romanian school teachers who have begun a pilot program of the *Character First!* curriculum in Romania. English teachers have implemented the curriculum successfully in the past—now the materials are translated and ready for implementation in the country's native tongue.

Already, teachers are reporting how the character lessons have made a significant impact in their classrooms.

- A mother asked her child's teacher, "What are you doing in school with my son?" After explaining the pilot program to her, the mother replied that her son has completely stopped swearing and is not using foul language anymore. (This child spent three years in first grade and already spent a night at the police station because of his violent behavior.)
- The mother of a spoiled child asked the teacher about the new character lessons in class. After learning about the program, the mother said that her child has never said

"Thank you" before. Now he thanks her for every little thing she does!

- During a parent-teacher conference, the parent abruptly interrupted the teacher. When the conversation was over, the student gently put his hand on his parent's arm and said, "Did you realize that you interrupted the teacher?"

Thanks to the investment of teacher and city leaders, from France to Romania, from Canada to Mexico, children are learning what it means to put character first. Make sure that those in your area are learning good character as well.



Teacher's in Arad, Romania are experiencing the benefits of putting character first!

"I am so happy to have this material in our own language!"

—A teacher from Arad, Romania

The Case

Clyde, a farmer, had a car accident. In court, a lawyer was questioning him.

Clyde said, "Well, I'll tell you, I was loadin' my mule Bessie into the..."

The lawyer interrupted, "I am trying to establish the fact that this man told the Highway Patrolman on scene that he was 'just fine.' Now several weeks after the accident he is trying to sue my client. I believe he is a fraud."

"I'd like to hear what he has to say about his mule," the judge replied.

"Well, I loaded Bessie into the trailer and was drivin' her down the highway when this semi-truck ran the stop sign and ran into my truck. I was thrown into one ditch, and Bessie was thrown out, too. I was hurtin' real bad and didn't want to move. But, I could hear ole Bessie moanin' and groanin'. Shortly after the accident an officer came on the scene. He could hear Bessie moanin', so he went over to her. After he looked at her, he took out his gun and shot her between the eyes. Then the Patrolman came across the road, gun in hand, looked at me, and said, 'How are ya feelin'?' Now, what would you say?"

What about you? Do you share the facts necessary to guide truths around others' mental roadblocks?

Astonishing Growth

Is your city's character torch running low on fuel? Has your city purposed to become a City of Character, and then become lost about actually fulfilling that promise? There is no better time than now to begin re-marshalling your community's efforts around the character development banner. You may not see immediate results, but if you endure, your persistently maintained efforts to establish the importance of character will not fail in producing long-lasting fruit.

Perhaps you can begin this re-vitalization effort in your area by gathering a nucleus of individuals within your community to emphasize character and discover ways to make it more meaningful to people within your sphere of influence.

Perhaps giving a simple gift subscription of Character Bulletins to a few individuals could spark a renewed interest in your community. Maybe your school needs character posters placed in classrooms or hallways. You could also talk with local businesses about the importance of character to their success by hosting a *Character and Business* forum to seek ways to help them strengthen their employees to be greater individuals of character.

Many businesses will benefit from posting the character posters in their establishment. If you are in city government, seek to encourage character development within your city's establishments.

Remember, character is applicable to every situation in life, and can easily be integrated into a city function or meeting, simply by mentioning the character quality that applies to the topic at hand and noting how taking heed to its instruction can enhance the success of the current endeavor.

If you are an outsider to city government, volunteer to strengthen your community by becoming their representative to hold the mantle of character promotion in city event. Taking action today will, without doubt, result in fruit for tomorrow. But whatever you do, remember to continue cultivating and watering the seeds!

Upcoming Seminars

[Implementation Seminar](#)

February 24, 2004

[Effective Leadership Seminar](#)

February 25, 2004

[Implementation Seminar](#)

May 25, 2004

(405) 815-0001 for more information.

About CTI

The Character Training Institute (CTI) was established to encourage true success in businesses, organizations, schools, communities, and families by encouraging character growth and development. With forty-nine qualities at its center, *Character First!* offers a variety of training and resources to stimulate character growth in individuals from all walks of life.

The Character Training Institute is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.