

Building CHARACTER

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CHARACTER FIRST! IACC
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF CHARACTER EDUCATORS

www.characterfirst.com

Meeting A Need

Quick, name the two things you think your employees most want from their job. If you are like the average supervisor, your response is "Good wages and job security." However, according to a recent survey, the average supervisor is wrong. Employees most want appreciation and being "in" on things. Can this gap between perceptions and reality be one reason it is difficult to maintain workplace harmony?

In order to bridge this gap, your company can begin a practice that has become vital for hundreds of companies: hold monthly employee meetings. Use the meeting as a time to review the monthly character quality, share company announcements, and, on their employment anniversary, praise employees for their character.

Castle Nursing Homes has 560 employees in seven locations, and it took expert planning to arrange a staff meeting every month, on every shift, in every building. But the effort was worth it. Employees use songs, skits, or

videos to illustrate the character quality, and are excited when it is their turn to make a presentation.

Edmond Regional Medical Center begins their meetings with the monthly video distributed by *Character First!*, and continues with discussion and application of the bulletins. The video is then made available to supervisors who want to use it at their own meetings.

Not every company finds it easy to hold a monthly meeting. Much effort is required to make this time successful. That's why *Character First!* developed the monthly video, a fifteen minute, two-part production designed to give your meeting extra interest. View this month's endurance video online [now](#).

Each monthly video uses stories, pictures, object lessons, and practical examples to communicate the character quality.



Endurance vs. Discouragement

The inward strength to withstand stress and do my best

Five aspects of endurance:

- Do not be a "quitter."
- Accept both instruction and correction.
- Do not waste your time, energy, and talent on meaningless pursuits.
- Bend instead of break.
- Put your whole heart into everything you do.



Finding Inward Strength

The sun rose quickly, lighting the sky with white heat. Far below, the sands stretched for miles, seemingly lifeless. The only movement appeared to be a string of ants creeping across the plains.

However, on closer inspection, the "ants" were a caravan, bearing valuable cargo across this vast natural barrier. Where horses, elephants, or even vehicles could not go, the camel can.

The endurance of the camel is legendary. It can go for days without water or food, existing on stored energy. Its body is designed to allow it to survive in sandstorms, extreme heat, and frigid cold. Although possessing a rather abrasive personality, the camel remains loyal to its owner, faithfully serving under difficult conditions.

For the camel to endure, all he must do is keep going step after step, putting one foot in front of another. He is equipped to survive, and he will, as long as he perseveres. What would happen to the camel if he thought he could not continue? He would die—regardless of the provision remaining in his hump, regardless of how close he was to an oasis.

In much the same way, even though we think we cannot continue, all too often we can. There is a great difference between what we can endure and what we think we can endure. How often have you quit, only to find out later that relief was imminent? Learn to endure to the very end, regardless of weariness, discouragement, and doubt. Keeping pressing forward, and reap the rewards of putting character first.

“With a little training, my grandson is great when meeting new people.”
—A grandmother from Alabama

Back to School

“But Mom, I don’t want to go back to school—I won’t know anyone!” For many children, the back to school blues are less about surrendering their summer holidays and more about the uncertainty of what awaits them on their first day. Even adults experience apprehension about the unknown and usually prefer to remain in territory where they are comfortable.

Sometimes nervous children just need a little reassurance that the other kids will like them and it will all turn out fine. They do not have to worry about who they know, what they wear, or how to fit in with the crowd...it is who they are on the inside that makes them special.

To prepare your child for a successful first day of school, set aside time to teach or refresh some basic skills in meeting new people, how to ask for directions, and what makes a good first impression. Act out different scenarios where you play the teacher, a bus driver, or a new classmate your child should meet. Switch roles so your son or daughter can

see how you would act in their shoes. Remember these points for making good introductions:



- Wear a genuine smile.
- Look people in the eye.
- Speak loud enough.
- Offer a handshake.
- Ask simple questions.
- Be outgoing.

Remind your children to look for new students who need encouragement or help finding their way around school. Instead of just hanging around their old buddies, challenge your children to meet at least one new person each day. Remember that “to make a friend, you have to be a friend.” Perhaps everyone’s back-to-school experience will be made a little easier.

In The Arena

“The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best, knows the triumph of high achievement; and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”¹

Have you ever given up on something before trying? Or, maybe you tried and quit, announcing the futility of attempting to accomplish the task. Afterward, you watch someone else complete the very thing you declared impossible and realize that they succeeded in this difficult task because they stuck with it longer than you did. Endurance is staying with a task beyond what you think is possible.

1. Theodore Roosevelt, “Citizen in a Republic”, April 23, 1910

Dynamic Character

“*Character First!* is for real. *Character First!* works, even in a large jail setting with a large agency.” The crowd applauded as Sheriff John Wetzel, Oklahoma County, OK, stepped down from the platform and Sheriff Ray Nash, Dorchester County, SC, took his place and began to present the Dynamic of Restoration.

Police Dynamics was developed by Sheriff Nash, applied in his department, and has been presented across the country. For eight hours on August 25, 2002, *Character First!* and *Police Dynamics* joined forces to produce a resource that will encourage law enforcement agencies as they implement a character emphasis.

In front of an audience of officers, law enforcement staff, and businessmen, Sheriff Nash presented the dynamics that have been repeatedly proven in the line of duty. Officers responded eagerly to this enthusiastic speaker and his extensive personal experience.

Video cameras captured every word, and a complete set of videos will be made available, including live footage not shown at this conference. This set will be available for distribution soon. (Call the Order Entry Department at (405)815-0001 to check its status.)

Larry Rhoads, director of *Character First! Business*, and a key figure in the development of this resource says, “*Police*

Dynamics provides the initial impetus for a character emphasis, and *Character First!* gives continuing support and training. We are confident that this will be a valuable tool for law enforcement agencies.”



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.

CTI is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization based in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.