

Building CHARACTER

May 2003 Edition

Business Impacts Community

"My utmost hope," explains Bill Mullet, "is to not simply make better people for a half-hour at work during a meeting, or throughout the weekday, but I want character to permeate throughout the people of our whole organization in their everyday lives."

With this mindset, Mullet, President and CEO of Precision Entry Inc., located in Holmes County, Ohio, began to actively encourage and emphasize character in his business.

In 1997, he caught the vision of strengthening his employees and thereby building a stronger, better-balanced company. After hearing about the gamut of character resources offered through *Character First!* some years before, Mullet knew where he could find some of the tools he needed in order to reach his goals.

Pioneering the first character program of its kind in Holmes County, Bill Mullet now offers his nearly 150 employees monthly character bulletins and leads them in a monthly company-wide meeting. Mullet personally teaches the qualities at this meeting and encourages his employees to follow them at work and at home.

Summing up his thoughts on what *Character First!* has done for his business, Mullet said, "I think it is one of the greatest things we have

ever done. It has helped pull people together and it has helped everyone see our vision more clearly. It has produced dramatic results. There is a level of respect that is unmatched between managers and employees. There is now a sense of teamwork that is needed to output the high quality products their customers have come to expect."

The impact of Mullet's dedication to the success of his employees has reached beyond his business and has begun to inspire the entire community.

Numerous local businesses are now following the example of Precision Entry, beginning character programs in their own companies. Castle Nursing Home and Weaver Leather are both using *Character First!*, due to Mullet's influence. The entire Holmes County school district has started implementing character initiatives along with the local county commissioner's office. Bill Mullet's vision has spread and is slowly transforming an entire community, one life at a time.



The example set by Bill Mullet at Precision Entry has impacted an entire community.

Boldness vs. Fearfulness

Confidence that what I have to say or do is true, right, and just

Five aspects of boldness:

- Don't be afraid to speak the truth.
- Keep a clear conscience.
- Support others when they are right.
- Be willing to stand alone.
- Speak with humility.



Relentless Power

A powerful moose slowly walked through the deep, cold snow of the northern Canadian wilderness. Suddenly, a much smaller animal leaped from the branches of a nearby tree and landed on the neck of the massive moose. Unable to rid itself of the small yet persistent predator, the moose quickly collapsed onto the pile of snow.

One of the most legendary hunters of the northern wilderness, the reclusive wolverine is a strong and tenacious animal, known to boldly take down enemies and prey much larger and stronger than itself.

Wolverines are unhindered by obstacles that come in the way of their goals. Hunters have returned to their cabins to find that wolverines have literally

gnawed their way into the cabin and devoured furs, traps, supplies, and anything with an edible odor. These powerful mammals have been known to move large boulders and climb high trees in order to reach people's food stores.

Traps are no deterrent, either. In fact, trappers consider wolverines one of their top enemies. The crafty wolverine so skillfully steals bait without springing traps and preys on trapped animals, American Indians used to believe that wolverines were reincarnated hunters. They seem to know all the tricks of the trappers.

Every year the long, bitter winter makes just staying alive a challenge. Yet, the wolverine is able to live another day because of its relentless and fearless quest for survival.

Though few of us have to fight for daily survival, boldness gives the strength and endurance to stand for what is true, right, and just.

A Worthwhile Investment

This month concludes the seventh year of the *Character First!* mentoring program in Oklahoma City. Over the years, more than 300 high school and college-aged students have volunteered their time and energy to teach character in nearly all 62 Oklahoma City elementary schools.



Tutoring a child for a few hours a month may change a life forever.

These mentors have learned many ways to teach character. Those who enjoy telling stories or teaching songs might prepare some of the lessons from the *Character First!* curriculum for use in a classroom or assembly. Other volunteers may read to students, tutor them in math, play together on the playground, or visit during lunch—always looking for opportunities to point out character in what they do.

"I love spending time with the students," one volunteer declared. "It's neat to be able to give something back to the community, and focusing on character will help these kids for the rest of their lives."

Another mentor reported, "I think I've learned more than the children. Every time we talk about a new character quality, I look in the mirror to see if I'm being responsible or patient or showing self-control. It's good for me."

A principal stated, "The volunteers have been wonderful. It's nice to have positive role models around the school—someone that encourages our students to do the right thing."

Not every school is fortunate enough to have volunteers, but maybe that is how you can help! Find a school near you and ask the principal if there is something you can do, even for a few hours a month.

What about this summer? Is there a camp or recreational program you can support? Check with a local church or community organization to see how you can help. Thanks to all who give of their time to point young people in the right direction—it's an investment worth making.

**"To teach
is to
touch
a life
forever!"**
—Unknown

Standing for Truth

During his years as Premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev denounced many of the policies and atrocities of his predecessor Joseph Stalin. Once, as he censured Stalin in a public meeting, Khrushchev was interrupted by a shout from a heckler in the audience. "You were one of Stalin's colleagues. Why didn't you stop him?"

"Who said that?" roared Khrushchev, glaring out over the audience. Agonizing silence followed as nobody in the room dared move a muscle. Then Khrushchev replied quietly, "Now you know why."

Khrushchev's response revealed much about himself and the people to whom he spoke. When it came time to boldly stand up against evil and uphold truth, fear took hold and took control.

This fear can control each one of us if we are not careful. When you know that something is true, right, and just, are you willing to risk yourself by standing up for the truth?

Character in the Military

After September 11, 2001, countless pressures faced America's military. Pressure to protect the homeland. Pressure to keep good relations between nations. Pressure to show compassion, yet justice—to demonstrate good character.

It is said that the true character of a person shows when they are under pressure. It is in these situations that character training proves so vital for success. Since its inception, the Character City initiative has expanded to counties, states, businesses, schools, hospitals, and now to "Commands of Character" within America's military.

A report from Commander Hank Bond, an officer in the US Naval computer telecommunication center in Guam, gives a glimpse into the impact of character training in the military. Since beginning character training, he says that he has "had no alcohol-related incidents requiring any disciplinary actions be taken within my command.... The number of formal disciplinary procedures has dropped dramatically during this period. There are, to be sure, other factors influencing my sailors' behavior, but I do believe that *Character First!* has been a major contributor."

Marine Chaplain Dan Stevens conducts character training for commanding officers, who in turn hold monthly meetings for their commands. The chaplain also takes units for two-day retreats where they spend one day on team building and one on applying character. The men and women usually go into the training with a negative attitude, thinking some chaplain is going to tell them that they need to fix their character. Though the training starts with the attendees slouched and arms across their chests, by the end everyone is listening carefully and complaining that the time was too short.



American forces are learning the skills of combat—and character.

During this time of great pressure for America's Armed Forces, it is heartening to know that service members from all branches of the military can rise above pressure with training in the skills of both combat and character.

Upcoming Seminars

[Implementation Seminar](#): May 20

[Effective Leadership](#): May 21

[Character Council Conference](#):

September 23–24

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.