

Leadership Integrity for the Family Business

SKM Associates LLC

Family Business Consulting
Developing High Performance
Leaders and Organizations

Integrity in leadership is frequently referenced but often undefined. It is often used to represent general platitudes such as consistency of words and actions, overall moral or ethical behavior, and consistency in adversity. At its core, though, leadership integrity in a family business involves the leader's identity grounded in a commitment to a specific set of values. A value is a principle, standard, or quality considered intrinsically worthwhile or desirable. Values are a source of strength because they give business families the power to act. Values are deep and emotional, difficult to change, and often unconscious, and integrity is a personal commitment to living out those values.

Sometimes people think of values as a list of things they should or should not do. To the contrary, values should be energizing, motivating, and inspiring. When people care passionately about something—in other words, value it—they can spur themselves to great achievements.

Integrity requires humble introspection, not self-righteous declaration. Being a leader of integrity does not mean perfection. Part of leading with integrity means the strength of character to learn from mistakes and seek continual self-improvement. Regardless of position or title, every leader and every family member must be responsible for modeling integrity.

How do you know if you are a leader of integrity? What are you doing to lead with integrity and to strengthen the integrity of those around you?

Tell your own story. Share how your character has developed and strengthened over time.

Invite feedback. Build a small group of people who know you well, see you clearly, want the best for you, and are willing to be totally honest with you.

Listen. Learn to listen without filtering what you hear through your pre-existing notions. You will find that everyone around you is continually giving you clues.

Our actions must mirror our words in every area of our life.

“Good leadership is built on love and truth, for kindness and integrity are what keep leaders in their position of trust.”

Proverbs 20:28 *The Passion Translation*

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