

DEPENDABILITY

CHARACTER



He who is dependable is like the sun. It is there, even when the storm is raging.

Our lives and businesses are built around things that are stable and dependable. We depend on the laws of physics such as gravity and the timing of the solar system. These laws are fixed and we can plan our lives around them. We also depend on manmade equipment and technology. Equipment and systems that are not dependable are replaced. This also applies to us as individuals; if we are not dependable or punctual we may be replaced by others who are.

It is important that we value people and their punctuality as a resource. We should consider time as one of the most valuable commodities ever given to mankind. You cannot do anything without it. A minute wasted is a minute lost forever. When we are punctual, it shows we value our time as well as the time of others. This creates value because others will consider us responsible, trustworthy, and dependable.

One of the most visible character flaws is the inability to be somewhere on time or not show up at all. Tardiness is costly because it affects our reputation. We become known for arriving late and being undependable. Somehow, we can always find an excuse, and may even lie to cover up, which adds to the flaw. Others blame it on their culture, but that doesn't make it right. If we don't take the responsibility for our personal promptness, others will treat us the same and valuable time will be lost by sitting around waiting for each other. Tardiness is a habit, a bad one. We won't overcome this bad habit until we see how it hurts us. Some may justify tardiness as a part of being busy, but if we are late on the job, late on delivery, and late for appointments, sooner or later we won't have a job, a delivery, or an appointment. Don't make an appointment if you are not planning to be there on time. If we overcome this flaw, we gain a valuable asset which makes people believe in us and be able to count on us.

Baton Exchange

Dependability is one of the building blocks of quality relationships. Generally, this means that you have the reputation of doing what you say you are going to do. If you are viewed as a dependable person, it is because you are known to be trustworthy and reliable. Trust is a mental state that can be easily destroyed in times of conflict. It is much easier to destroy trust than it is to rebuild it. One bad action can destroy years of confidence.

Benefits

1. You will earn the trust of others. This is an essential factor for lasting success in any relationship, personal or business.
2. You will earn the respect of others. They will come to believe in and rely on you and this will increase your value to them and bring you additional opportunities.
3. You will create a positive environment. When people realize they can depend on you, it will inspire their confidence in your abilities. People will want to work with you because they know things will get done.

Barriers To Dependability

1. Underestimating how long something will take, and as a result over-committing on a deadline. Add margin to your estimate.
2. Over-committing. Say “no” more often.
3. Working on other things too close to the time you are supposed to leave to go somewhere can result in you being late (and develop a reputation for being undependable in promptness.)

Practices

1. Be a person of your word and expect others to do the same. Be frank, open, and sincere. Speak in a manner that is easy to understand and follow through on what you promise. Keep secrets and don't be afraid to say no if that's required.
2. Be stable, consistent and predictable. Learn to become single minded, disciplined in your thoughts, decisions, and emotions. Deliberately consider every challenge or decision that comes your way and choose a path that is ethically consistent. Fulfill your commitments large and small.
3. Appreciate time - both yours and others as a valuable resource. Your attitude towards time always determines the quantity and quality of what you produce.
4. Never use excuses. Be honest. Face reality. Avoid falling into lies to cover up your mistakes or weaknesses. This will only make things worse for you and will multiply the damage.
5. Continually work to build a good reputation. A machine is valued according to its dependability over a long period of time. It builds its reputation by consistently performing without the need for a lot of maintenance. People are valued the same way. Your long term track record is what will build your reputation. Lack of dependability will detract from your reputation and can kill the potential of a good future.

Our businesses and families are built and established around people who are stable and constant. Dependability is a powerful character trait that brings many other great attributes with it such as integrity, honesty, trustworthiness and loyalty.

Key Scriptures

- “But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment” - James 5:12
- When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay” - Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

- A man with many acquaintances may suffer harm, but there is a loving friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24
- “Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel, saying, “This is what the Lord has commanded. If a man vows a vow to the Lord or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth” - Numbers 30:1-2

Quotes On Dependability

- “Without dependability one's ability may be a liability instead of an asset” - Woodrow Wilson
- “If you are a man of dependability, you are worth more than if you were clever” - Roy L. Smith
- Dependability is like currency that can be deposited in a relational bank account.

Remember...thoughts produce actions, actions become habits, habits form our character, and character determines our destiny!

Reflect & Respond

1. If five of your friends were asked how dependable you are, what would they say?
2. How do people react when you are late?
3. What is the most important quality in the people that you trust?
4. Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10 in this character quality:
5. Why did you give yourself this rating?
6. What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?

Ask Your Mentor

1. How have you seen dependability (or lack thereof) played out for you and in coworkers that you have known?
2. How do you think someone can develop dependability?
3. It is said, “Others can do a better job if they can depend on us to follow through. Also, we can be more productive if we have someone who is dependable.” Do you think that is true? If so, why?

Creative Connection

Think of a song, character or person from a book, movie or history, or an everyday item that personifies the main idea of this lesson and share it.

Go Do

1. Ask your boss or someone who knows you well to rate your overall level of dependability.
 2. Ask God, “What have I not followed through on?” Write down what comes to mind. How will you follow through? What will you do? By when?
 3. Practice. How I will practice this over the next month:
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Go Deeper: Further Conversation & Study for those who want to go deeper.

1. What big problem do you think this session may be addressing?
2. What emotions, if any, did you have from what you learned in this session? Was there anything that surprised, excited, or angered you?
3. Look up: Proverbs 12:22; Daniel 6:4; Matthew 25:21,23; Proverbs 11:13, 25:13-14; Psalms 15:4-5; 2 Corinthians 1:15-19; Matthew 5:37
4. How is this quality shown in the life of Jesus Christ?
5. Which people in Scripture demonstrate this quality? Which people in Scripture lacked this quality?

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Sources & Resources

Photo credit:

Global Priority (LaRed), <https://globalpriority.org/>

Talent is Never Enough, John Maxwell

Read Leadership Promises for Every Day, John Maxwell, p. 227, for devotional on dependability.



Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9rxSipUqsM>