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Your Personal Values Are Your Career Success Foundation

By Bud Bilanich

Success Tweet: Your personal values are things you hold near and dear; things on which you absolutely will not compromise.

Kevin Eikenberry is a friend of mine, and a leadership expert. I subscribe to his blog. The other day he did a post in which he talked about the importance of a firm and steady foundation. He used the bible parable about the wise man who built his house upon the rock, and the careless man who built his house on sand. When the rains and winds came, the wise man's house stayed strong; the other man's was washed away. Kevin went on to say...

"The story speaks to building on a firm and steady foundation. The parallel for us as leaders is to build our leadership habits, values and beliefs on solid unshakable principles. It is easy to read a book or article and be excited about a new technique, approach or method. Most of these are sound and valuable. But ultimately they will hold the greatest value for you when they are integrated into the foundation of your leadership house – and the techniques, methods and approaches are understood based on their underlying and unassailable principles."

Your [personal values](#) are your [career success](#) foundation. As Kevin says, they should be solid, unshakable principals, things that guide your life and your decision making. They should be fad proof; ideas on which you can rely in the long run.

A couple of days ago, I did a post in which I identified my personal values: common sense, simplicity, optimism, human potential, value, trust, individuality, hard work, the power of one. These values are the foundation on which I have built my life and career. They guide my decision making. I turn to them when I need help figuring out what to do. They have served me well. And, I will not compromise on them.





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Let me give you an example. Back in December I was approached by an HR executive at one of my corporate clients. He asked if I would be willing to provide some coaching for one of the leaders at the operation for which he is responsible. Of course, I said yes.

I submitted a proposal outlining how I would approach this specific coaching project. Then, over the next few months, I answered a lot of questions about my approach to the coaching, how much it would cost etc. I sent the HR exec several of my books gratis. I really thought I had the gig sown up. Last week he called me to tell me while he would have preferred to use my services, his HR boss at corporate headquarters instructed him to use another coach who was doing some work in another part of the company.

If you've ever worked hard to make a sale and then lose it due to something completely out of your control, you know how I felt – frustrated. I was discussing this situation with a colleague. She said she would have been very angry about this situation. I wasn't angry, stuff happens in business. I was a little frustrated, but I chose to let it go.

I value optimism. The Optimist Creed guides my behavior. Point 1 of The Optimist Creed says, *"Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind."* Point 4 says, *"Promise yourself to look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true."* As I truly value optimism and this advice, I had to let go of the frustrating situation. Holding on to it would have created negative energy that would have impacted my work. I don't have time for negative energy. I'm an optimist. As Point 10 of The Optimist Creed says, I am *"too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble."* I value optimism. Therefore, I let go of the situation and moved on.

By the way, I have created a frameable .PDF of The Optimist Creed. If you would like a FREE copy to frame and hang in your workspace, go [here](#) to download it. I have given away over 1,000 copies of it to readers of my blog and my career success coach clients.

Here's another example. I value trust. I am a trustworthy person, and I assume that on





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the part of other people. That's why most often I do business on a handshake. I will sign a contract if it's absolutely necessary, some companies won't hire me without a signed contract. But I prefer my working relationships to be less formal. Some people say this is naïve. I think it is trusting. I'm not trying to convince you to do business on a handshake. I bring it up here to show you how my personal value of trust impacts my work every day.

I value hard work. It's in my genes. I am skeptical of and turned off by internet offers to set up a business that requires little to no work. My belief is that the dictionary is only place success comes before work. This doesn't mean that I am inefficient about what I do. That's not the case. I outsource a lot of my technical work because I'm not good at it. I don't want to become an HTML expert. On the other hand, I use my time to do the things I'm good at – like writing books and writing on my blog, appearing as a guest on internet and broadcast radio interviews, working with my career success coach clients. I work hard at doing the things that help me advance my business and career success. I believe the old adage, *“The harder I work, the luckier I get.”*

The common sense point here is simple. Successful people use their personal values as a foundation. They will listen to new ideas, but don't change on a whim. They heed the advice in Tweet 19 in *Success Tweets*, *“Your personal values are things you hold near and dear; that on which you absolutely will not compromise.”* This means you should think long and hard about your values. They should come from deep inside you. Once you clarify them, live them. Be true to yourself and your personal values. You'll find your personal values are a foundation that will serve you well when things get tough and frustrating.

Bud Bilanich is a motivational speaker, author and blogger who will help you create the life and career success you want and deserve.

