

Effective Leadership and Ethics in Business



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SECTION I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Background

McCombs Elite Eight selected three highly talented individuals, all of whom hold leadership positions in the business world, to conduct interviews with. These interviews provided the opportunity to learn about how their diverse backgrounds fuel their perspectives on leadership and ethical practices in business. The leaders chosen were: Jeremy Threlkill, Vertical President at Fullsteam; Sarah Maxson, Head of New Development at Article Student Living; Misty Casanova, Manager of Informatics at Aetna CVS Health. By conducting interviews with these three individuals, detailed insight was gained on what makes an effective, but ethical leader.

Leadership in Practice

Through the insightful discussions that were had during the interviews, key topics regarding the practice of leadership in the business world were identified. The interviewees discussed their specific leadership styles, as well as specific characteristics that contribute to becoming and being an effective leader. A combination of strong leadership characteristics traits, along with their diverse leadership styles, allowed the interviewees to become successful leaders. As leaders, Jeremy, Sarah, and Misty all stressed the importance of clear communication with their employees. They emphasized that part of their success came from their commitment to connecting with their employees on a deeper level, and creating strong relationships that extend beyond work. By consistently serving as a positive and motivating role model, these leaders not only uplift their employees, but they also challenge them to continue towards their professional and personal goals.

Ethics in Practice

Regarding ethical practices in the business world, the interviewees shared their individual perspectives on ethics and their specific approaches to addressing and resolving ethical dilemmas as they arise. Specifically, maintaining a culture of trust, referencing company policies, and having a motivational and empathetic approach are ways that each leader upholds ethical standards in their organizations on a day-to-day basis. The role of an effective leader is heavily influenced by their capability to perform strong ethical decision-making while also making sure that their decisions align with the ethical standards of the organization as a whole.

Connections to Course Concepts

Connections were made between our interview findings and specific Management 336 course topics. Through incorporating intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and establishing happy workplaces, employers are able to attract and retain employees. Employees who are incentivized for their hard work and dedication to an organization are more likely to stay loyal to their employers. Additionally, happy workplaces can increase productivity because employees are likely to be more motivated in an area that promotes positivity. Leaders who are able to communicate well to understand their employees' needs are the ones who are able to efficiently lead their teams to success.

INTRODUCTION

As individuals work towards becoming leaders, there are some key things to keep in mind. When considering the question ‘What makes an effective leader?’, it is important to be aware of the various leadership styles and certain characteristics traits that make up a leader. On the other hand, regarding ethics, it is important to learn about the approach to ethical decision-making as a leader and how to create a balance between personal and ethical views in the workplace.

Leadership and ethics go hand-in-hand in the business world, so a deep understanding of both is a crucial component. Each person’s background is unique, so there is not one strict path to follow when learning how to become a leader. Through the interviewees’ personal experiences, course material, and outside research, McCombs Elite Eight was able to identify what makes an effective but ethical leader. The foundation of a successful organization is based around both effective leadership and ethics.

Throughout this report, the detailed information on leadership and ethics has not only helped current leaders reach their successful positions, but can also serve as guidance for aspiring future leaders in the business world.



INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND AND INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Jeremy Threlkill

Jeremy Threlkill currently serves as the Vertical President at Fullsteam, a software company focused on acquiring fintech businesses, integrating credit card processing solutions, and expanding sales teams. Before this role, Jeremy held various positions in sales and marketing. He started his career in sales at NCI at 17 years old, quickly rising to the top 5% of the company. Jeremy's proficiency in creating sales scripts led him to a position at an SEO company and an ad tech company specializing in sales. He has also worked at Dell, Outbound Engine, and moved into the digital marketing industry shortly after. His experience led him to co-founding Dumpster Rental Systems, the country's largest dumpster software company. Jeremy later sold this company to Fullsteam, where he continues to lead and operate it. Currently, Jeremy oversees two companies and is preparing to acquire three additional ones through M&A. One of his main tasks is to identify teams that have weak sales and then have his team do full steam accelerated marketing. He continues to achieve great success in the ecommerce and digital marketing industry, demonstrating his effectiveness as a hands-on leader.

During the interview, Jeremy mentioned how he prioritizes transparency and honesty within his company, believing that these values strengthen the team. He sees himself as a hands-on leader and is convinced that his active presence elevates his team's work quality. Jeremy makes it a point to listen to his employees and provide direct feedback, believing in the principle that sugar coating is ineffective. He lives by the motto, "You aren't just in charge, you're leading the charge.", which guides his daily leadership approach.

Furthermore, Jeremy believes that in order for a team to thrive, its members must also take initiative and think independently. As president, he values standard processes and procedures but emphasizes the importance of listening to employees because they have the closest connection to their work. When it comes to making executive decisions concerning ethics, Jeremy has the mindset that some decisions can be made without him but he trusts that his employees will always keep him in loop so he can make sure to know about everything that is going on.

Behind Jeremy's success as a leader, is his ability to empower and motivate his employees everyday. Jeremy makes it a priority to stay in touch with every department, ensuring that his employees are well-supported and consistently have the opportunity to keep learning. Moving forward, Jeremy will continue his position as Vertical President at Full Steam, aiming to further the company's growth and development.

Sarah Maxson

Sarah Maxson is currently the Head of New Development at Article Student Living, a real estate development company. Sarah graduated from Clemson University with a degree in marketing and mass communications. After earning her undergraduate degree, Sarah attended Purdue university and received her masters in Communications. Her career began at Aspen Heights, where she excelled as a leasing manager and set a company record for the most leases signed. After some time at Aspen Heights, Sarah began a new journey in Myrtle beach and began managing lease-ups for CA Ventures. Sarah is passionate about marketing and her passion aligns with her current position at Article Student Living. At Article Student Living, Sarah is responsible for training staff and executes the marketing plan for new developments. After completing market research, Sarah leads her team through the new development phase and assists with lease-ups for the first year.

As a leader, Sarah believes in leading by example and mentioned in her interview that this is her leadership style. Sarah reflects on her own personal experiences and likes to see where she has succeeded and failed. By doing this, she is able to train people better than she was trained, which leads to better results and higher performance from her employees. Acknowledging the good and the bad is an important tool that Sarah uses as an effective leader because she sees the positive results from it.

During the interview, Sarah emphasized the importance of continual learning and building connections as key components of effective leadership. She believes that building personal relationships and understanding her team's motivation is very important. Sarah advises future business leaders to be confident, ask questions during interviews, and be well-informed about

their potential company to make a memorable impression. Sarah claims that communication skill and professional development, such as earning certifications, will be important for future leaders.

Moving forward, Sarah will continue her position at Article Student Living and continue developing new buildings and leading by example everyday.

Misty Casanova

Misty Casanova's leadership journey begins with her background in data analysis and project management, as she began as a data analyst at Burrell Behavioral Health and Comprehensive Mental Health Services. Through her roles, Misty increased her skills in measuring and tracking data input into systems, as well as excelling in project coordination and management. Her dedication to continuous improvement led her to pursue certifications to enhance her expertise in the field. As Misty transitioned into her current role as the Manager of Informatics at Aetna CVS Health, following the largest healthcare merger in U.S. history, she brought with her a wealth of experience and a strong foundation in data analysis and project management. In this role, Misty oversees critical data operations, and leads a team of over 20 people.

During the interview, Misty reflected on her leadership style as defined by her commitment to leading in a hands-on method and fostering a culture of transparency and mutual respect. She believes in the power of open communication and encourages her team members to freely share their ideas and perspectives. Drawing from her own experiences, Misty views motivation as a valuable tool to help her team reach their goals. She strongly believes in creating an environment where her team feels empowered to innovate and take calculated risks, as well as keeping them accountable for their work.

In addition to her focus on fostering a supportive work environment, Misty is deeply committed to upholding ethical standards in her leadership approach. She navigates ethical dilemmas by prioritizing company policies and goals while ensuring fairness and transparency in decision-making processes, as she understands that a lot of issues are situation specific. Misty's ethical framework emphasizes the importance of empathy and accountability, reflecting her dedication to fostering a culture of trust and integrity within her team.

Furthermore, Misty's advice to future business leaders reflects her ethical beliefs and commitment to personal and professional growth. She encourages aspiring leaders to prioritize discipline, emphasizing the importance of holding oneself to high standards and taking accountability of one's actions. Misty highlights the need for resilience and self-compassion, recognizing that leadership, especially in the corporate world, can be challenging and that setbacks are inevitable. She encourages future leaders to approach each situation with a growth mindset, learning from both successes and failures to continuously evolve and grow as leaders.

LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

Characteristics of a Leader

A common theme found among each interviewee was the need to be adaptable in their careers. Jeremy Thraikill explained his belief that no job is beneath a leader, emphasizing how critical it is for the success of a company that its leader understands the root causes of the company's success. He believed that through this understanding, a leader would adequately comprehend the intricacies inherent in the foundation, facilitating the learning and growth of both the leader and building trust and credibility with the workers. Sarah Maxon described her field of work as ever-changing and accentuated the importance of understanding new trends and being able to adjust adequately with them, as this is critical in the constantly evolving market she's in. Additionally, our third interviewee, Misty Casanova, mentioned that an effective leader cannot stay rigid in their motivational styles; everyone is motivated by different factors. A leader must be willing to ethically bend to accommodate those motivational factors to progress not only the team but also the company in the industry.

A second characteristic revealed as essential in leadership by our interviewees was the ability to be empathetic. When a leader is empathetic with their staff, they enhance their communicative abilities with employees, demonstrating a willingness to listen, understand perspectives beyond their own, and respond with the sensitivity required. Consequently, this fosters motivation and engagement among employees, creating an environment that supports, respects, and empowers them. Jeremy Thraikill exemplified a profound understanding of this concept. He recognized that

every individual carries some form of blind spot, emphasizing a leader's role in nurturing an environment conducive to open dialogue and trust to effectively address issues. Similarly, Sarah Maxon emphasized the importance of building personal relationships with her team. She highlighted how it enabled her to discern the root motivators for her employees, allowing her to adapt her motivational style accordingly. She credited this approach for her success in the industry, viewing it as instrumental in cultivating a workplace culture that attracts and retains talent.

Lastly, a notable trait observed in all interviewees who have held or are holding prominent leadership roles is the desire to learn from others. Each interviewee, at some point during their interview, mentioned or encouraged reading books they personally cherished and grew from. They emphasized that no single leader possesses all the answers and stressed the importance for individuals in leadership positions to not only acknowledge this fact but also actively seek to expand their knowledge beyond what they already know. By remaining receptive to the expertise and insights of others, leaders can enhance their own skill sets by incorporating different thought processes or methodologies. Learning not only equips them with specific skills but also fosters creativity and critical thinking, enabling them to approach challenges from diverse perspectives and navigate uncertainty with confidence. It is crucial to recognize that effective leadership is dynamic; it necessitates continuous refinement and development. When leaders prioritize ongoing growth, they refine their ability to motivate, inspire, and guide others.

Styles of Leadership

The three interviewees each represent distinct leadership styles, showcasing how different approaches can contribute to a productive and supportive work environment.

1. Hands-on

Jeremy Threlkill demonstrates a hands-on leadership style characterized by leading by example, transparent and honest communication, and allowing others to lead. Leaders who embody this style demonstrate the behavior and work ethic they expect from their team, serving as role models and setting high standards for performance. They maintain open and honest communication, fostering trust and ensuring that team members are well-informed and engaged.

Additionally, hands-on leaders empower their team by allowing others to take on leadership roles, promoting growth and encouraging initiative. This approach cultivates a collaborative and dynamic work environment where team members feel supported and motivated to contribute their best. His approach involves recognizing areas that need improvement and encouraging open feedback and collaboration. By creating a collaborative environment where everyone can contribute ideas and take ownership, Jeremy fosters empowerment and a sense of shared purpose among his team members. Given his emphasis on being innovative, he embodies a transformational leadership style. His approach focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to reach greater levels of performance and success through constructive feedback and innovative ideas.

2. Accountability with Empathy

Misty Casanova embraces a leadership style that expertly combines accountability with empathy, demonstrating signs of a supportive leadership style. She places a strong emphasis on motivating her team members and assisting them in achieving their goals without resorting to micromanagement. By providing clear communication and setting precise expectations, Misty ensures that each team member understands their role and responsibilities, fostering a cohesive and effective team dynamic.

Misty's supportive demeanor and willingness to lend a helping hand create a nurturing work environment where employees feel comfortable seeking guidance and expressing their ideas. Her empathetic approach allows her to understand the needs and challenges of her team, enabling her to offer tailored support and encouragement. A key aspect of Misty's leadership style is her ability to balance holding her team accountable while also providing the necessary resources and support for their success. She does not hover over her employees; instead, she trusts them to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively, which empowers them to take ownership of their work. Her leadership style cultivates a sense of trust and respect within her team, which in turn leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction. Her ability to blend accountability with empathy creates an inclusive and collaborative atmosphere, where team members are inspired to strive for excellence and work towards shared goals.

3. Positive and Transformational

Sarah Maxson's leadership style revolves around positivity fitting into a transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership approach is frequently linked to stronger corporate culture, higher levels of employee engagement and happiness, and high levels of productivity which is clearly embodied by Sarah through her charismatic and motivating personality. It emphasizes personalized support, motivational inspiration, and effective communication. Transformational leaders prioritize nurturing the skills and abilities of their team members. Sarah Maxon focuses on making sure no one feels underdeveloped and making team members feel welcome while maintaining a positive and enthusiastic energy. She aims to ensure that everyone understands how they fit into the company as a whole, creating a culture where achievements are celebrated and areas for improvement are addressed with compassion and encouragement. She believes that she brings enthusiasm and positive energy into the workplace which radiates off of employees and improves their productivity and makes the workplace more enjoyable.

Advice for Future Leaders

Jeremy Thraillkill talked about embracing innovation by not being afraid to come up with new ideas and learning continuously. He talked about how leaders must recognize that the business landscape is constantly evolving, driven by technological advancements and shifting market trends. He emphasized on fostering a culture of curiosity and continuous learning within themselves and their teams. By seeking out knowledge through reading, attending workshops, and engaging with industry peers, leaders can stay ahead of the curve and guide their organizations toward new opportunities.

Misty Casanova emphasized on the importance of maintaining discipline, holding yourself accountable, and staying organized. Leadership requires juggling numerous responsibilities and managing multiple tasks simultaneously. To succeed in this role, leaders must cultivate discipline and hold themselves accountable for their actions and decisions. Staying organized is not only crucial for effective time management and prioritization for Misty, but also sets a positive example for their teams and ensures that projects run smoothly.

Sarah Maxson, on the other hand, emphasized on confidence and enthusiasm as powerful tools for a leader. She talked about how bringing positive and spirited energy into the workplace impacts the employees by creating a positive and motivating work environment. An enthusiastic demeanor can uplift and energize a team, helping to drive productivity and innovation.

ETHICS IN PRACTICE

The Importance of Ethics in the Workplace

In the workplace, ethics are regarded as the backbone of professional work. “According to the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions at the Illinois Institute of Technology, an occupation becomes a profession when two criteria are met: members of the profession share the same occupation with a moral purpose and members create and follow a set of standards for the work in their profession.” (Dawes & McCleary, 2022)

Ethics in Practice within the Workplace

In today's complex business landscape, ethical considerations play a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture and performance. Through qualitative interviews, this research explores the multifaceted dimensions of ethics in practice, focusing on three distinct yet interconnected components: Trust & Accountability, Professional Approach, and Personal Moral Compass. The findings reveal the importance of fostering trust through transparent business dealings, consistent delivery on commitments, and exemplary leadership.

Trust serves as the foundation of ethical relationships, both within and outside the organization. Through transparent and honest business dealings, companies can foster trust with stakeholders, including customers, employees, and partners. By consistently delivering on promises and commitments, organizations demonstrate reliability and integrity, thereby strengthening their reputation and credibility. Moreover, trust is not solely a matter of external perception but also hinges on internal leadership and culture. Effective leaders lead by example, upholding ethical principles and values that permeate throughout the organization. By setting the tone and encouraging trust among employees and stakeholders, leaders lay the groundwork for a cohesive and ethical work environment.

Accountability complements trust by providing a framework for responsibility and performance management. Clear definition of roles and responsibilities within the organization ensures clarity and alignment, minimizing confusion and potential ethical lapses. Moreover, accountability entails measuring progress and holding individuals and teams responsible for achieving goals.

Implementation of performance metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) enables organizations to track performance objectively and identify areas for improvement. Importantly, a culture of accountability fosters resilience and growth by reframing mistakes as opportunities for learning and improvement. Rather than assigning blame, organizations encourage individuals to take ownership of their actions and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.

In addition to trust and accountability, maintaining a professional approach is essential for upholding ethical standards within organizations. This entails adhering to professional codes of conduct and ethical guidelines that govern industry practices. By ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, organizations mitigate risks and uphold their commitment to ethical behavior. Furthermore, professionalism encompasses respect for diversity and inclusion, recognizing the inherent value of every individual within the organization. By fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity, organizations cultivate an environment where ethical considerations are integral to decision-making processes.

At the heart of ethical frameworks lies the personal moral compass of individuals within the organization. While organizational policies and guidelines provide a structure for ethical behavior, ultimately, it is the values and beliefs of individuals that shape their actions and decisions. Encouraging employees to reflect on their personal values and align them with organizational goals fosters a sense of purpose and integrity. By empowering individuals to act in accordance with their moral compass, organizations cultivate a culture of ethical leadership and responsibility.

In conclusion, ethics in practice encompasses a multifaceted interplay of trust, accountability, professional approach, and personal moral compass. By prioritizing transparent business dealings, fostering a culture of accountability, upholding professional standards, and nurturing individual integrity, organizations can build a robust ethical framework that guides

decision-making and behavior. This research underscores the importance of integrating these components into organizational culture to promote sustainable and responsible business practices in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Ethics Implemented by Leaders

When it comes to the implementation of these ethical concepts within the workplace, the priority they take may vary based on the leader who is implementing the policies. For example,

Jeremy Thraillkill prioritizes trust and accountability as the most important ethical practice within his workplace. During the interview with Jeremy Thraillkill, he emphasized that he trusts his employees to be open and honest with him about anything that may arise compromising their ability to efficiently and effectively complete their work. Thus, he allows his employees to feel comfortable and confident in their relationships with him, encouraging them to alert him of any new obstacles and any mistakes that may have been made without having to worry about any unjust consequences.

On the other hand, Sarah Maxson prefers to focus on the personal moral compass aspect of ethics. She wants to get to know her employees on a personal level and learn what each of her subordinates likes, to help build a more friendly connection with them outside of work. This includes her asking her coworkers out to dinner after work and just hanging out with them in general so that their overall work environment doesn't feel uncomfortable and awkward. Once all of the workers get to know each other, Maxson can better make moral decisions towards her subordinates as she would be able to see them as both friends and coworkers as opposed to just coworkers.

Lastly, Misty Casanova opts for the professional approach to ethical decision-making in the workplace. She embodies the aspects of a good professional leader by providing personalized incentives to her subordinates, is empathetic towards others when they inevitably make mistakes and leans into the more hands-on motivational leadership role. In doing this, Casanova can foster an environment of communication and respect in the workplace, where all employees act professionally.

Overall, all of these ethical approaches are effective, it just depends on the type of leader that you are. For some, it may be better to have a friendly relationship with your coworkers, but for others, it may be better to keep that relationship more professional. Neither is better than the other, it purely depends on what you prefer and how you feel you would best be able to encourage your team to do their best work both with and without you there.

CONNECTIONS TO COURSE CONCEPTS

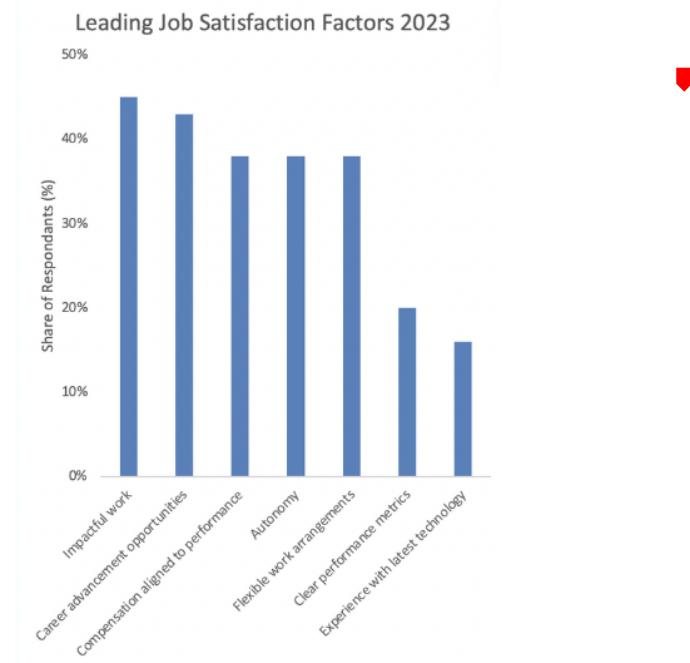


Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

A core discussion with the interviewees surrounded the motivation of employees. Given that everyone is motivated by different factors, creating a system in which everyone is motivated can be difficult. To deal with this dynamic, the interviewees generally talked about hiring those with intrinsic motivation. These people would go above and beyond due to their own desire for success and their internal drive. To find those with intrinsic motivation, all the interviewees would screen for this trait during the hiring process. However, all the interviewees also talked about the importance of adding external motivating factors to further promote success. A key trait of leadership was discovering which benefits each employee would respond best to. For instance, not everyone is motivated by money. Thus, some employees would respond more positively to more time off or a title promotion. Jeremy Threlkill specifically talked about the importance of giving extra benefits to employees that went above and beyond for a specific sprint. If someone outperformed their expectations, he would reward them with extra time off or a bonus. This culture of rewarding employees combines their internal motivation with external factors, creating a company where employees consistently exceed expectations. The importance of combining intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is well reflected in the data. According to a job satisfaction survey conducted by Statista shown in Figure 1, about 50% of the most important job characteristics were intrinsic motivators, such as impactful work. However, the other 50% of the most important job characteristics were extrinsic motivators, such as compensation or potential for promotion (Dyvik, 2023).

Figure 1

Leading Job Satisfaction Factors 2023



Note. The graph shows how some respondents highly valued intrinsic motivators to fulfill job satisfaction, while other participants valued extrinsic motivators more.

Happy Workplace

Sarah Maxson, in her interview, stresses the importance of charisma, empathy, and positivity in effective leadership. She believes these traits are crucial for building strong connections with team members and fostering a positive work environment. Mitsy, on the other hand, underscores the significance of motivation in leadership, highlighting how understanding and promoting intrinsic and extrinsic motivators can drive team success. This resonated strongly with the concept of a happy workplace that was discussed within this course, especially the case that was discussed about Zoom's approach, as CEO Eric Yuan emphasized the pursuit of happiness for both customers and employees. As Yuan stated, "The purpose of life is to pursue happiness, and I was not happy. Then, what's the risk?" This aligns with Mitsy's view that motivation is key to leadership success. Zoom's focus on delivering happiness to both customers and employees reflects Maxson's emphasis on charisma, empathy, and positivity, as these qualities contribute to creating a fulfilling and motivating work environment.

CONCLUSION



Although every person has different backgrounds and experiences, there is no doubt that an effective leader exemplifies strong character traits and morals that help create success for both themselves and their organizations. Through this project, the McCombs Elite Eight had the opportunity to gain insightful information regarding leadership skills and ethical approaches from three current successful leaders in the business world. It is important for a leader to have certain characteristics traits such as adaptability, empathy, and curiosity. Additionally, an effective leader should have a strong approach to ethical decision-making while also being able to maintain a balance between personal and professional ethical views. Jeremy Threlkill, Sarah Maxson, and Misty Casanova, offered valuable perspectives on how motivated individuals can build themselves up to become successful and ethical leaders in the business world. The role of a leader is important, and the individuals who take on leadership roles should be dependable and trustworthy to make the most optimal decisions for themselves and their teams.

APPENDIX



Appendix A: Interview Questions

Background

1. Please tell us about yourself including your personal and professional background to get where you are today
2. Can you tell us about the company that you work for?
3. What made you want to work in this specific industry?

Personal leadership styles

1. What is your leadership style?
2. As a leader, what do your employees think of your leadership style?

Traits of an effective leader

1. What would you say are some traits of being an effective leader?
2. How do you motivate employees, especially since each person is motivated by different things?

Ethics

1. How do you go about making executive decisions concerning ethics?
2. How do you prioritize and correctly implement personal ethics in the workplace?

Advice for future business leaders

1. What advice would you give to future business leaders?
2. What skills do you see becoming more important for successful leadership in the future?

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Section II



PRESENTATION SLIDE DECK

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS IN BUSINESS

Presentation by McCombs Elite Eight
MAN336 - Team 5



Meet the team!

			
MOHAMMED ALAWAMI	JACOB GARZA	ASHRITA GUDAVALLI	REAGAN NGUYEN
			
BONNIE REYES	GARIMA TALWAR	SAMHITHA THALLURU	KYDENCE THRAILKILL

Agenda

- ★ Interviewee Profiles
- ★ Leadership in Practice
- ★ Ethics in Practice
- ★ Connections
- ★ Key Takeaways



Getting Acquainted: Interviewee Profiles

BACKGROUND

- Former CEO and Co-Founder of Dumpster Rental Systems
- Currently the Vertical President at Fullteam
- Business model is to acquire fintech companies, integrate credit processors, and build sales teams
- Strong background in marketing and sales

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hands-on leader & leads by example
- Empowers others to lead
- Values the culture of trust
- Likes to stay in touch with every department and knows that no job is beneath him

ADVICE FOR FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS: Don't be afraid to come up with new ideas and never stop learning.

JEREMY THRAILKILL



DRS FULLTEAM

BACKGROUND

- Former data analyst at Burrell Behavior
- Currently the Manager of Informatics at Aetna CVS Health
- Misty has a strong project management emphasis and has used several certifications to work her way up in the industry

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hands-on & motivational leader
- Values clear communication & respect
- Understands that employees are motivated by different things
- Believes in holding employees accountable while showing empathy

ADVICE TO FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS: Remain disciplined, hold yourself accountable, and stay organized. As a leader, you are going to have a lot of things going on so it's important to know what your day looks like.

MISTY CASANOVA



BURRELL BEHAVIOR **cvs Health** **aetna**

BACKGROUND

- New Development Specialist for Article Student Living
- Started off as a CA and built her way up
- Passionate about marketing, sales, and strategy

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Leads by example, and get to know your employees
- Empathy and positivity are crucial for a healthy and happy workplace
- Always learning and becoming better by reading books or getting digital certifications

ADVICE TO FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS: Be confident in your abilities, keep up with digital skills, but overall, be an enthusiastic professional and take advantage of mentorship

SARAH MAXSON



**ASPEN
HEIGHTS
PARTNERS**



Leadership in Practice

Leadership in Practice



Characteristics of a Leader



Styles of leadership

Leadership Characteristics

ADAPTABILITY



Permits leaders to understand teams needs and ethically motivate them towards the goals of the company.

EMPATHY



Empathy fosters communication, trust, and a supportive environment where employees feel valued.

CURIOSITY



Allows leaders to stay innovative adaptable and capable to navigate changes while inspiring growth within their team.

Styles of Leadership

HANDS-ON



- Lead by example
- Transparent and honest communication
- Allow others to also lead

ACCOUNTABILITY WITH EMPATHY



- Keep up motivation
- No micromanaging
- Communicate expectations clearly while showing support

POSITIVITY



- Notices success
- Make everyone feel welcome
- Have a positive and enthusiastic energy



Ethics in Practice

Ethics in Practice



Trust & Accountability



Professional Approach



Personal Moral Compass

Trust

- Transparent business practices foster trust with stakeholders
- Consistent delivery on promises builds trust with customers, employees, and partners
- Lead by example: uphold ethical values to set the tone for the organization



Accountability

- Define roles and responsibilities clearly
- Use performance metrics and KPIs to track progress and hold people accountable
- View mistakes as learning opportunities to encourage ownership and improvement



Professional Approach

- Code of Conduct and Ethical Policies
- Ethics Education Training
- Learn how to be fair

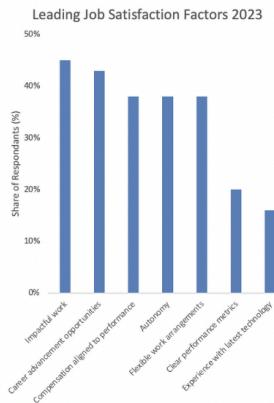
Personal Moral Compass

- Leaders serve as role models
- Employees learn workplace ethics from their employers
- Empathy and Forgiveness

Connections to Concepts

Employees require a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors. Hire on intrinsic factors and promote success with extrinsic motivators.

Source: Statista



Connections to Concepts

A happy workplace leads to greater productivity, innovation, and decreases employee turnover. But most of all, it keeps your employees... happy!



Key Takeaways

Leadership

- Adaptability
- Empathy
- Curiosity
- Communication

Ethics

- Maintain culture of trust
- Reference company policies
- Motivational and empathetic approach

Advice

- Embrace motivation
- Maintain discipline
- Stay confident

Thank You!

Any Questions?

Presentation by McCombs Elite Eight
MAN336 - Team 5



References

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- Morris, L. S., Grehl, M. M., Rutter, S. B., Mehta, M., & Westwater, M. L. (2022, July). *On what motivates us: A detailed review of intrinsic v. extrinsic motivation*. Psychological medicine. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9340849/>
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ORAL PRESENTATION GROUP SUMMARY



After conducting three interviews and taking thorough notes throughout each of them, our team began assigning sections of the presentation to each group member. We decided it would be best and most efficient if each team member's report part would correspond with their oral presentation part. Also, we established that those who were direct connections with the interviewees would be the one to present the interviewee background and interview summary for that respective person. For the other parts, we created a google doc where everyone put their names next to the parts they would like to do. After assigning everyone a report and presentation part, we began crafting our presentation.

As a team, we decided to write our assigned report parts first before making our slides in the presentation. This ensured that we were capturing the main points from our written sections and that we all understood our parts thoroughly. We set deadlines for our parts in the report so that we could have time to focus on our oral presentation leading up to our presentation day. We created our respective slides, and made sure that we were limiting our words on the slides and only putting main points. This part was not difficult since we had written our report parts prior.

After creating our slides, everyone began creating their scripts on what they wanted to say during their part of the presentation. Since there was a time limit of 25 minutes for the presentation, we emphasized making each of our parts a maximum of 2.5 minutes to allow time for natural buffers and questions at the end. Each member individually worked on practicing their parts, and we decided to meet the week of our presentation to run through the whole thing a few times. During our meeting, we went over speaking order, standing positions, using the hand-off method to transition between speakers, and also presentation time. We went through our presentation twice and made sure that everyone knew what they were going to talk about, for how long, and who they'll be handing it over to. To conclude our meeting, we decided to coordinate our business professional attire and prompted everyone to meet 10-15 minutes early on presentation day.

Our oral presentation went very well. The presentation was informative, engaging, and professional. The transitions throughout were consistent and everyone did an amazing job on

their parts, due to the extensive preparation we had done as a team. Everyone on the team had a deep understanding of their specific parts and it really showed during our presentation. Our team precisely planned each part of the report and presentation, and our hard work paid off. Overall, our presentation went smoothly because of our detailed planning as a team.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING STATEMENTS



Mohammed Alawami

This project strengthened my understanding of leadership in practice. The people we interviewed have a long history of leading others, and have thus encountered all different types of personalities. Hearing about how these leaders were able to lead others despite their employees being so different helped me understand the nuances of leadership and the importance of understanding your employees. The interviewees also had great advice, such as the importance of discipline and creativity. Hearing about the characteristics of a leader will hopefully help me become a better leader later on in life, and also help me be a better employee when led by others. Further, hearing about how the interviewees handled conflict was incredibly valuable to me. Since dealing with conflict is something I struggle with, hearing them define a framework helped me understand how to deal with future conflicts. Lastly, the structure of the project itself improved my ability to work in large groups. I have very little experience working in such large groups and thus underestimated some of the difficulties, such as scheduling meetings. Now I better understand how to operate in a group with many people.

Jacob Garza

At the beginning stages of the team leadership project, I learned how to connect with people on LinkedIn. It taught me the importance of networking and not being nervous to reach out to people. During the interviews, I was provided with the opportunity to gain insight into the stories of leaders across many different industries. Furthermore, I was able to learn about the work and thought that goes into being a C-Suite leader. Our interviewees effectively described the different ways that you can take the role of a leader. Some chose to be more hands-on and friendly with their coworkers and others chose to be more hands-off with professional relationships with their coworkers. This helped me understand that you do not need to force yourself to be a certain way to be an effective leader, you can just be the best version of yourself and that is the best you can do. When writing the final report I did some research and found studies backing the claims that we had heard from these leaders, further solidifying their validity and effectiveness. During the presentation of our slides, I learned that it is always a group effort. Regardless if you are talking or not, you should always be engaged and looking at the audience. No audience member will be interested if none of the presenters seem interested. I also did not feel nervous about the

presentation, which was something that had never happened before. Presumably, the reason for this was the realization that nerves have never done anything good for me. Getting over my fear of presenting was one of the more important things I have learned throughout this process and will give me a better understanding of being a good leader. Finally, in the last stretch of the project, I also learned from the presentations from other groups. They explained that some of these leaders have had non-traditional routes to the position they are in now. Some people never went to college, some went for a while and then dropped out without completing it, and others have and then decided they did not want to use their degree. In conclusion, this project taught me many things, but the most important was to be yourself. Everyone's path is different, and you are better off being the best version of yourself than you are being a mediocre version of someone else.

Ashrita Gudavalli

Participating in the team leadership project deepened my understanding of effective leadership and its impact on organizational success. Through conducting interviews with seasoned leaders across diverse industries, I gained invaluable insights into the multifaceted nature of leadership and the importance of adaptability in navigating complex team dynamics. These interactions not only exposed me to various leadership styles but also highlighted the significance of empathy and communication in fostering a positive work culture. One key takeaway from the project was the realization that leadership is not bound by a singular approach but rather encompasses a spectrum of styles, each with its own strengths and challenges. This understanding has empowered me to embrace my own unique leadership qualities and recognize the value of authenticity in leading others. Moreover, collaborating with my team members throughout the project provided me with practical experience in effective teamwork, communication, and time management.

Reagan Nguyen

This project gave me the opportunity to learn more about effective leadership and ethics in the business world. Through conducting interviews with successful business leaders, I was able to expand my knowledge of different leadership styles and how they can help someone become successful. I really enjoyed how interactive this project was and how it allowed us to network

and learn more about topics that are important to business majors. Through our interviews, I found it particularly interesting to learn about the interviewees' personal background/experiences and how they got to where they are today. As an undergraduate student who is still in the early stage of my career, it was so inspirational to learn how these leaders built their way to personal and team success through hard work and dedication. Although each interviewee took a different path to get where they are, they all emphasized the importance of strong communication skills and putting your best foot forward. They all offered amazing advice and it was evident that they are truly passionate about their careers and organizations. Additionally, I enjoyed working with my team. Although we all had busy and hectic schedules, we were all able to set some time aside to prioritize the project. This was one of the larger teams I have had to work with, so this project definitely helped me strengthen my time management skills in order to meet the deadlines for my assigned parts. Overall, this project was an amazing opportunity to learn new things regarding leadership and ethics, and collaborate with an amazing hard-working team.

Bonnie Reyes

Throughout the duration of this project, I have gained a clearer understanding of what it means to be a leader and the necessary skills needed to efficiently lead a team through conflict and towards excellence. Two main takeaways I gleaned from the interviews were the necessity of empathy in leadership and the delicate balance required between empathy and maintaining a firm understanding with staff. I now comprehend that leading with empathy and understanding encourages employees to turn to you in times of trouble rather than concealing burdensome news. Additionally, it fosters a positive environment that people eagerly anticipate being part of. Employee morale is crucial for creating a workplace culture that consistently motivates and initiates teamwork. Moreover, I learned that being willing to learn from others is essential for a leader's improvement; adopting an "I know it all" mentality leads to mediocrity and potential failure. Lastly, I gained significant insight into collaborating with others to achieve a common goal. Holding people accountable for their duties is essential within a team, instilling a sense of responsibility and implying potential consequences for neglecting commitments. Understanding that each team member had contrasting schedules made scheduling interviews and group meetings challenging, but I now recognize the importance of staying in touch and efficiently communicating valuable information when not all members can be present. In conclusion, this

project has taught me valuable lessons in leadership dynamics, and I can clearly envision myself applying the skills learned here in future workplace endeavors as an effective contributor.

Garima Talwar

During the process of this project, I felt honored to hear from so many successful leaders and learn from their experience. Personally, I have regarded Sarah Maxson as a mentor for a while now, but interviewing her in a formal manner heavily influenced my perception of her work and I felt like I understood her mannerisms even better than before. I always used to say “I want to be Sarah Maxson when I grow up” and hearing her enthusiasm and personal advice on how to become a better leader really inspired me. I also think that the insights given by the other interviewees were valuable as well, and I think Jeremy Threlkill and Misty Casanova's emphasis on a hands on approach reflects my own approach as well. However, their specific expertise helped me realize how important empathy is in such an approach. While I have always generally felt comfortable presenting to an audience, something I really valued during the presentation was also being able to observe the other presenters and relate my own method to theirs. Their feedback on how to handle messing up, and getting to observe their methods was so useful in understanding what I could do better when I present next. Overall, this process of reaching out professionally, conducting interviews in a formal manner, and presenting our findings helped me grow as a businesswoman, but the content itself improved my understanding of leadership and my confidence in my ability to lead a team.

Samhitha Thalluru

Throughout the team leadership project, I gained invaluable insights into effective leadership, personal development, and teamwork. The process taught me the importance of networking and connecting with professionals on LinkedIn, which allowed me to engage with leaders from diverse industries and learn from their experiences. Conducting interviews with successful business leaders deepened my understanding of various leadership styles, such as hands-on and hands-off approaches, and emphasized the significance of being authentic and true to myself as a leader. One of my biggest takeaways from the interviews is the importance of putting forward my best personality. Sarah Maxson emphasized this advice and I better understood the importance of bringing a confident and vibrant personality to the workplace. While working on the project, I

conducted research that supported the claims made by the interviewees, solidifying their approaches and validating their effectiveness. Presenting the final report and slides taught me how essential it is to engage the audience and collaborate with my team members to deliver a cohesive presentation. I was able to overcome my fear of public speaking, which has boosted my confidence for future presentations. Learning from other groups' presentations also highlighted the varied paths leaders take to achieve success, underscoring the value of pursuing one's own unique journey. The project provided me with a clearer understanding of the skills required to lead a team effectively, particularly the importance of empathy and open communication in fostering a positive work environment and motivating employees. Through collaboration with my team, I honed my time management and coordination skills, navigating different schedules and priorities to complete the project successfully. Ultimately, this experience reinforced the value of being adaptable, accountable, and a dedicated contributor in any team setting, and I look forward to applying these lessons in my future endeavors.

Kaydence Threlkill

Throughout the leadership project, I had the privilege of interviewing experienced CEOs and managers in the business industry. This opportunity provided me with valuable insights into effective leadership and employee motivation. While we briefly covered different leadership styles in class, conducting these interviews allowed me to see how these styles are applied in the workplace. I learned that leadership is not limited by background or experience; anyone can be a leader with the right approach. One thing that I feel like I truly learned is that leaders really do care about their employees. They like to come up with different incentives so they can keep their employees happy and I feel like that's a really nice thing to do as a leader. Being part of a team project taught me the importance of collaboration and time management. We worked together efficiently, recognizing the value of each team member's contribution. Additionally, navigating different schedules taught me the importance of patience and flexibility in teamwork. Additionally, navigating different schedules taught me the importance of patience and flexibility in teamwork. Finally, the presentation aspect of the assignment helped me improve my public speaking skills and overcome my fear of presenting.

GROUP MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS



Mohammed Alawami

- Helped create the interview questions
- Interviewed Jeremy Threlkill and Misty Casanova
- Designed and presented the slides on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators
- Helped edit the powerpoint slides
- Helped write the section on connections to class concepts

Jacob Garza

- Created some interview questions
- Interviewed Jeremy Threlkill
- Designed and presented the slides on Professional Approach and Personal Moral Compass
- Researched and wrote the “Ethics Implemented by Leaders” section of the report
- Referenced the work of a book called “School Psychology Ethics in the Workplace” from the UT Library

Ashrita Gudavalli

- Helped create the interview questions
- Interviewed Sarah Maxson
- Researched, created and presented the slides on Trust & Accountability
- Wrote the “Ethics Introduction” and “Trust and Accountability” section of the report
- Retouched the presentation slides design
- Added and formatted references on the report

Bonnie Reyes

- Interviewed Jeremy Threlkill, Misty Casanova, and Sarah Maxson
- Created and presented the slides on Leadership Characteristics
- Wrote the “Leadership Characteristics” section of the report
- Helped design presentation slides outline

- Created the “Table of Contents” and cover page on report
- Added powerpoint slides to report

Reagan Nguyen

- Helped create interview questions
- Interviewed Misty Casanova and Sarah Maxson, took notes during both interviews
- Created and presented Introduction, Agenda, and Key Takeaway slides
- Wrote the “Executive Summary”, “Introduction”, “Conclusion”, and “Oral Presentation Group Summary” sections of the report
- Helped design presentation slides outline and order of presentation
- Edited the presentation slides to make sure it was all uniform

Garima Talwar

- Interviewed Sarah Maxson and Misty Casanova
- Researched, created and presented the slide on the concept of Happy Workplace
- Reached out, confirmed interview, created slide, and presented about Sarah Maxson
- Wrote the “Misty Casanova” and “Happy Workplace” sections of the paper

Samhitha Thalluru

- Helped create the interview questions
- Interviewed Sarah Maxson
- Researched, created and presented the slides on Leadership in practice
- Researched types of leadership styles and identified styles to associate to the interviewees
- Wrote the “Advice for Future Leaders” and “Styles of Leadership” sections of the report
- Made the Leadership in Practice and Styles of Leadership slides
- Added and formatted references on the report

Kaydence Thraillkill

- Helped create interview questions
- Interviewed Jeremy Thraillkill and Misty Casanova
- Created and presented Jeremy’s and Misty’s interview slides

- Formatted the appendix
- Wrote the interviewee background and interviewee summary for Jeremy and Misty
- Reached out to two interviewees and confirmed our meetings with them