

# ETHICS

## Module 1 : Ethical Leadership

Facilitator : Dr. Thomas Buabeng



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# Session Overview

This module looks at ethical behavior in organizations and in society. It aims at equipping participants to:

- Acquire the tools that enable ethical decision-making and behavior under all foreseeable conditions.
- Gain the opportunity for the individual to explore ethical reasoning and decision-making in real life conditions.
- Gain the ability to make ethical choices when faced with ethical dilemmas.



# Session Outline

Three topics are covered in this session, namely:

- 1) Understanding ethical leadership
- 2) Importance of ethical leadership
- 3) Practicing ethical leadership



Topic One

# DEFINING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP



# What is ethical leadership?

1) Lets reflect on the scenario below:

You're the director of a community-based human services organization that includes branches in several towns. Your source of funding is having budget crisis which is threatening to reduce your funding by 30%. The head of the funding agency suggests to you that you simply close down a couple of branches. That means both laying off dedicated staff members and denying services to the communities and groups of people that have come to rely on you and your services. Perhaps more important, it means deciding among several communities, to all of which you've made a commitment. How do you handle the situation? This is an ethical question.



# What is ethical leadership?

- ❑ Leaders of organizations, initiatives, and institutions as well as political leaders face ethical questions nearly every day, and have to make decisions.
- ❑ The decisions they make, as well as the ways by which they make those decisions, determine whether or not they are ethical leaders.
- ❑ Whether you direct a small organization, are in charge of a group in a larger organization, head a large agency or institution, or simply sometimes take an informal leadership role in your daily life, you cannot ignore the issue of ethical leadership.



# CONCEPTS IN LEADERSHIP

- ❑ Values - Core beliefs that guide actions.
- ❑ Morals – Customs, traditions, and beliefs that are reflected in personal convictions about right and wrong.
- ❑ Ethics - Standards of conduct. Ethiko (Greek) – habit. Two dimensions -prudence (right) and virtue (good).
- ❑ Ethics are the standards of right and wrong that influence behavior
  - ❑ Right behavior is considered ethical
  - ❑ Wrong behavior is considered unethical

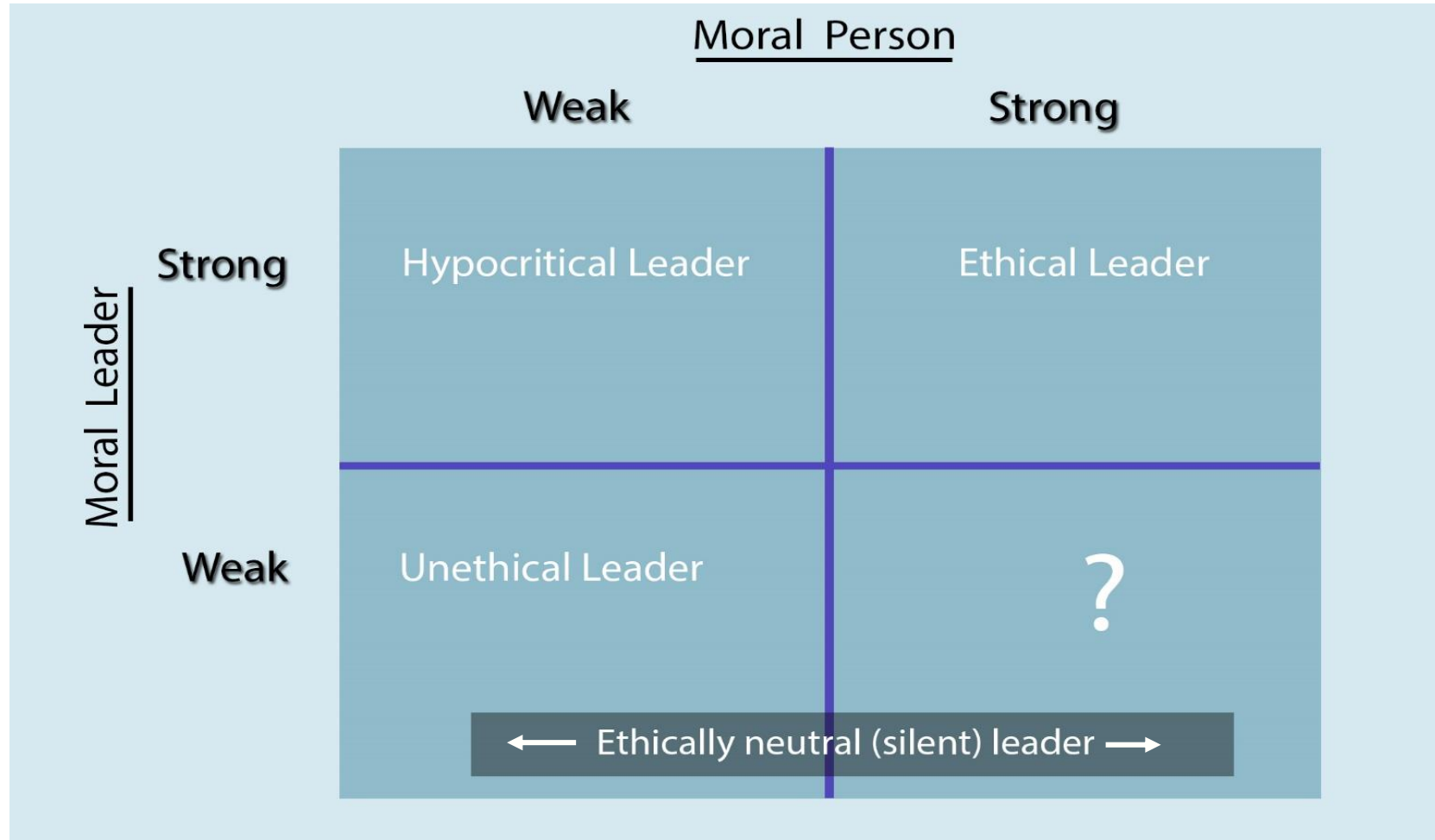


# Elements of Ethical Leadership

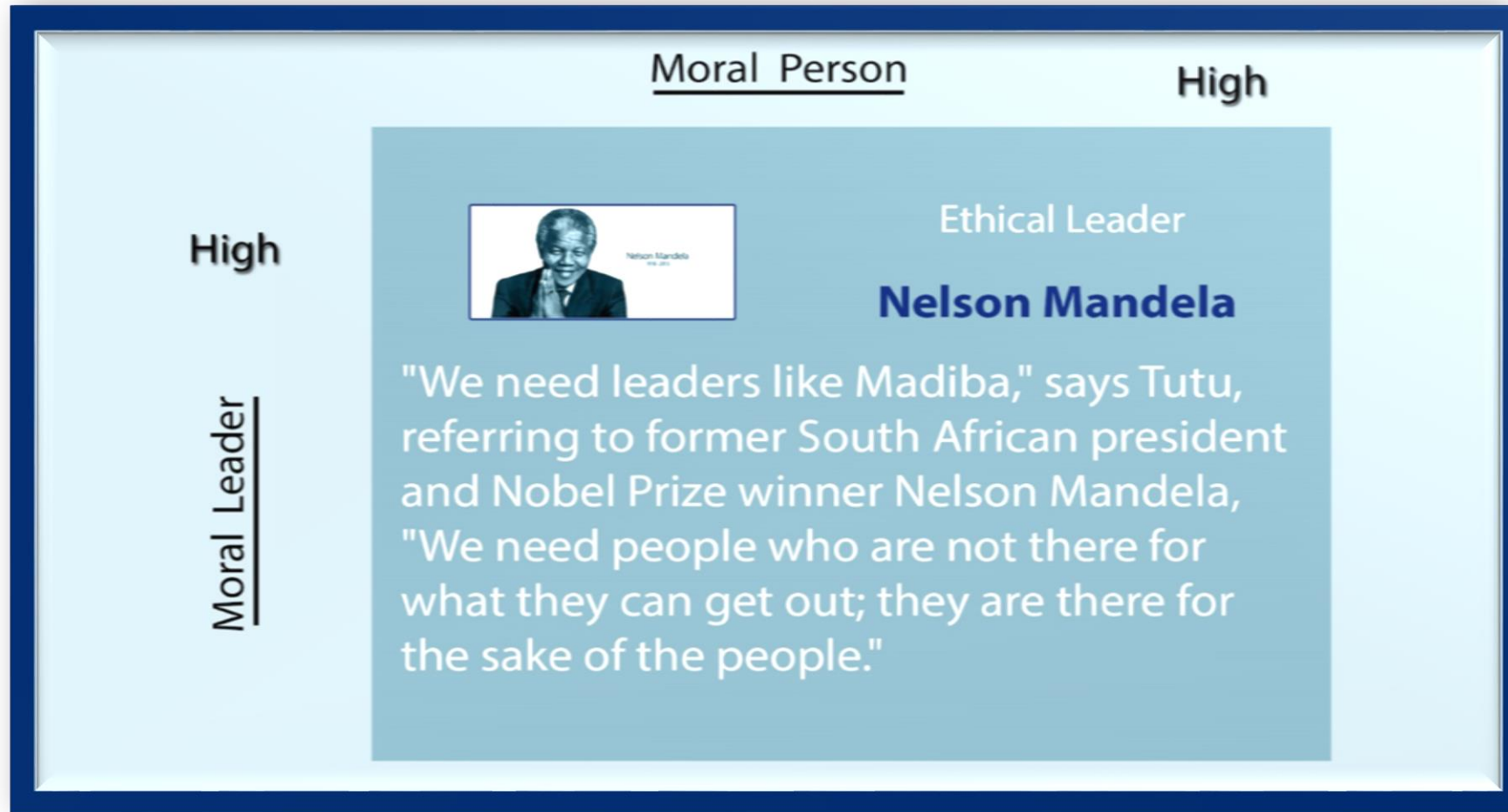
- ❑ Ethical leadership involves both *acting* and *leading* ethically all the time.
- ❑ First, ethical leaders must act and make decisions ethically, and secondly, ethical leaders must also lead ethically – in the ways they treat people in everyday interaction, in their attitudes, in the ways they encourage, and in the directions in which they perform their leadership roles.
- ❑ Ethical leadership is both visible and invisible.
  - ❑ The visible part is in the way the leader works with and treats others, in his behavior in public, in his statements and his actions.
  - ❑ The invisible aspects lie in the leader's character, in his decision-making process, in his mindset, in the set of values and principles on which he draws, and in his courage to make ethical decisions in tough situations.



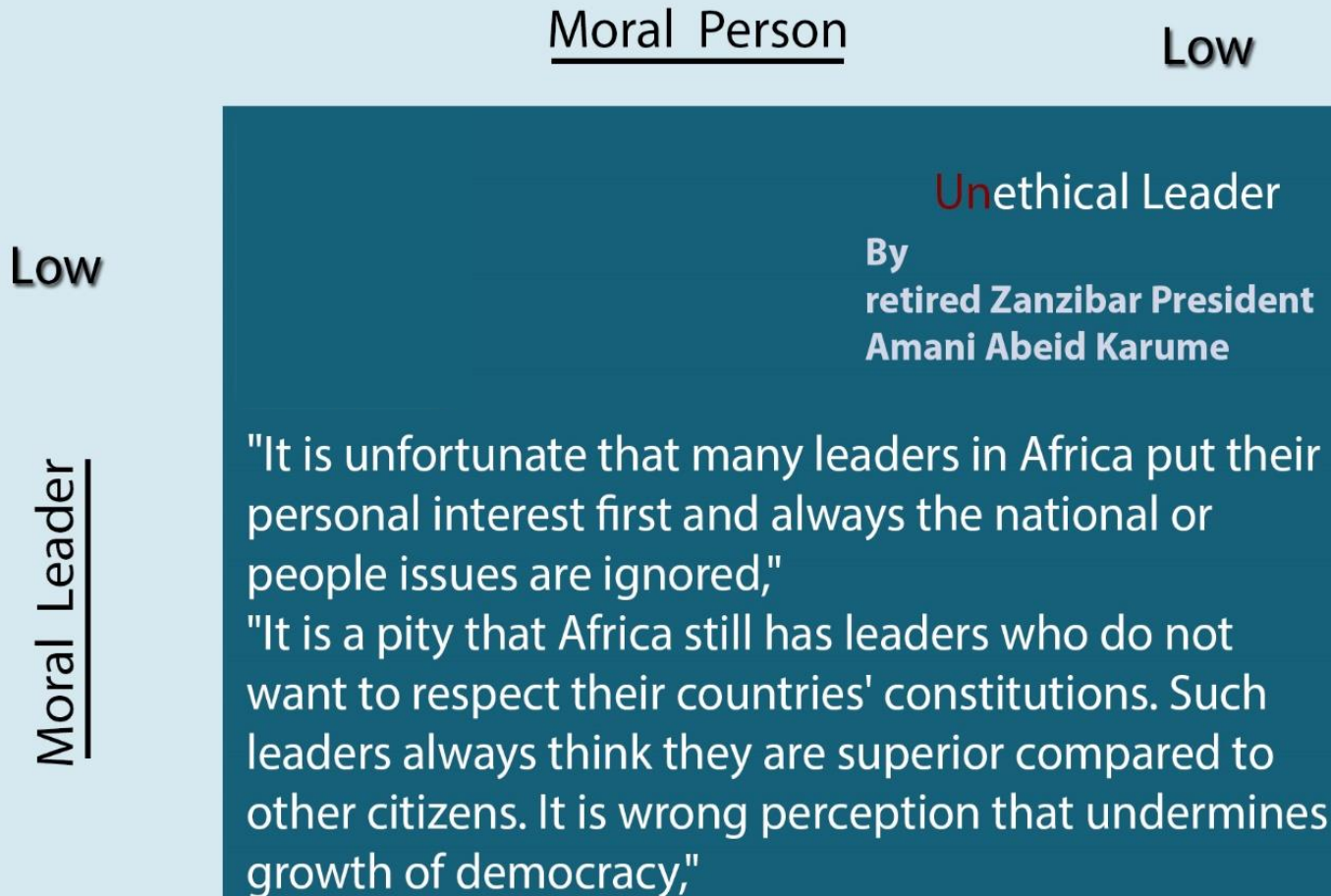
# Ethical Leadership Reputation Matrix



# Ethical Leadership Example



# Unethical Leadership Example

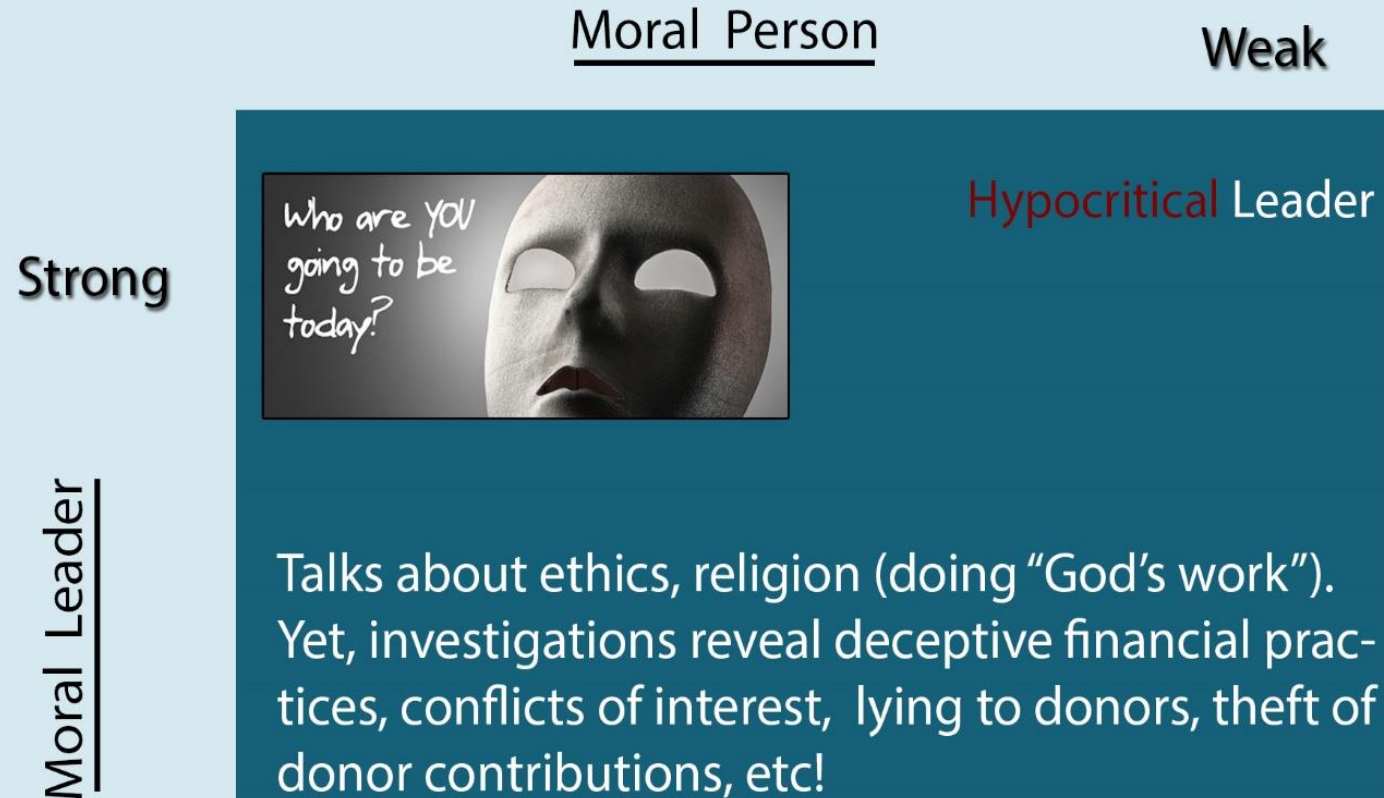


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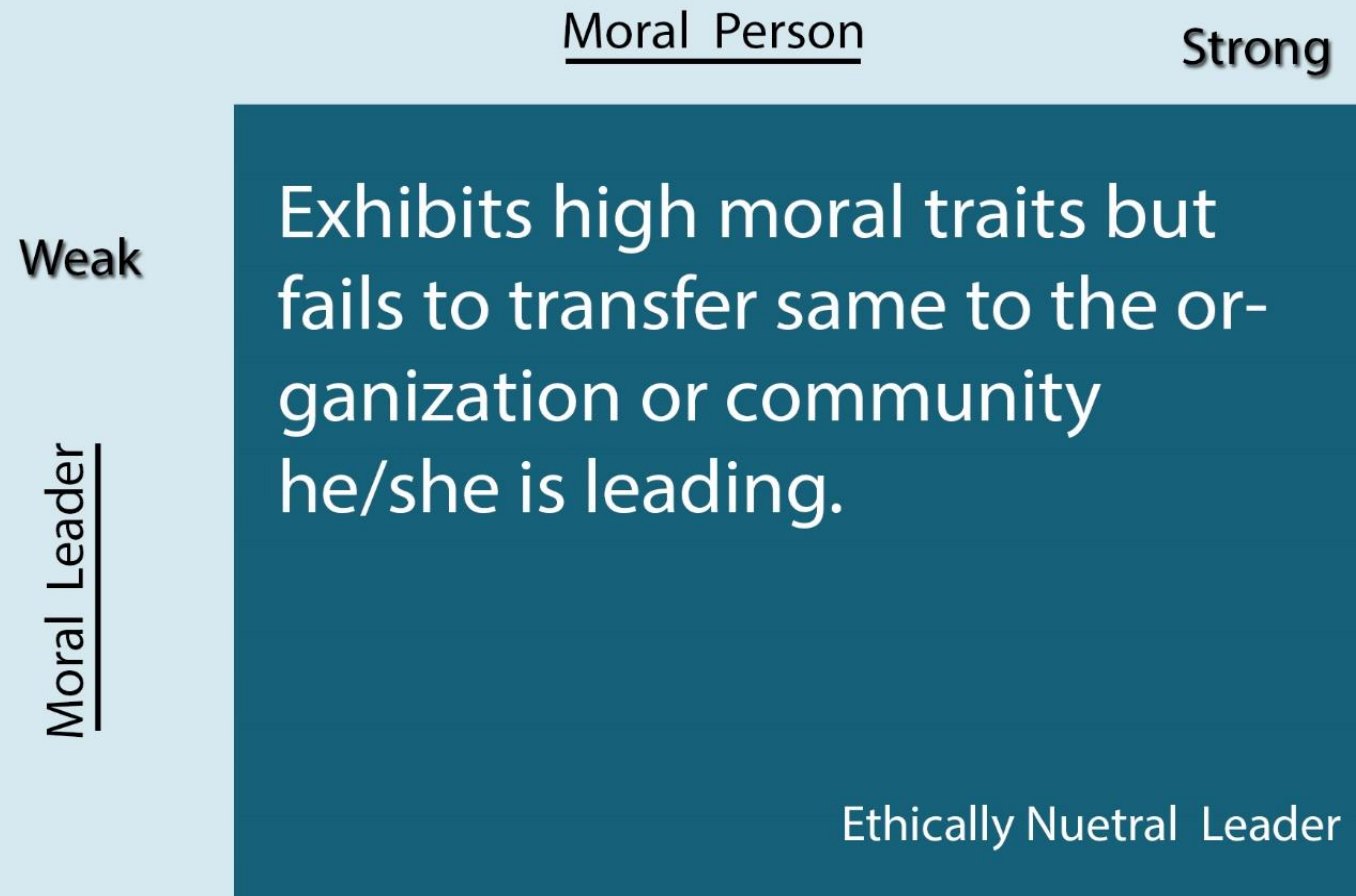


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# Hypocritical Leadership Example



# Ethically Neutral Leadership Example



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# Summary

- ❑ To be perceived as an ethical leader, must be a visibly ethical person and an ethical leader with a consistent message

## 1) Being a moral person alone is insufficient

- ❑ Executives are distant from most employees and, without “moral management,” bottom line messages can overwhelm all others.



## 2) Being a moral manager is insufficient

- ❑ Moral leader (proactive words and actions) gain legitimacy only if employees believe the exec is a principled, caring person who means what s/he says (counters cynicism)

Topic Two

# THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP



# Why practice ethical leadership?

## 1) As a role model who transfers ethical behavior to the organization or community.

- ☐ Leaders are role models – to ensure that your organization or community and those who work in it behave ethically, the leader must model ethical behavior.

## 2) Ethical leadership builds trust. Leadership –is based on trust.

- ☐ People will follow an ethical leader because they know they can trust him to do the right thing as he sees it.



# Why practice ethical leadership?

## **3) Ethical leadership allows you to occupy the moral high among competitors**

☐ You can look very small in comparison if your ethical standards are not up to theirs, discrediting your cause and alienating your allies.

## **4) Ethical leadership is simply the right way to go.**

☐ Everyone has an obligation to themselves, to their organization, and to society to develop a coherent ethical system that seeks to make the world a better place. Leaders, have a particular obligation in this respect.

## **5) Ethical leadership affords self-respect.**

☐ Because you know that you consistently consider the ethics of your decisions, actions, and interactions, you can sleep at night and face yourself in the morning without questioning your own integrity.

# Why practice ethical leadership?

**6) Ethical leadership brings credibility, respect and integrity, both for you and the organization.**

**7) Ethical leadership attract collaboration.**

- ☐ Other leaders and organizations will be much more willing to collaborate with you if they know that you'll always deal with them ethically.

**8) Ethical leadership creates a good climate and high performance within the organization.**

- ☐ If everyone in the organization knows that power will be fairly shared, that they'll be dealt with respectfully, and that the organization as a whole will operate ethically in the community, they're likely to feel more secure, and to be dedicated to the organization.

# Why practice ethical leadership?

**As a role model**

**builds trust**

**affords self-respect**

**brings credibility,  
respect and integrity**

**attract collaboration**

**Increase Performance**

Application

# THE AFRICAN STORY



# Examples from African Countries

- ❑ Watch the video from the site below and outline 5 traits to suggest ethical leadership in the people in the video as well as those who were merely mentioned as examples.
- ❑ <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/south2north/2013/11/what-ethical-leadership-201311272134694981>.



Topic Three

# GENERAL GUIDELINE TO ETHICAL LEADERSHIP



# How to practice ethical leadership

- ❑ In the same way as most people were not born leaders, but learn to be so through experience, discipline and hard work; people – whether ethical or not can learn to practice ethical leadership over time.
- ❑ The next slides present a suggested tool box for practicing ethical leadership:



# Ethical leadership tool box

- 1) Ethical leadership requires a clear and coherent ethical framework on which the leader can draw in making decisions and taking action.
  - ❑ That doesn't mean that your personal history has to include a lot of instruction in ethics, or even role models who demonstrated highly ethical behavior. Whereas to some people, ethical standards arise in opposition to what they have been socialized into, others grow out of cultural or religious teaching, or out of academic learning in such areas as philosophy, history, psychology, or literature.
- 2) Your ethical framework should agree with the ethical framework, vision, and mission of the organization or initiative.



# Ethical leadership tool box

## 3) Ethics should be a topic of discussion

- ☐ Both the ethics of an organization and that everyone in it should be regularly discussed by all concerned. Everyone's ethical assumptions, should be open to questioning, and everyone should be willing to hear that questioning.

## 4) Ethics should be out in the open

- ☐ You should be able and willing to explain your ethical framework and your ethical decisions, and to stand by them because you have a responsibility to stand up for what you believe in, not just to talk about it.

## 5) Ethical thought must be connected to action.

## 6) Ethical leadership is a shared process.

- ☐ Everyone in an organization or community should have the chance to exercise it – and to follow through with exercising it – when appropriate.

# Some Basic Do's and Don'ts

- ☐ Put the good of the organization and the general good before your own interests.
- ☐ Encourage the discussion of ethics in general and of the ethical choices involved in specific situations/ decisions as part of the organizational culture.
- ☐ Institutionalize ways for people to question your authority.
- ☐ Don't take yourself too seriously – some sense of humor is ideal.
- ☐ Consider the consequences of your decisions on others to minimize harm.
- ☐ Treat everyone (organizations) with fairness, honesty, and respect all the times
- ☐ Treat other organizations in the same way you treat other people – with fairness, honesty, and respect.



# Some Basic Do's and Don'ts

- ☐ Collaborate with inside and outside the organization.
- ☐ Communicate
- ☐ Work to become increasingly culturally and interpersonally competent.
- ☐ Take cultural sensitivity and cultural competence seriously.
- ☐ Work to be inclusive.
- ☐ Be serious with your leadership responsibility, and be accountable for it.
- ☐ Constantly re-examine your ethics and strive to increase your competence.
- ☐ Don't outstay your usefulness.



# Session Recap

Three topics were covered in this session,

- 1) Understanding ethical leadership
- 2) Importance of ethical leadership
- 3) Practicing ethical leadership



# Practice Exercise

- ☐ Think of a time in one of your past positions when you needed to make a difficult decision that had ethical implications...think of a time that you were challenged ethically. What did you do?
- ☐ Describe your personal experiences by which leadership in your organization conveyed to staff that ethics/ethical behavior is a high priority?
- ☐ With reference to Ghana and any African country, how would you describe the management of ethics in those countries and make recommendations?



# Reading List

- ❑ Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 97(2), 117-134.
- ❑ Ciulla, J. B. (2013). *Leadership ethics*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- ❑ Lewis, C. W., & Gilman, S. C. (2005). *The ethics challenge in public service: a problem-solving guide*. John Wiley & Sons.
- ❑ Shah, A. (Ed.). (2007). *Performance accountability and combating corruption*. World Bank Publications.