

**Manhood Conference**

**Topic: *Good Work***

**By**

**Deacon Odell L. Brown, CIA, CPA, PHR**

## Some Prevailing Questions



# Your Current Reality (Work Environment)

It is a real challenge being a Christian in my work environment because there is so much (check all that apply)...

- \_\_\_ Loss of self-identity
- \_\_\_ Outdated rules, policies
- \_\_\_ Unjust compensation
- \_\_\_ Unrealistic goals
- \_\_\_ Dead-end job
- \_\_\_ Dehumanizing bureaucracy
- \_\_\_ Unethical behavior; corruption
- \_\_\_ Insufficient training
- \_\_\_ Unclear directions
- \_\_\_ Stress
- \_\_\_ Meaningless work
- \_\_\_ Inadequate tools, equipment
- \_\_\_ Sexual immorality
- \_\_\_ Greed
- \_\_\_ Apathy, laziness
- \_\_\_ Rumors, gossip, mess
- \_\_\_ Sense/air of entitlement
- \_\_\_ Violence
- \_\_\_ Disrespect for authority
- \_\_\_ Back stabbing
- \_\_\_ Distrust
- \_\_\_ Poor customer service
- \_\_\_ Arrogance
- \_\_\_ Power grabs
- \_\_\_ Adversarial relationships
- \_\_\_ Profanity
- \_\_\_ Disrespect for others
- \_\_\_ Other
- \_\_\_ None of the above

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## Question:

Do you consider your workplace as a:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Battle field?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Mission field?



**Follow up Question: What armor do you wear to work?**

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## Quiz

### True or False:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ God worked.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Work is a necessary evil.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Work can become an idol god.

### Multiple Choice (circle one):

Work was meant to be....:

- a. Frustrating and exhausting.
- b. Avoided or simply endured.
- c. A gift from God.
- d. None of the above.



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## The Concept of “Work”:

- Originally
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Today



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## Today's Objectives

### Knowledge:

A better understanding of what is “good work”.

### Application:

How to apply that knowledge to the “work” that we do.

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## Knowledge (Some Biblical truths)

1. God is the **standard** of all that is good.
2. God's **works** are good.
3. God's **gifts** are good.
4. God's **commands** are good.
5. **Obedience** to God's **commands** is good.



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## 1. God is the **standard** of all that is good (Ps. 100:5)

- All that He plans, does, creates, commands and approves is good.
- No one is good without qualification but God (Mark 10:18). And Jesus said unto him, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.*
- *God is the norm, judge, and decider of what is good, and man and things are good to the extent that they conform to Him and His will.*

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## Quiz

### True or False?

1. **True**-- God worked.



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## 2. God's **works** are good.

- They reveal His attributes of wisdom and power (**Ps. 104:24-32; Rom. 1:19-20**) and display His glory (**Ps. 19**).
- Step by step as He formed creation, He examined it to prove that it was good (**Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25**), and when He finished it, “God saw everything” including man, “and, behold, it was very good” (**v 31**).
- Sin was originated by man (the creature) not the Creator.
- Sin did not come into existence because God could not do good without causing evil, but because man in his freedom of will caused it to exist.

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## Brief Discussion:

**Question:** What is **work** to you?

- Is it a mere means of making a living to survive in our culture—a necessary evil?
- Is it an avenue to retirement when you can finally start “living?”
- Is it a way to make money in order to buy things you love and live big on the weekends?
- At best, is it a venue for sharing the Gospel with non-Christian co-workers?
- At worst, is it a consequence of the fall, a punishment for human sinfulness?

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## Quiz

### True or False?

2. **False**-- Work is a necessary evil.



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## Commentary:

### Genesis 2: Man was created to **work**.

Genesis 2 tells us that work is a fundamental piece of our humanity—it tells us that we were created to work. Before sin infected the world, ***“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to **work** it and keep it (2:15).”***

Even more stunning is the fact that God Himself worked: ***“And on the seventh day God finished His **work** that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His **work** that He had done (2:2).”*** There is something foundational about work in God’s design of creation.

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## Video: Dr. Myles Munroe



<https://youtu.be/eanZapIHBrA>

(Time Period: 2:50 – 4:05 mark)

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## 3. God's **gifts** are good.

- God's gifts are good because they express His love and mercy, and are for man's good.
- **James 1:17**: Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is not variableness, neither shadow of turning.
- **Matt. 3:45; Luke 6:33; Acts 14:17**: He does good to all men, both the just and unjust.
- **Matt. 7:11**: He gives good gifts in particular to His children.
- **Romans 8:28**: For the Christian: "All things work together for good to them that love God".

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## 4. God's **commands** are good.

- As God's law is a reflection of His holy character, so His commands are a revelation of His moral perfection and perfect will.
- The ideal moral standard of the Bible is to be like God the Father (**Matt. 5:48**), as this has been revealed in the scripture and in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
- Christ came not to destroy the law of God but to fulfill it for our justification, and commended it as a guide for the walk of faith and obedience (**Matt. 5:17-19, 48**).

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## 5. Obedience to God's commands is good.

- Obedience pleases God, is the basis of blessing and answered prayer (1 John 3:22; 5:2-3), and blossoms forth into the performance of those good works for which the Christian has been saved.
- Matt 5:16: *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”.*
- Col. 1:10: That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being faithful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. (fruitful)
- Eph. 2:10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
- 2 Cor. 9:8: And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

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## Multiple Choice (check one):

Work was meant to be:

- a. Frustrating and exhausting.
- b. Avoided or simply endured.
- c. **A gift from God.**
- d. None of the above.



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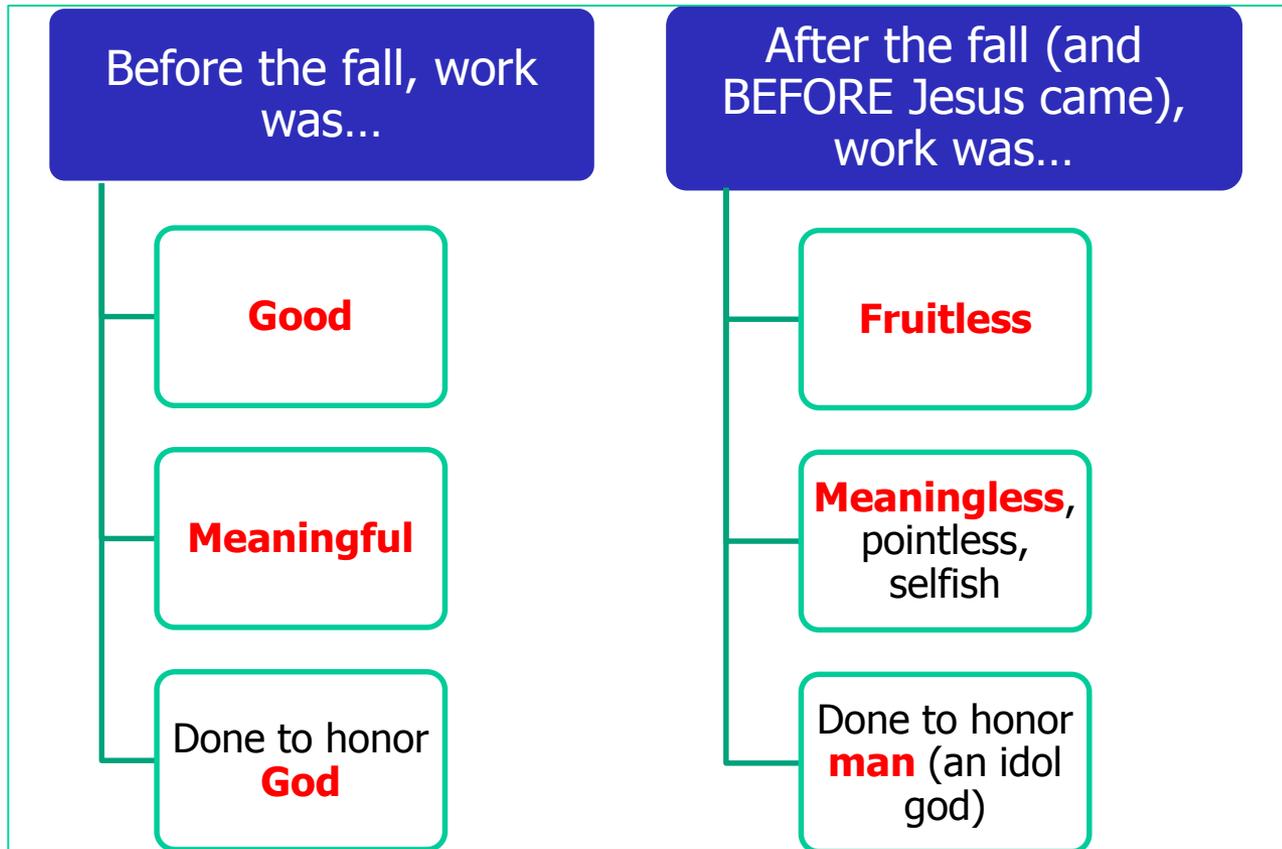
## Commentary:

God created us to work, and to do so with joy. Because of our sin, work is often meaningless and toilsome. With jaded hearts, we view work as either:

- Our giver of meaning and our identity, or
- As a necessary evil

The work of Christ redeems our earthly work. Because Jesus overturned the curse God placed on our work due to our sin, our occupations once again can serve their proper place.

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## Quiz

### True or False?

3. **True--** Work can become an idol god.



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## ANTIOCH FELLOWSHIP MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH IDOLS

**An idol is anything that competes with God for your heart's affection.**

**Pastor Martin Lloyd-Jones has said an idol is usually whatever "rouses and attracts me so easily that I give my time, my attention, my energy, and my money to it effortlessly".**

**Below are 11 questions adapted from David Powlison's book "Seeing with New Eyes" to give you insights that may help you identify possible idols in your life.**

- What do I worry about most?
- What, if I failed or lost it, would cause me to feel that I did not even want to live?
- What do I run to in order to comfort myself when things go bad or get difficult?
- What do I do to cope? What are my release values? What do I need to feel better?
- What oftentimes preoccupies me? What do I always daydream about?
- What makes me feel the most self-worth? Of what am I the proudest? For what do I want to be known?
- What do I often lead with in conversations?
- Early on what do I want to make sure that people know about me?
- What prayer, unanswered, would make me seriously think about turning away from God?
- What do I really want and expect out of life? What do I think would make me happy?
- Whom or what do I trust in for my future?

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**Application:** In what sense can any work be called “good”?

1. When it is done in accordance with God’s revealed standard and will (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
2. When it stems from the right motive, namely, love to others and gratitude to God (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Thes. 1:3; Heb. 6:10).
3. When it is performed with the right aim, that is, the extension of a knowledge of God and His glory (Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 10:35; 1 Peter 2:12).

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## Colossians 3:23-25:

- **Work heartily:** work not only when the boss is watching, and with the motivation his watching supplies, but to work with singleness of heart (i.e., in honest dedication).
- All service, for Christians, is primarily to the Lord, who judges in all fairness and justice.
- The faithful “slave” of Christ receives a son’s portion—the **inheritance**.
- **Reward** is not “pie in the sky”. The real reward is the Father’s approval. (**Well done thy good and faithful servant.**)
- **Receive:** To get back, whether in the present life or at the Day of Judgment. God is here viewed as the guarantor of justice.
- **No respect of persons:** refers to both slave and master.

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## Application, continued:

4. Man must combine love and righteousness in a spirit-filled walk if his acts are to be truly good (**Rom. 8:3-4; Gal. 5:22-23**).
5. Thus, good work is work of love (**Mark 14:3-6; Matt. 5:13-16; Rom. 12:9-21; Rom. 13:8-10**).

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## Meaningful Work (Vocation)– includes...

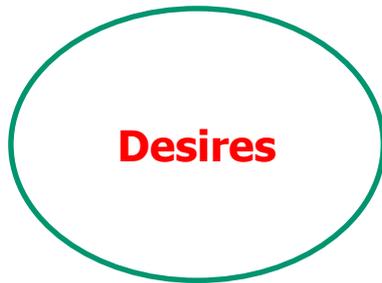
1. Creativity
2. Discipline
3. Excellence
4. Integrity
5. Passion

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## A Guide/Model to Finding Your “Calling” or “Purpose”:

Bottomline: All of us are “called” or “commanded” to represent Christ.

#1



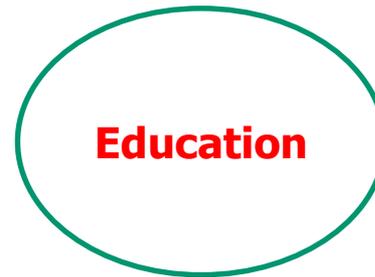
Psalm 37:4

#2



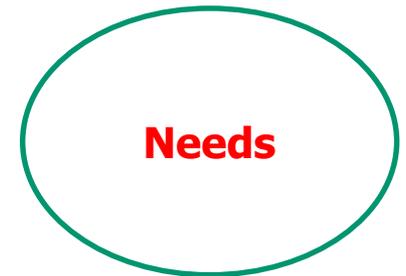
Romans 12: 6 - 8

#3



Matthew 4:28

#4

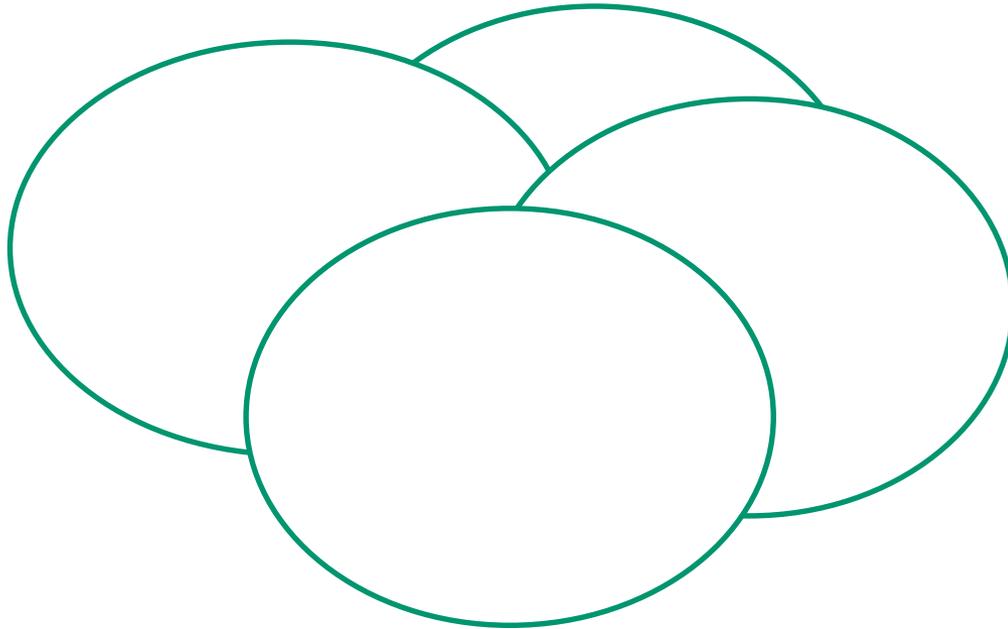


Matthew 25: 34 - 36

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## A Guide/Model to Finding Your “Calling” or “Purpose”:

Our “calling” or “purpose” is where our desires, talents, and education meet the needs of the world in some way.



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Think About ....:

Your Desires, Dreams, Interests	Your Talents, Abilities	Your Education, Training, Experience	Needs Around You

- In God's eyes, the **WAY** you do your work is as important as what your **WORK IS**.
- Your decision every day to serve God **TODAY** is more important than positioning yourself for the right job tomorrow. (Faithful in very little— **Luke 16:10**).

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**Question: Why am I here? (Does your “**calling**” have to be dramatic?)**

**Note: *“You must realize that your fulfillment in life is dependent on your becoming and doing what you were born to be and do. For without purpose, life has no heart”.—Dr. Myles Munroe***

**Note: *“Over a lifetime, serving the common good comes far more from doing each day’s work to the best of your ability in Christ than it does from finding the best job for yourself” ([www.thetheologyofwork.org](http://www.thetheologyofwork.org)).***

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## Commentary:

Though sin severed the intimacy which God shared with Adam and Eve in Eden and though its toxins continue to course through the veins of this world still today, we as humans remain image-bearers of God.

And as God's image-bearers, our work has dignity and meaning because work reflects God's image in us. As God worked in creating a good and dynamic world, so He commissions us as His representatives to work and cultivate this good, even in this sin-marred world.

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## Commentary:

When God created the heavens and the earth, He made order out of that which was chaotic (**Genesis 1:2**)—His activity in the six days of creation narrates His majestic and deliberate creation of a good and beautiful world for humans to inhabit and govern.

Thus, “Whenever we (humans) bring order out of chaos, whenever we draw out creative potential, whenever we elaborate and ‘unfold’ creation beyond where it was when we found it, we are following God’s pattern of creative cultural development.”

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## Commentary:

Even the most mundane job has real meaning because we are living out our identity as God's image-bearers by continuing His work of ordering the world in such a way that all of creation and people in particular, can thrive and flourish.

The restaurant worker, the musician, the bank teller, the janitor, the teacher, the landscaper, the salesman, the beautician, the mechanic, the mortgage consultant, the dentist, and countless more, all reflect the image of God when they do their work heartily and to the Lord (**Colossians 3:23**) because they are continuing God's creative task of making the world a good and orderly place for life to flourish.

# Your Current Reality (Work Environment)

It is a real challenge being a Christian in my work environment because there is so much (check all that apply)...

- \_\_\_ Loss of self-identity
- \_\_\_ Outdated rules, policies
- \_\_\_ Unjust compensation
- \_\_\_ Unrealistic goals
- \_\_\_ Dead-end job
- \_\_\_ Dehumanizing bureaucracy
- \_\_\_ Unethical behavior; corruption
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- \_\_\_ Poor customer service
- \_\_\_ Arrogance
- \_\_\_ Power grabs
- \_\_\_ Adversarial relationships
- \_\_\_ Profanity
- \_\_\_ Disrespect for others
- \_\_\_ Other
- \_\_\_ None of the above

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## **Current Worker:** Questions you might ask yourself...

1. What is my purpose in life?
2. What do I need in order to become the person God has called me to be?
3. What do I desire that will help me gain more enjoyment in life?
4. Can I stay true to my values and still advance in my field?
5. How can I make the difficult choices that must be made in the course of a successful career?

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## Retiree Candidate: Questions you might ask yourself...

1. What things do I want to accomplish with my life before I am unwilling and unable to contribute anymore?
2. What dreams did I have in my first half that are still beckoning? Are new dreams emerging?
3. What things am I most passionate about?
4. What are some of my regrets and what have I learned from them that I can apply to the future?
5. How can I get closer to God?

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## Resources:

1. The Bible (selected scriptures)
2. *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (Timothy Keller)
3. *In Pursuit of Purpose* (Dr. Myles Munroe)
4. *Half Time* (Bob Buford)
5. [www.thetheologyofwork.org](http://www.thetheologyofwork.org)



## MPrints

P.O Box 380426

Duncanville, TX 75138

Cell: 214-212-9374

Email: [odellbrown72@gmail.com](mailto:odellbrown72@gmail.com)

Website: [www.mprints.us](http://www.mprints.us)

# Odell L. Brown (Retired) At-A-Glance



### Career Awareness & Development:

- Targeted Coaching & Mentoring
- Career Transitions Resources
- Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP); see [www.dallasacap.com](http://www.dallasacap.com)
- Adjunct Human Development Professor
- College Internship Program

### Human Resources & Training:

- ADA/Career Transitions Resources
- Business Acumen
- New Leader Onboarding
- HR Workshop
- Emerging Leadership Development Program
- ERP Implementations (PeopleSoft, SAP)
- Instructional Design/Facilitation
- College Relations and Recruiting
- College Internship Program
- Continuing Education for 120 CPAs

### Accounting & Auditing:

- Adjunct Accounting Professor
- VP--Financial & SEC Reporting
- Internal Audit Director
- Public Accounting

### Education & Certifications:

- Harvard Business School (Executive Leadership Development)
- Master's in Professional Counseling
- Master's in Human Resources & Training
- Bachelor's in Accounting
- Certifications: CIA, CPA, PHR (CFE—inactive)

### Past Employers:

- MPrints (Owner)
- Southwest Airlines Co. (Retired)
- North Lake College
- Associates First Capital Corporation
- KPMG LLP



### My Personal & Professional Desires:

- Make a positive difference in the lives of others (**to “Lift As I Climb”**)
- Travel to interesting places
- Meet a lot of interesting people
- Have viable career options (not “jobs”)
- Live comfortably

### Some Keys to Success:

- Strong desire to succeed (passionate)
- Strong work ethic; perseverance
- Purpose-driven goals/life
- Insatiable desire to learn; thirst for knowledge
- Ability to handle confidential information
- Strong attention to detail
- Organized; strong project management skills
- Strong leadership skills; ability to follow the lead of others
- Strong ability to build relationships (network with a purpose)
- Good combination: Technically competent, socially acceptable, politically astute

