



**Health Workforce Initiative**

**Hi-Touch Healthcare: The Critical Six Soft Skills**

*Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module:*

**Integrity**

HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



# Integrity

## Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module

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# Integrity

## Background Information

Integrity can be defined as a dedicated obligation to an accepted code of conduct and way of living. It is not a simple state, but rather a highly complex condition that reveals an individual's attitude towards a precise and accepted way of living. In the workplace, integrity is revealed in the ways in which an individual reacts to his/her professional attitudes and values. Acting with integrity leads to respect in the workplace which can, in turn, lead to mutual understanding and agreement.<sup>i</sup> We speak of attributes such as professional, intellectual, and artistic integrity; however, the most profound sense of the term relates to general character. Philosophers have been particularly concerned with understanding what it means for a person to exhibit integrity throughout life.<sup>ii</sup>

In healthcare, integrity is often seen as a core value in the delivery of ethical care. The person acting and with integrity also demonstrates respect to vocation of healthcare. At the same time, the health care environment is complex. A provider who acts with integrity is able to exclude acts of self-interest, yet, at the same time, may not be able to exclude acts that go against his/her moral beliefs. For example, the nurse who refuses to clean up a soiled patient because s/he finds the task unpleasant is clearly not acting with integrity. On the other hand, refusing to assist with euthanasia because that decision goes against one's personal moral beliefs would not be described as lacking integrity.<sup>iii</sup> Calhoun (1995) states that "acting with integrity should require a reason to do something right, rather than a reason for avoiding something evil."<sup>iv</sup> Tyreman (2011) suggests that integrity remains a necessary quality in society and particularly in healthcare, but that the focus needs to shift from personal integrity (a person's own personal values and beliefs) to respect for the community the individual is representing.



In recent years, the rise of managed care began a steady decline in private physician practices and an equally steady rise in large organizational models of healthcare. As a result, patients are increasingly receiving care from physicians and other health care professionals, such as nurse practitioners and physician’s assistants, organized into collaborative partnerships. This has led to a lack of consistency in “seeing the same practitioner each visit.” As a result, over time different providers see the patient and, with increasing frequency, inconsistencies and confusion over “proper” management can occur. Often, the chain of workers prevents reliable determination of accountability. “No longer can society simply depend on the professionalism of individual physicians to ensure ethical integrity in the health care setting.”<sup>v</sup> In today’s modern health care times, building an ethical infrastructure is imperative to the future of any health care organization.<sup>v</sup> Silverman (2000) suggested that attaining organizational integrity must involve a shared commitment to ensure a strong association between the organization’s mission statement/values and the decisions and behaviors at all levels of the system.<sup>vi</sup>

This module will focus on professional integrity versus one’s personal belief system, as well as methods to differentiate between the two. The current healthcare delivery system and ways to improve both ethics and integrity in any healthcare organization will also be emphasized.



## Training



**Overall Goal:** This training provides participants an understanding of the importance of personal and professional integrity in the healthcare environment as well as activities to reinforce behaviors that depict integrity.

**WIIFM: What's in it for me?** Understanding and practicing professional integrity is imperative for all team members involved in delivery of quality healthcare, regardless of job function or title. This session helps participants understand how his/her own personal and professional integrity can reflect on the organization in which they are employed.

“If we use frequency as a measure, then listening easily qualifies as the most important kind of communication” ... “Studies show that most employees of major corporations in North America spend about 60% of each workday listening to others.”<sup>i</sup>



### **Materials Provided:**

1. Integrity Module PowerPoint
2. Activity # 1 – Your Yes's and No's
3. “Speaker” questions
4. “Responder” questions
5. Activity # 2 – Integrity Self Evaluation
6. “Self-Evaluation” worksheet
7. Activity # 3 – Defining Honesty and Integrity
8. “Integrity and Honesty” worksheet
9. Activity #4 – Game Plan



**Directions for the Trainer:** Activity preparation information is included in this document and/or within the PowerPoint presentation notes. Each PowerPoint slide, as appropriate, includes detailed explanations and instructions for the trainer. As with all Grab-N-Go Modules, you can use it all for a more detailed training, or simply use one or two of the many activities—a la carte style!



## ACTIVITY #1

### Yes's and No's



**Goal:** This activity provides an opportunity to experience how the changes in volume and tone of voice can make a difference in how your yes's and no's are interpreted by the receiver. This interpretation may either positively or negatively affect others perception of your integrity.



**Materials Needed** (Quantities vary by how many in the group):

(Note to trainer—handouts are designed to make multiple copies on each sheet of paper and will, therefore, need to be cut before the training begins.)

- PowerPoint slide # 7.
- One set of instructions per group of two—one copy of “Speaker” questions and one copy of “Responder” questions.
- Pen/pencil for each participant.



#### **Procedures:**

Have participants break into pairs.

- Explain to the entire group that with each pair there will be a speaker and a responder—they can choose who plays which role.
- Pass out a set of instructions to each group. There are separate instructions for the speakers and the responders. Make sure that they don't look at each other's instructions.
- Explain that the speaker will ask a series of four questions, each question will be answered by the responder in different tone and volume of voice (they will ask and respond to each question three different ways).
- After instructions are clear, have the groups begin asking and answering the questions.
- Allow approximately 5-10 minutes for the questions to be completed.
- Bring the entire group back together and have them discuss the following topics:
  - Did you get a different meaning from the answers depending on the tone of their voice? The volume of their voice? Why?
  - Did any of the responses make you feel uncomfortable? Why?



## ACTIVITY #1

### Yes's and No's

- Can you think of a time that your tone of voice or your volume affected how someone may have interpreted the meaning of your statements? Have participants give examples. Would you change that now?
- Why do we make judgements about the person when s/he uses a tone or volume that we, the listener, deem rude, manipulative, or inappropriate?



## ACTIVITY #1

### Yes's and No's

#### **Speaker Questions:**

*Speaker: ask the question, wait for a response, then ask the SAME question a second and third time, giving the Responder a chance to respond each time the question is asked. Then, move to the next question.*

1. You and I both have the day off tomorrow; want to meet for lunch somewhere?
2. Can I borrow money for lunch?
3. I'm so far behind today. Could you help me do a bed bath and bed change in 229 please?
4. What do you think about that patient in 210? Did you hear that she burned herself in a honey oil explosion? Her two-year old was taken away with massive burns. I refuse to take care of her!!! Would you??

*Speaker: ask the question, wait for a response, then ask the SAME question a second and third time, giving the Responder a chance to respond each time the question is asked. Then, move to the next question.*

1. You and I both have the day off tomorrow; want to meet for lunch somewhere?
2. Can I borrow money for lunch?
3. I'm so far behind today. Could you help me do a bed bath and bed change in 229 please?
4. What do you think about that patient in 210? Did you hear that she burned herself in a honey oil explosion? Her two-year-old was taken away with massive burns. I refuse to take care of her!!! Would you??

#### **Responder Questions:**

1. *(first-time response):* No. (Sarcastically and eyes rolling.)  
*(second-time response):* NO!!! (Loudly and angrily.)  
*(third-time response):* No... (Softly and pitifully, as in you feel sorry for the speaker.)



## ACTIVITY #1

### Yes's and No's

2. *(first-time response):* Sure! (Happily with a smile on your face.)
- (second-time response):* Sure... (Sarcastically as in “sure but you never pay me back and you ALWAYS ask me.”)
- (third-time response):* Sure . . . (Softly and quietly, as in “okay, but I really don’t have the money to do that.”)
3. *(first-time response):* No way!! (Loudly and angrily.)
- (second-time response):* No way! (Apologetically, as in “I don’t have time for my work either.”)
- (third-time response):* No way! (Meanly, as in “you never help me out when I ask you.”)
4. *(first-time response):* Yeah! (Loudly, as in she deserves good care like any patient, regardless of their background.)
- (second-time response):* Yeah... (Softly and reluctantly, as in “I guess I would be forced to I would.)
- (third-time response):* Yeah!! (Sarcastically, as in “not a chance!”)



## ACTIVITY #2

### Self-Evaluation



**Goal:** This activity provides an opportunity to discover whether you are a person of integrity in both your personal and professional life.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint slide # 10.
- Enough copies of the “Self-Evaluation” worksheet for each participant.
- Pen/pencil for each participant.



**Procedures:**

- Put slide number 10 on the screen during this self-evaluation.
- Give each participant a “Self-Evaluation” worksheet.
- Have them quietly complete the self-evaluation.
- After approximately 5 minutes, have them share (if they would like) about their responses.
- Some ideas for discussion:
  - Were there differences between their professional and personal lives?
  - Do they know of anyone that consistently acts with integrity? In their personal lives? In their professional lives?
  - Do they know of anyone that consistently acts **without** integrity? In their personal lives? In their professional lives?
- Food for thought: Explain that this self-evaluation is very personal, and that it might be a good idea to repeat this privately at some point and see if the answers are the same.



## ACTIVITY #2

### Self-Evaluation

### Are you a Person of Integrity?

1. **True or False?** I always try to do what is right, even when it is costly or difficult.

Personally \_\_\_\_\_ Professionally \_\_\_\_\_

2. **True or False?** I am true to myself.

Personally \_\_\_\_\_ Professionally \_\_\_\_\_

3. **True or False?** I live up to the highest ethical standards.

Personally \_\_\_\_\_ Professionally \_\_\_\_\_

4. **True or False?** I don't compromise my values by giving in to temptation.

Personally \_\_\_\_\_ Professionally \_\_\_\_\_

5. I think I am/am not a person of integrity because: (circle correct response and explain)

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## ACTIVITY #3

### Defining Integrity and Honesty



**Goal:** This activity provides an opportunity to discuss how each person perceives integrity and honesty and how they may define these terms.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint slide # 12.
- One copy of the “Integrity and Honesty” worksheet per group (see pages 12-13).
- Pen/pencil for each participant.
- Two bags of M&M’s. One bag filled with the M&M’s and the other bag emptied and filled with something else (rocks, marbles, sand, etc....).
- Two clear bowls or containers to pour the contents of each bag into.



**Procedures:**

- Take out the bags of M&M’s and the two containers.
- Ask “When you buy a bag of candy at the grocery store, what do you expect to find in the package? What should it look like?”
- Allow participants to respond and then first pour the bag filled with candy into one bowl. Then pour the second bag filled with another material into the second bowl.
- Ask the participants “Are you surprised by what you see? How would you feel if this actually happened to you after buying a bag of candy?”
- Explain that “Just like this bag of M&M’s, what is on the inside of us needs to match what is on the outside.”
- What we show on the outside because of what we believe on the inside allows our integrity to shine through.
- Discuss that when all healthcare employees within a given facility act with integrity, it demonstrates to the community that the entire organization acts with integrity.
- Have the participants break into groups of three or four.
- Hand out one worksheet to each group and have them discuss and complete the worksheet. (10 minutes.)
- Have a representative from each group present highlights from the group discussion, including definitions for integrity and honesty.



## ACTIVITY #3

### Defining Integrity and Honesty

#### Integrity and Honesty Worksheet

Choose one (or both) of the two quotes below and answer the questions.

1. *“Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people.”* Spencer Johnson, author.

- a. Do you agree with this quote? Why or why not?

- b. What does this quote mean to you?

2. *“Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth. Do the right thing because it is right. These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.”* W. Clement Stone, author.

- a. Do you agree with this quote? Why or why not?

- b. What does this quote mean to you?



## ACTIVITY #3

### Defining Integrity and Honesty

3. How would your group define integrity?

4. How would your group define honesty?

5. What are the differences between the terms and are these differences important in the health care setting? Why or why not?



## ACTIVITY #4

### Game Plan



**Goal:** This activity provides an opportunity to apply what participants have learned in the workshop and to create a next steps plan of action.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint slide # 21.
- Piece of paper and pen/pencil for each participant.



**Procedures:**

(Note to Trainer: Leave slide up while activity is being done.)

- Give each participant a piece of paper and pen/pencil.
- Give participants approximately 5-10 minutes to complete the game plan (use prompt on PowerPoint slide).
- Have participants share desired parts of the game plan and why they felt they were important.
- Discussion points:
  - Was there anything they put on their list that they wouldn't have thought of before this presentation and work?
  - Are there significant differences on your list between integrity in the workplace and integrity in their personal life?
  - Had you ever consciously thought about the integrity of your workplace environment before? If so, are there any examples they would like to share?
  - What, specifically, can your workplace do to promote integrity? How should people be held accountable?



## References

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<sup>1</sup> Toledo-Pereyra, L. H. (2006). Integrity. *Journal of Investigative Surgery*. 19:1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (2013). Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/integrity>

<sup>3</sup> Tyreman, S. (2011). Integrity: is it still relevant to modern healthcare? *Nursing Philosophy*. 12: 107-118.

<sup>4</sup> Calhoun, C. (1995). Standing for Something. *The Journal of Philosophy*. 92(5), 235-260.

<sup>5</sup> Mantel, J. (2015). Ethical Integrity in Health Care Organizations. *Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics*. Fall, 2015, 661-665.

<sup>6</sup> Silverman, H. J., (2000). Organizational Ethics in Healthcare Organizations: Proactively Managing the Ethical Climate to Ensure Organizational Integrity. *HEC Forum*. 12(3):202-215.