

# VICES AND VIRTUES AS APPLIED TO ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

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## VICES

### Pride

Pride is demonstrated by organizations that choose:

- To base their activities on their own passion and perspectives without the benefit of a strategic plan or regard for aligning their mission to market needs - a "we know everything we need to know" perspective.
- Not to collaborate with other organizations to provide enhanced or expanded products and services.

### Lust

Lust is evident when organizations propose to benefit needy client populations, but in fact exist to provide shallow, "do-gooder" gratification for trustees and volunteers. Such organizations provide ample opportunities for trustees and volunteers to "feel good" about their service and/or socializing in lieu of dedicating resources and time for in-depth exploration of clients' needs.

### Gluttony

Organizations with a "scarcity" mentality - where there is never enough money, time, staff, or volunteers to address the need - demonstrate a perverse gluttony. The focus of a gluttonous organization is always on what is not possessed or not available, as if the organization would immediately expend all resources it secures, and more. Such an organization does not consider how to most efficiently and effectively use resources that are available and plan for growth.

### Covetousness (Greed)

Greed is demonstrated by an organization that seeks expansion, not for the sake of the clients it benefits, but for the personal gratification of leadership and the creation of the institution for its own sake.

### Sloth

Inflexible, stagnant organizations that cling to the "status quo" demonstrate sloth. Examples include organizations whose leadership:

- Are eagerly anticipating retirement,
- Will not take action to remove employees/staff or board members who are creating significant dysfunction.

### Envy

Organizations evidence envy when they focus primarily on the competitive aspect of their external relationships rather than identifying and enhancing their core competencies and partnering with other organizations.

### Anger

Organizations that so fervently adhere to and "preach" their message and mission that they perceive those not aligned with them as enemies exhibit anger. Anger prevents the organization from viewing its "opposition" objectively and strategizing about incrementally moving its opposition to another perspective.

## VIRTUES

### Justice

An organization that is intentional about involving the clients it benefits and/or those at its lowest levels of authority in decision-making. Participatory decision-making is based on the principle that all participants have wisdom to offer.

### Prudence

Most organizations understand the importance of demonstrating fiduciary responsibility, especially related to generating profits and/or balancing budgets. However, organizations that go beyond such basic activities to create and use cash flow projections and cost centers and build cash reserves demonstrate prudence.

### Temperance

Temperance is demonstrated in the organization that places high value on planning to thoughtfully move itself toward its goals and generate controlled growth.

### Charity

Charity can be seen in organizations that:

- Hold their mission in highest regard and measure all they endeavor against the fulfillment of it, and
- Seek synergy by freely sharing their expertise and resources through partnering and collaborating

### Fortitude

An organization that does not expect short-term, instant solutions to complex problems, but is willing to work persistently toward long-term solutions demonstrates fortitude.

### Hope

Hope is demonstrated by organizations that seek more effective and efficient ways to fulfill their mission. Such organizations remain hopeful that their vision of the future will come to fruition.

### Faith

Organizations that view challenges as opportunities for gaining new perspective on their mission and programs demonstrate faith in their ability to fulfill the need for which they were created. In addition, organizations that work to benefit their clients and/or community evidence faith in the capacity for change and in the resiliency of the human spirit.

## ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL FOR PHILANTHROPIC FUNDRAISERS

ALTERNATIVES	1	2	3	4
<b>PUBLIC TRUST/VALUES</b>  How does this alternative promote or detract from public philanthropic values?				
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION</b>  How does this alternative promote or detract from the organizational mission?				
<b>PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>  How does this alternative affect long-term relationships with colleagues, donors, volunteers and the public?				
<b>PERSONAL INTEGRITY</b>  In what ways does this alternative help or not help you develop into the sort of person you want to be?				

Adapted from *Ethical Decision-Making in Fund Raising*, Marilyn Fischer, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2000.  
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## **VISION, VALUE, & MISSION STATEMENTS: ESSENTIAL EXPRESSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ASPIRATIONS**

*“Nonprofits need to spend time and effort evaluating and articulating their aspirations. Aspirations inspire staff, volunteers, and donors. They define what an organization will do – and won’t do. They help define an organization’s overall approach and set priorities for action. They are a basis for strategy, which in turn defines the necessary organizational skills that can be delivered only with the proper design of human resources, systems, and organizational structure. In short, aspirations drive everything. According to our findings, the organizations that made the greatest gains in social impact were those which tackled high-level questions of mission, vision, and goals.”*

(From The McKinsey & Company report, Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations, prepared for Venture Philanthropy Partners in 2001. [www.venturephilanthropypartners.org](http://www.venturephilanthropypartners.org))

### **Vision**

An organization’s vision reflects a bold and inspiring view of the future. The vision:

- Defines the organization’s ultimate motivation, its dreams, and its image of a desired future.
- Describes the ideal situation if the organization could fulfill its utmost wish.
- Is clear, specific, compelling, and understanding of what the organization aspires to become or achieve.
- Is a detailed sense of the future the organization is trying to create.
- Produces a commonality of purpose and a sense of excitement.
- Conveys a sense of change that will be wrought in the world through the accomplishment of the organization’s strategic goals.
- Provides a vivid sense of what the organization will look like, what it will do, and how it will be regarded in the future.

Like the mission, the vision is also broadly held within the organization by Board members, staff, and volunteers and is consistently used to direct actions and set priorities. A clear vision is fundamentally important to planning for the future, building community support, and achieving a successful funds development program.

### **Values**

Every great organization is characterized by dual actions: preserve the core and stimulate progress. On the one hand it is guided by a set of core values and fundamental purpose – which change little or not at all over time – and on the other hand it stimulates progress – change, improvement, innovation, renewal – in all that is not part of the core values and purpose. Core values and core purpose in enduring great organizations remain fixed while their operating practices, cultural norms, strategies, tactics, processes, structures, and methods continually change in response to changing realities.

Indeed, the great paradox of change is that the organizations that best adapt to a changing world first and foremost know what should *not* change; they have a fixed anchor of guiding principles around which they can more easily change everything else. They know the difference between what is sacred and what is not, between what should never change and what should be always open for change, between “what we stand for” and “how we do things.”







