

Honesty is the Best Policy

Teachers and my dear students, Good Morning!

It has been a while since the last Day 6 playground assembly. Thank God for giving us this warm and fine morning in spring. To start with, I like to share with you a short story.

{ Source: The Seed, <http://www.citehr.com/47995-seed-honesty-best-policy.html> }

A successful businessman was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over his business. Instead of choosing one of his directors or his children, he decided to do something different.

He called all the young executives in his company together.

"It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO," he said. "I have decided to choose one of you."

The young executives were shocked, but the boss continued. "I am going to give each one of you a seed today - a very special seed. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next CEO."

Jim was one of the young executives. Like the others, he received a seed.

Jim went home and excitedly, told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and other planting materials. They carefully planted the seed.

Every day, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed every day, but nothing happened.

Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt very upset. Jim wondered what had gone wrong. Six months went by - still nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed.

Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however. He just kept watering and fertilizing the soil – he worked very hard to make the seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection. Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick at his stomach. It was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right.

He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed. A few felt sorry for him!

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives. Jim just tried to hide in the back.

"Oh, its wonderful, what great plants, trees, and flowers you have grown," said the CEO.

"Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered the financial director to bring him to the front.

Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!"

When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed. Jim told him the story.

The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim, and then announced to the young executives, "Here is your next Chief Executive! His name is Jim!"

Jim couldn't believe it. "Jim couldn't even grow his seed. How could he be the new CEO?" The others said.

Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead - it was not possible for them to grow. All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees and plants and flowers.

"When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive!"

The story ends here.

What do you think about the story? You may think that it's a fairy tale in the modern time? It won't happen in our real life. Some of you may think that the theme of the story --- HONESTY is a bit outdated. My dear students please don't think this way. In a newly published book: *Leadership in the Era of Economic Uncertainty: The New Rules for Getting the Right Things Done in Difficult Times*, the author thinks that it's **important for leaders not to give false assurance**. A good leader should sort all the confusing information from the outside world and give an intellectual honest viewpoint to his subordinates. "There [should be] no sugar coating, extraordinary pessimism nor extraordinary optimism – [a leader] has to build credibility in the eyes of [his] people."

A career guidance counsellor advises his clients that “in interviews, honesty is still the best policy.” He remarks that “when an interviewer asks you something to which you don't know the answer, it's much better to admit it than to pretend otherwise. Also, misrepresenting yourself on your résumé in any way is a big mistake, not just because it will come back to haunt you, but simply because it's wrong.”

The society of mankind only works on the mutual trust of people. Trust builds on honesty. The policy of honesty works on the principle of give and take. If we are honest to others, only then can we expect others to be honest to us. The virtue of honesty is never an out-fashioned concept. I believe that, on the contrary, honesty is the right medicine to heal the world in this difficult time and help to take mankind forward.

The famous English poet, Alexander Pope, has expressed that “an honest man is the noblest work of God”. To end my sharing this morning, I pray that all of you act honestly and devote yourself to make this world better in times of widespread greediness, selfishness, and corruption. Thanks for your attention and may God bless you always.

Reference:

- (1) <http://literarybonanza.blogspot.com/2008/09/honesty-still-best-policy.html>
- (2) <http://www.citehr.com/47995-seed-honesty-best-policy.html>