

Defining Principles of the Authentic Business Person

By Frenetta Tate

John Maxwell said, *“Image is what people think we are; integrity is what we really are.”* Authenticity is crucial to the sustainability of your business. The actions and decisions of business persons, at almost every level of management, are more scrutinized now more than ever. The uncovering of abuses of power and unethical behavior over the past seven years has made ‘authenticity’ a highly admired characteristic in business.

Authentic business persons inspire those around them, bringing people of all backgrounds and statuses together around a commonality of values and goals. In addition, they tend to motivate others to create value for everyone involved. It would be to your advantage to incorporate values that speak to the principles of authenticity in your business operations, internally towards your employees and externally towards your clients.

In a world where lies are often more appealing than truth; Honesty, fairness and ethical behavior are still highly valued. An authentic business person is trustworthy, genuine, and committed to the truth. They know who they are, have confidence in what they stand for and consciously choose to act with integrity in all of their business dealings. While there are many qualities of an authentic person; six will be highlighted here:

The Authentic Business Person:

1. Embraces Growth. The authentic business person understands that change is inevitable, but Growth, learning, developing and evolving is crucial and mandatory. Authentic business persons seek to be a better person and adjusting to life’s challenges and conditions with a positive outlook that influences others.

2. Operates in Truth. As an authentic business person grows, he or she becomes more honest with themselves and all those they make contact with, thereby developing a higher level of trust and kindness towards others and in their relationships with others.

3. Seeks Wisdom. An authentic business person has the insight to look at situations objectively, gain clarity when needed and make informed decisions, coupling knowledge with wisdom.

4. Takes Initiative. Albert Schweitzer said, *“Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.”* An authentic business person is a passionate go-getter. If something needs to be done, they get it done; leading by example and showing the way for those coming after them. They are servant persons with willing hearts and action-oriented thoughts.

5. Encourages Diversity. An authentic business person understands the value of diversity and therefore fosters diverse interaction among others and seeks to create an environment that spurs innovation and positive conflict resolution.

6. Practices Integrity. An authentic business person integrates his or her life with the highest levels of ethics and practices integrity in relationships with others, with clients, vendors and business partners.

It is noble for business persons to desire making an indelible impact in their organization, influence their employees and have solid relationships with business clients but what is of most importance is that persons are authentic in their business, trustworthy in their client’s eyes and ethical in their dealings. By doing this, they will be great persons and make an impact worth remembering. These six defining principles can serve as a guide as you grow in your ability and desire to lead with authenticity.