

Socially Responsible Leadership

A socially responsible student leader is not only concerned about what he does, but *how* he does it. As a leader you have the opportunity, and ultimately the responsibility, to add value to your campus and greater communities by holding yourself and others accountable for how your endeavors affect the people, places, and world around you. Although it is voluntary, it is quickly becoming the expectation of leaders to model the way for ethical and responsible leadership in the world.

Carving Out Your Character

This leadership position you've taken on requires strength—strength of will, strength of convictions and, most importantly, strength of character. And your character is who you are and how you act, even when no one is looking.

A socially responsible leader works towards building a character that is...

Consistent
Humane
Aware
Responsive
Accountable
Culturally sensitive
Tuned in
Ethical
Respectful

Carve out your character carefully. It's the essence of who you are.

Operating Ethically

As a socially responsible leader you are being asked to “model the way.” In many ways this requires you to consider how your personal ethics intersect with your responsibilities as a leader. Consider these five principles as you reflect on your own leadership ethics:

1. Ethical leaders do not transmit intentionally deceptive or harmful messages.
2. Ethical leaders place concern for others above concern for personal gain.
3. Ethical leaders respect the opinions and attitudes of others.



...that good intentions alone just don't cut it. You may have the best of intentions yet, if you don't act, you are not living up to the expectations and standards of a responsible student leader.

4. Ethical leaders are consistent in their treatment of others regardless of gender, ethnic, or social background.
5. Ethical leaders follow the “golden rule of leadership” by demonstrating a willingness to meet the expectations required of followers.

Responsibility for Others

One part of social responsibility is being responsible for people—those you work with, serve in your role, or haven't even met. A socially responsible leader treats all people with respect and works to help the marginalized matter by:

- Responding to and eliminating biased statements
- Refusing to join in harmful jokes or behaviors
- Genuinely caring about the needs and wants of colleagues and community members
- Holding organizations and people accountable for irresponsible and unethical behaviors toward others

Community Contributions

Contributing positively to your community—how can you do that? Take some time to reflect on how you can do the following ...

- ✓ Keep a global perspective
- ✓ Create a positive workplace
- ✓ Promote diversity
- ✓ Keep students' wellness needs in mind
- ✓ Focus on sustainability

Once you've answered these types of questions, you can meld your answers into an organizational mission statement. It shows what you stand for!