

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

I hope you are enjoying the more temperate weather we seem to be having.

In this issue, our **Self-Development** column discusses the important matter of organizational values, and how those values impact the culture of an institution.

The **Elephant in the Room** column addresses a very troubling matter that took place on the campus of New York University recently, and involved a former First Daughter.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I share some musings about a characteristic that truly makes us human.

And the **World of Words** column treats you to yet another gem in our amazing English language.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Shared Values

*"Organizations have to have values. But so do people.
To be effective in an organization, one's own values
must be compatible with the organization's values.
They do not have to be the same.
But they must be close enough so that they can coexist."*
Peter Drucker

The first job in your career can sometimes be a game-changer, putting you on the right path for a productive future. I was lucky in that my first job out of college was working for a man who went on to become one of the most respected household names in the field of leadership and human potential -- **Stephen R. Covey**. He wasn't famous when I was first hired, having just left academia to launch his boutique management consulting firm. But once his book, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, was published in 1989, it became the best-selling business

book of all time. I was lucky to have been in Covey's orbit to learn some important lessons before his notoriety made him less accessible.

One thing I learned from Covey was an adaptation of a model I had previously read about in the very notable book, *In Search of Excellence* by **Tom Peters** and **Robert Waterman**, both principals at McKinsey & Co. *In Search of Excellence* had a model they referred to as the 7S model, which provided savvy management consultants a roadmap for where to analyze an organization, each of the 7 elements of the model using a word that begins with the letter S. There were the hard-S items, (hard, as in concrete, measurable), which included Strategy, Structure, and Systems. There were the soft-S items (soft, as in more qualitative, less easily measured) such as Style, Staff, and Skills. Covey added two additional items, Self, and Stream (the latter by which he meant, the environment, things outside the organization that could have an impact -- the competition, new technological innovations, disease, terrorism, natural disasters, the economy, politics, etc.) Thus, Covey's version was called the 9S model.

But at the heart of both models was something called ***Shared Values***.

Whether we are talking about a small business, a sole proprietorship, a large corporation, a non-profit, a paramilitary organization, a church, a hospital, or a symphony orchestra, all such entities will benefit greatly if they have a clearly defined set of values and those values are clearly understood and supported by the entire employee population.

Values are those things we hold most supreme. We put them on a pedestal. They reflect our deepest beliefs. We seek to emulate them consistently. And as **Peter Drucker** so eloquently said in the quote at the header of this column, they must be something that the employees can support and commit to.

Organizational values must be selected very carefully. They define the firm's character. And they cannot merely be placed on a plaque and then affixed to the wall and forgotten about. They must be talked about frequently -- very frequently. Furthermore, the specific values an organization embraces as their core values must be few in number, for each time an additional value is added to the mix, there is a slight dilution of the unique character of the organization. 3 values is a potent mix precisely because of the focus derived from their limited number. Organizations that embrace, say, 5 values have made their organizational culture somewhat less concentrated. An organization that embraces a very large number of values, say 10 or more, has so watered down their uniqueness that the maxim "He who stands for everything stands for nothing," can be said to apply.



Finally, any employees who cannot embrace and support the organization's governing values have to be cut loose -- regardless of how well they perform at their jobs. Even the top sales professional, the top R&D genius, or the top general manager who does not or cannot exemplify the corporate values must be cut loose, lest that person poison the culture of the institution.

Shared Values must be seen as sacrosanct.

The Elephant in the Room

In Defense of Chelsea Clinton

I must confess I barely know anything about **Chelsea Clinton**. And while I'm not a fan of Chelsea Clinton, I have no particular animus for her. Yet something occurred recently involving the former First Daughter that beckons comment. Here's the short version of what took place.

On March 15th, an Australian man armed himself and walked into two separate Islamic Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, opening fire and killing 50 while wounding an additional 50. Later that evening, a vigil was held on behalf of the victims of this horrific act of evil on the campus of New York University. Chelsea Clinton, pregnant with her third child, attended that vigil. She was confronted by some radicalized, far-Left students who blamed Ms. Clinton herself for the shootings.

How could this be?

Let's backtrack to the beginning to put this sordid episode in context.

First, we must remember what a freshman Congresswoman from Minnesota, who is also a Muslim, said about Jews. The Congresswoman,

Ilhan Omar, has a history that suggests she is rabidly anti-Semitic, a hater of Jews, and an avowed opponent of the nation of Israel. Her antics include having asked a judge for leniency toward a group of radicals living in Minnesota who were trying to join ISIS, a 2012 tweet wherein she claimed Israel had "hypnotized the world," her plea that Allah might "awaken the people and help them see the evil doings of Israel," her support of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement which targets Israel, her claims to laugh at the notion that Israel is a democracy, her tweet that Israel should be compared to the US southern states during the days of segregation, her suggestion that U.S. politicians are being bribed to support Israel ("It's all about the Benjamin's baby"), etc. The bottom line is that Ilhan Omar is a Jew hater.

This prompted a backlash against Ms. Omar from numerous sources, one of whom was Chelsea Clinton, who tweeted the following words: "We should expect all elected officials, regardless of party, and all public figures to not traffic in anti-Semitism." Hardly what I would call an abrasive or devastating rebuke, more of a mild chastisement.



Chelsea Clinton, left, being confronted by Leen Dweik

But in the "thinking" (as much as it can be referred to as "thinking") of one Ms. **Leen Dweik**, the student at NYU who confronted Chelsea Clinton at the vigil, Chelsea's tweet actually caused the Australian man to go and shoot up two mosques. In other words, Ms. Dweik imagines the shooter read Chelsea's tweet that elected officials should not be anti-Semitic as a sort of dog whistle to go out and murder Muslims.

You can see the video (and it loops several times) by [clicking here](#).

Being a college professor myself, I do understand that students are in college to learn things, which presumes they don't know a whole lot. But Ms. Dweik is so far gone, she is probably incapable of learning simple arithmetic. Here are Ms. Dweik's exact charges against Chelsea Clinton, while pointing a minacious finger towards Chelsea Clinton's chest:

"This right here is the result of a massacre stoked by people like you and the words that you put out into the world! The 49 people died [it later went up to 50] because of the rhetoric you put out there."

This was followed by the snapping of lots of fingers of those students who had surrounded Chelsea Clinton, and who were in support of Ms. Dweik's confrontational manner. I believe snapping one's fingers in this context is an alternative to clapping one's hands in approval.

When Chelsea Clinton responded, meekly, with "I'm so sorry that you feel that way," she was mocked by another student who asked, defiantly, "What does 'I'm sorry you feel that way' mean? What does that mean?!"

OK, let's unpack this.

Leen Dweik has the mental capacities of an 11-month-old. My 5-year-old grandson could easily detect the vacuous and incoherent puke spewing from her mouth for what it is as she confronted Chelsea Clinton with the sheer idiocy that a call for not being anti-Semitic produces monsters who go and murder innocent Muslims.

And note that there is something inexplicable in the Leftist mind that renders the Leftist incapable of blaming the murderer.

My great lament is that Chelsea Clinton was far too diplomatic and polite to give Leen Dweik the verbal thrashing that she deserved. I wish Ms. Dweik had confronted someone like **Alan Dershowitz** instead of Chelsea Clinton. Mr. Dershowitz would have taught her a thing or two.

Leen Dweik is a radicalized, sick, demented individual. She is not in college to learn, but to further indoctrinate, just as she herself has been indoctrinated. She attempts to position herself as a paragon of virtue, as one who is intolerant of bigotry and hate, and who feels that words really matter.

It turns out she is no stranger to [wielding bigoted words](#) herself, as someone unearthed previous tweets wherein she used the N-word, the word "faggot," and other such terms, and she has recently gone to great lengths to give her convoluted alibis as to why she didn't mean what she wrote. But Muslims are a protected species in her mind (whereas all decent people feel that all human beings -- and that includes Jews -- are to be protected from evil). It is a certainty that if the killer in Christchurch had targeted Jewish Synagogues, Ms. Dweik would be smiling inside, feeling in some perverse way that justice had been served.

Leen Dweik believes that being anti-Semitic and a hater of the nation of Israel is a good thing. She believes there is virtue in bigotry, so long as the target of that bigotry is Jewish or Israeli in some way.

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

Check out [my website](#) for tools to help you with your career, your presentations, and other matters.

Shameless Plug

Need Help Preparing For That Next Big Interview?

So you have trouble with job interviews? You get nervous? You feel unprepared? You get psyched out? I understand. And that is why I am pleased to alert you to my eBook: ***Your Interview Roadmap***. At over 12,000 words and with six appendices, this guide book will open your eyes to what really goes on in the world of interviewing from both sides of the table, and will prepare job seekers to hit it out of the park 80% of the time. (OK, more like 90%, but I prefer to be understated.)



If you are interested in purchasing the product, you can [click here](#) to make your purchase. The advice you will glean from this eBook is golden! I would charge you six times the price of the eBook to give you the same advice in person.

If you've done poorly in job interviews in the past, you can turn it around. The answers are there. Take action!

From Ara's Journal

On Conscience

One of the things that makes us distinctly human is the notion of conscience.

Strangely, we tend to be more cognizant of our conscience when we have done something regrettable. The very notion of shame is inextricably linked to this human quality called conscience. I suppose our encounters with shame start in childhood. Indeed, **Neil Postman**, a great writer and thinker, asserts that "without a well-developed idea of shame, childhood cannot exist."



But many of us seem to shed any vestiges of shame as we grow older. We seem to be insistent that we are always right and incapable of error or foolishness.

What is so hard about being wrong, I wonder? Are we afraid our self-worth or our *raison d'etre* will implode?

Personally, although I find it painful when my conscience is signaling to me that I did the wrong thing, a deeper part of me is grateful that such signals are still working. Because to me, one of the worst of the human conditions is to be oblivious to one's own failings. (Imagine the football team that assumes it is winning when the score is 21-7 in favor of the other team!)

Painful though it is, shame, and the conscience that gave birth to that impression, is a valuable and treasured gift if we will muster the courage to face it and heed it.

The World of Words

Miscreant

Building Your Power of Expression

Miscreant, adj.

Pronunciation: mĭskrēənt

Meaning: A person who behaves badly. Can also refer to a person who is depraved or villainous. Also, in some circles the word refers to a heretic or someone who is "unbelieving" (in a religious context).



Usage:

- *She is finally saying goodbye to her miscreant husband.*
- *He supports tough penalties against corporate miscreants.*
- *How long is it going to take to catch the miscreant who keeps knocking down mailboxes in our neighborhood?*

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

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