



# ***StrategyDriven Professional***

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## **Leadership Lessons from the United States Naval Academy - The Honor Concept**

*“Midshipmen will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will they mislead or deceive anyone as to known facts. A midshipman will be truthful, trustworthy, honest and forthright at all times and under all circumstances.*

*Midshipmen are presumed to be honorable at all times and to possess moral integrity in the fullest sense and will be treated accordingly, unless they prove otherwise by their words or actions.*

*Midshipmen should neither permit nor accept anything which is not just, right, and true. They should do the right thing because it is right, not because of fear of punishment.”*

### **The Honor Concept United States Naval Academy**

It is the privilege of professional executives and managers to lead the men and women of their organizations toward the achievement of mission goals. As such, these leaders are responsible for acting with the utmost integrity, leading in both a moral and ethical manner. Doing so promotes trust, accountability, and group cohesion; forming the foundation of high team effectiveness.

Of all the leadership lessons instilled in midshipman at the United States Naval Academy, none is more important than that of the Honor Concept. Indeed, none has shaped and defined my life, my way of being, more than the Honor Concept.

Ethical leadership is deliberate, embodied by a leader’s every word and deed and not limited by time or place. The ethical leader is known for his/her personal integrity, respect for others, and commitment to doing what is right, regardless of the consequences.

The midshipman’s Honor Concept needs no translation or interpretation. It is an elegant, simply stated set of personal and organizational values. While there cannot be enough said about the importance of the Honor Concept to executive, manager, and employee performance, it is a universal truth that without honor, without integrity, no one or organization can be truly successful.



## **Final Thoughts...**

Integrity forms the foundation of every trusting relationship, without it teamwork breaks down. Individuals, not knowing whether or not they can rely on those they work with, become more and more self-reliant, self-serving, and self-focused in their efforts. Over time, success of the group becomes secondary to personal success. Efficiency declines as an ever increasing amount of effort is expending on follow-up, reminders, and, at times, pleading for work to be done; particularly if it does not directly benefit the individual performing it.

The **StrategyDriven** organization is one of individual and collective integrity. As such, the Honor Concept's core principles are embedded within the **StrategyDriven** principles and best practices and their absence reflected in the warning flags. Practices, processes, and behaviors explicitly representative of these principles are contained within the many Organizational Accountability and Diversity and Inclusion articles found on the **StrategyDriven** ([www.StrategyDriven.com](http://www.StrategyDriven.com)) website.

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