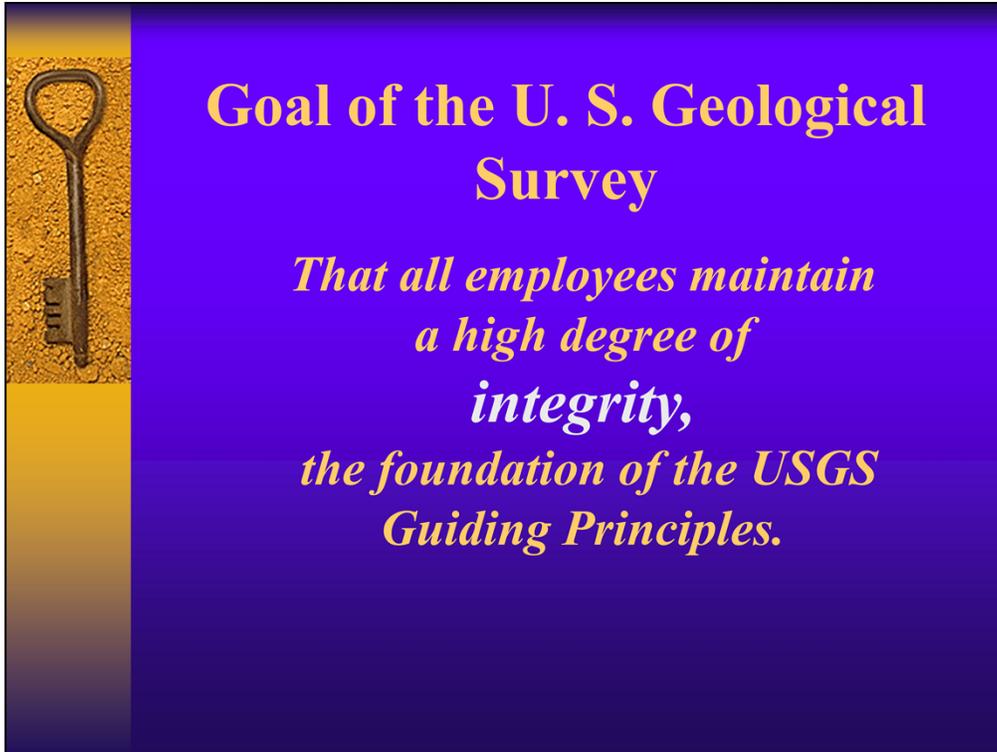


USGS Guiding Principles
"Keys" to Unlocking Success



Goal of the U.S. Geological Survey

That all employees maintain a high degree of integrity, the foundation of the USGS Guiding Principles.



Guiding Principles for the USGS

- Be respectful
- Be accountable
- Communicate
- Value differences
- Encourage
- Focus
- Collaborate

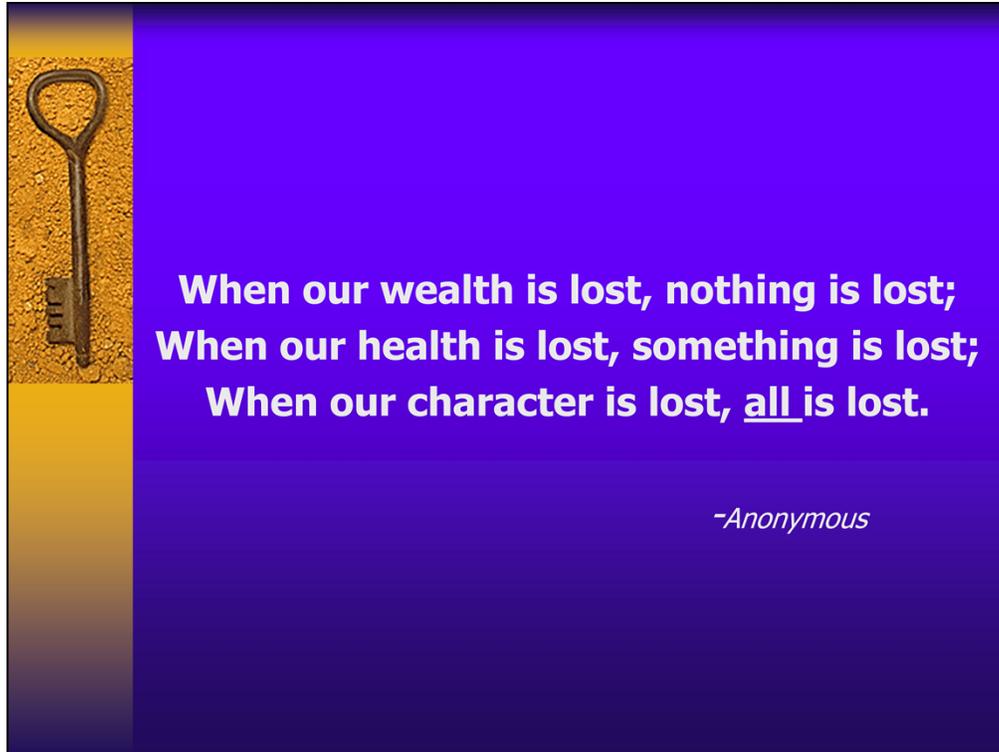
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How the Guiding Principles were Developed:

The Guiding Principles were developed during the initial Steering Team meeting for the Leadership Program. Members of the Steering Team included 4 ELT members plus the Deputy Director, a Regional Executive, and the Leadership Program Manager. The team was charged with identifying the leadership behaviors that all USGS employees needed to exemplify. However, one of the ELT members challenged the group with the statement that the ELT had just completed a fairly contentious meeting where leadership behaviors had not been practiced, so shouldn't

they focus on the ELT behaviors before addressing all employees. Therefore, the first several hours of the meeting were focused on the leadership behaviors needed for the ELT. Once the list was completed to the team's satisfaction, one member said, "Now that we've spent all this time for the ELT, what are we going to do for the rest of the Survey employees?" After a 5 second pause and studying the list for the ELT, the team realized that the behaviors that were expected of the ELT were also the behaviors that should be expected of all USGS employees. The Deputy Director at that time, Kathy Clement, followed through with these principles by building these principles into her performance appraisals with the ELT members and also asking them in turn to provide feedback to her about how well she was living by these guiding principles. She stated that the ELT meetings greatly improved and the ELT members held each other accountable to these behaviors. I suggest that you consider how much of an impact we could make by holding ourselves and each other accountable to behave according to these principles, incorporating them into the performance plan, and thereby helping employees to be more successful in attaining USGS goals and performing our mission.



**When our wealth is lost, nothing is lost;
When our health is lost, something is lost;
When our character is lost, all is lost.**

-Anonymous

Developing a strong character is an important factor in becoming the most effective leader that you can be.

Everyone is a leader, whether they are leading themselves, a few people or a large office. However, effective leadership is a choice and requires personal responsibility and character.



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- Treat each other with dignity
- Honor roles and responsibilities of each person

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What behaviors demonstrate respect?

Some Answers: listening, not gossiping, courteous communication, do what you say you're going to do (trustworthy), be honest and truthful, golden rule.

How often do we find ourselves gossiping or listening to others talk negatively about another person? This type of behavior damages relationships and reduces productivity in the work place.

What does "treating each other with dignity" look like? Think of your role as a supervisor/manager, you have 2 employees who are disrespectful to one another – how do you encourage them to treat each other with dignity? Some possible answers include teaching them how to:

- Listen respectfully
- Confront compassionately; have the courage to be confronted

- Authentically be interested in what the other person thinks and has to say

What are some effective techniques to address disrespectful behavior? If someone is sarcastically putting another person down because they have a different scientific/technical/managerial point of view than the other person, what is an effective way to address this situation?



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who you are and what you stand for

Take personal responsibility
Reward desirable behaviors and results
Be decisive and consistent
Communicate clear expectations for the job
Hold others accountable

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Personal responsibility is one of the fundamental characteristics of leadership; everyone can be a leader and personal responsibility is key to being an effective leader.

According to a major study performed by the Gallup Poll, the most important information that employees need to feel valued in their position is a clear understanding of what is expected for their job.

As a team leader, manager, team member, or employee it is each person's responsibility to hold each other accountable for the commitments of the team or individual.

How do you hold others accountable?

- Consequences to actions; call them on it as a team member
- Get agreements in writing

- Follow up
- Model accountability



Communicate



- ◆ Be a good listener
- ◆ Be honest in the message you deliver
- ◆ Admit when you are wrong
- ◆ Be flexible

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Think of some of most important skills for being a good listener (such as avoiding making judgments about the speaker, showing empathy, placing yourself in the speaker's shoes, and avoiding interruptions or breaking the flow of the conversation, etc.).

One of the greatest gifts we can give another person is permission to make mistakes and the best way we can do that is to admit when we make a mistake. Provide a personal story.

The desire to be right often results in inflexibility. We are so invested in being right rather than being kind that it adversely affects our communicating. Choose to be kind instead of being right.



Value Differences

- Different backgrounds
- Different ways of thinking
- Different disciplines, roles



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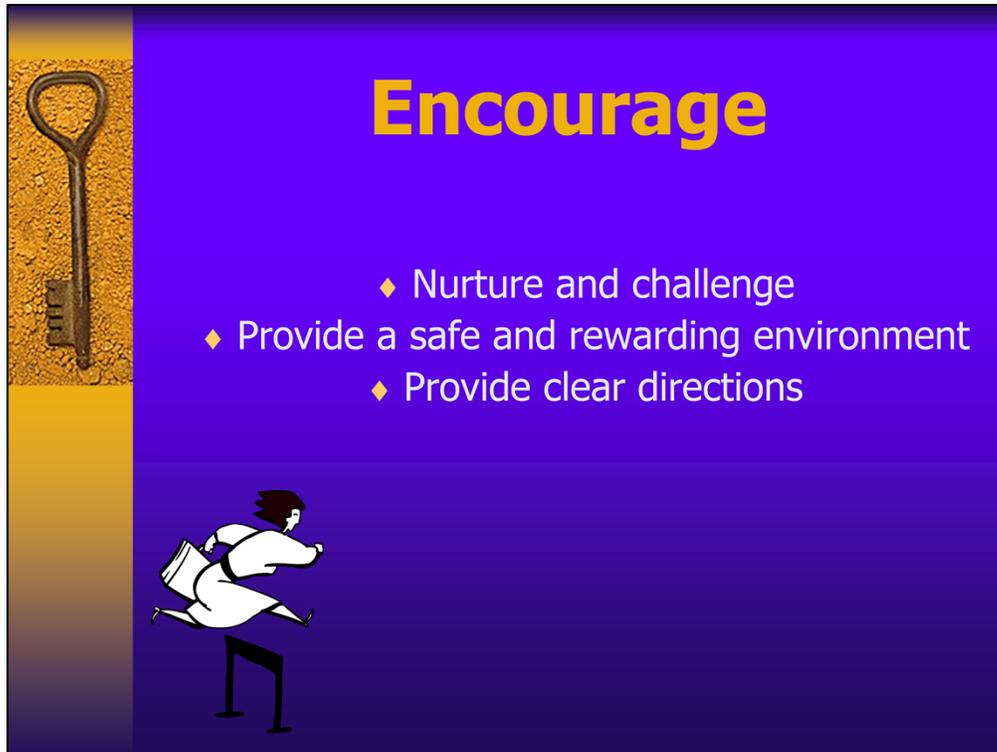
What is now the Water discipline use to be 3 separate water divisions. There was lots of complaining and justifying why the divisions did not make sense to unify; however, once the 3 disciplines were combined the science greatly improved because of the collaboration. Sounds similar to our separate disciplines becoming one bureau.

An excellent quote:

“In great teams conflict becomes productive. The free flow of conflicting ideas and feelings is critical for creative thinking, for discovering new solutions no one individual would have come to on his own.” By Peter Senge

Another good quote is: “None of us are as smart as all of us.” By Phil Condit. This could also get a conversation going.

When you're staffing a position think about differences. What are the strengths in the team you have and where are their weaknesses? You want to fill the weaknesses. You often need the person who challenges our thinking – it may not be the easiest person on the team but it is vital for the team to find the best solution.



Encourage

- Nurture and challenge
- Provide a safe and rewarding environment
- Provide clear directions

Think of a time you have challenged an employee. How did you do it? What happened (did you get good results)? What are some other ways you could do this in your office?

Re: a safe and rewarding environment – Good quote: “Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.” By Robert F. Kennedy

– Do you think your employees would have greater results if they were not afraid of making a mistake or of failing? How can a safe environment be created?

What rewards do you offer in your office? Physical as well as emotional? What new things could you do? Some examples are: thanking people, even for little things; giving credit during a staff meeting for work done; interoffice awards.



Focus

- ◆ Strive toward USGS mission/vision
- ◆ Accept change
- ◆ Be resilient
- ◆ Think beyond your own discipline



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The USGS Vision and Mission statements:

VISION: USGS is a world leader in the natural sciences through our scientific excellence and responsiveness to society's needs.

MISSION: The USGS serves the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to:

- *describe and understand the Earth;
- *minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters;
- *manage water, biological, energy and mineral resources;
- *enhance and protect our quality of life.

We can so easily get distracted by the latest reorganization, latest office moves, the budget decreases, and potential downsizing. If we can focus on our vision of

science excellence, science knowledge, and science impact we can accept change more easily.
Provide a personal story of how vision at work helped you to adjust to change.



Collaborate

- Work as a team member
- Coordinate with others
- Keep others informed

An example of collaboration – The Denver Leadership Group: The Denver Leadership Group formed from graduates of the Leadership 101 program. They started having lunch together after their class because they wanted to figure out how to keep the positive energy going that they had experienced at the class. As other graduates finished the class they joined the group. After awhile, they decided they wanted to share this experience with others. They set up two 1-day courses on leadership for 72 employees in Denver and then followed up these sessions with monthly brown bag sessions. The next year they did the same thing for 50 Central Region employees with an additional half day for each session where the CELT's (Central Executive Leadership Team) presented descriptions of their disciplines and some career information. The brown-bag sessions continue. They exemplify exceptional team work and collaboration and show how powerful one small group of people can be.



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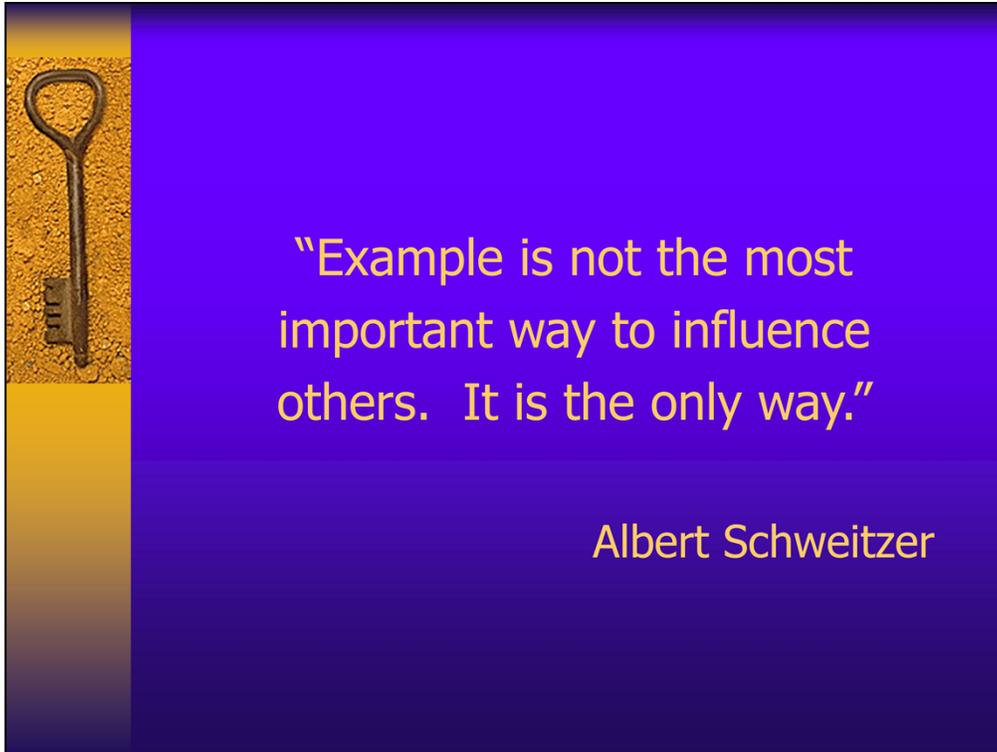
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How can you begin to become aware of and practice these principles?

-An example from the OED office: they wrote up a contract of how they should act as OED and USGS employees. They all signed it and have framed copies at their desks to remind them. OED has monthly meetings to discuss one principle at a time. Office members take turns facilitating the meetings. Activities and handouts are used to help the discussions.

-Think of one thing you want to do to begin modeling and promoting the guiding principles.

Challenge each person in your office to personally commit to live by these guiding principles and practice them daily.



It's a lot to absorb at once, but if we take the first step toward becoming aware of these principles within our own lives and helping to model them, then changes can be made.