

Professional Kindness Character Scale

Kindness in the Community

Professionalism is a noun and carries weight when used to describe various types of behaviors, attitudes, and characteristics of an individual at work. Being a professional has nothing to do with higher education or what your business card reads. It has everything to do with *how* you do your work. Are you kind, fair, optimistic, and truthful? These are but a few of the competencies that truly exemplify a professional. The magic of building your professional character is that you can start anywhere, any place, and progress to any degree that you want. Your character belongs to you at the end of the workday; it is not a commodity that, if given away, disappears. In fact, if you cultivate your character, you grow.

Complete the *Kindness Character Scale* worksheet below. Reflect on each statement honestly. Use the self-assessment to explore character traits by discussing a number of the statements in more detail and how the question applies in your work setting and profession.

When the issues we face in our work and lives seem too overwhelming, let's refer to the late American composer John Cage who suggests that the solution is to "*begin anywhere.*" Remember that power is in the present moment in *what we do*; character is *how we do it* and *what we are* at the end of it.

Attitude	I struggle to see the positive side of people and situations around me. My words and actions reflect this. (1) (2) (3)	It is comfortable for me to step forward with an optimistic outlook even through adversity. (4) (5)
Authenticity	I rarely allow others to see my genuine and true self. I am not aware of what is most important to me. (1) (2) (3)	I would not even think to pretend to be something I am not. I openly bring my whole self to everything I do and wear my heart on my sleeve. (4) (5)
Compassion	I rarely consider meeting the needs of others in my life. I am not quick to identify with another's pain and suffering. I see compassion as a sign of weakness. (1) (2) (3)	I am known as someone who is kind and feels empathy for others. I will do what is necessary to support others through their pain by giving them my undivided attention. (4) (5)
Courage	More often than not I allow fear to paralyze me from moving ahead and taking small steps forward to complete my goals. (1) (2) (3)	I take safe, courageous risks to grow & strengthen my character so I can do the <i>right thing</i> for myself and others. (4) (5)
Excellence	In general I do not take the initiative to grow my own potential. (1) (2) (3)	I choose to show up, be present and give 100 percent of my best self to everything I do. (4) (5)
Friendship	I am generally unwilling to create a safe and supportive environment full of goodwill and respect for others. I fault find easily. (1) (2) (3)	I am a warm and welcoming friend who creates a sense of belonging for others. I speak well of others and am not moved to find fault. (4) (5)

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Integrity	I have gained a reputation as someone who doesn't 'walk my talk." (1) (2) (3)	I do what is right and honest in any situation, regardless of who is 'watching." (4) (5)
Resilience	I usually resist change of any size. I struggle with not having a strong reserve of inner strength to whether the storms of life. (1) (2) (3)	I am proactive in creating a healthy and vibrant lifestyle by examining my own behaviors in response to challenging events. (4) (5)
Responsibility	I refuse to take responsibility for my actions and usually will blame others when things don't work out. (1) (2) (3)	I hold myself accountable for both my positive and negative actions and their impact on others. (4) (5)
Service	I rarely make time to meet the needs of others and tend to put myself first not in a healthy self care way, rather in a selfish way. (1) (2) (3)	With a caring heart I reach out daily to those around me and give generously of myself. (4) (5)
Inclusion	I am most often unwilling to be open to the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of others. Being critical and judgmental is easy for me. (1) (2) (3)	I celebrate the individuality in others openly. I always strive to connect by breaking down barriers to create a shared understanding. (4) (5)
Trust	I make too many promises I can't keep and therefore I am not dependable. I struggle to be forthright with the truth. (1) (2) (3)	I am known as someone who is reliable and keeps my word. I speak my truth confidently and respectfully. (4) (5)

Hold a discussion on what happens when you exhibit too much professionalism or too little.

Perhaps team members may want to repeat the self-assessment at a later date to see how far each has moved on each of the traits. Celebrate your efforts to make incremental steps in the right direction. Remember to be kind to each other and recognize awareness and efforts.

Resource: *Compendium12* by Olivia McIvor