



THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES



LESSON 27

A MORE VIRTUOUS WORKPLACE?

**Building the workplace as
a moral community**

27



SESSION 1

THE MORAL VIRTUES AT WORK

27

Courage, Justice, Honesty, Compassion,
Self-discipline, Gratitude, Humility



● **Two major issues confront us all in our working lives. They are:**

1. Being exploited by others in the workplace through their vices; how might our virtues tackle their vices?

and

● **2. Being exploitative of others in the workplace through our own vices; how might our aspiration to virtue uproot our own vices?**

Discuss ways in which these two temptations might reveal themselves

TACKLING EXPLOITATION



What issues
connected with
'being exploited'
can you see on the
next slide?

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DID YOU KNOW THAT IN THE USA:



25% of employees say work is their main source of stress and 40% say their job is "very or extremely stressful"

80% of people are dissatisfied with their jobs

15% of director-level women have slept with their bosses -- and 37% of them got promoted for it

More than 13 million working days are lost every year because of stress-related illnesses.

The average person spends 90,000 hours at work over their lifetime

Money and poor relationships at work are cited as the biggest source of stress

10,000 workers per year drop dead at their desks as a result of 60- to 70-hour work weeks in Japan. The phenomenon is known as "karoshi"

Couples in which one partner spends 10+ hours more than usual at work divorce at twice the average rate

64% of Americans cancelled vacations last year. One-third did it for work-related reasons even though most felt they were more in need of a vacation than the year before

25% of people check into work hourly while on vacation, via email and phone. 59% said they check work during traditional holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving. Basically, work is everywhere.

GROUP WORK



The following slides explore the kinds of virtues and vices that one can cultivate (and avoid) in the workplace.

There are 4 major Tasks to complete as a team of 3 or 4.

At the end of the 4 Tasks, you will have to evaluate how well you and your team functioned as a team, in terms of virtues and vices you showed in completing the tasks!

But first...

Make a list of the kinds of emotions that the following issues might provoke in the workplace:

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IN PAIRS...



Discuss your experiences of working life. (If you have yet to engage in work, relate this to your school experience). You may wish to relate your experiences to the headings in the 'Sources of tension in the workplace' scatter-gram on Slide X.

Do you recognise any of these emotions? How have they revealed themselves in your working life?

Think in particular about your relationships with colleagues and superiors, (or teachers) and any subordinates you may have.

AS A TEAM OF 3 OR 4, CREATE A MONTAGE THAT DEPICTS THE FOLLOWING WORKPLACE VICES:



Overwork and work-aholicism

Underwork and laziness

Office gossiping – back-biting and sowing discord

Career-ism, ambition and office politics

Negligence

Exploitation – exploiting others and being exploited by others

Bullying and alienation

Any other workplace vices you feel relevant

Which virtues might tackle which vices? How?

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● **FOR EACH OF THE
VICES ON THE PREVIOUS
SLIDE, DISCUSS:**



● **Which virtues could make
for a fairer and more
harmonious workplace**

- **ENACTING THE
VIRTUES AT WORK:
THE PERFORMANCE VIRTUES**



- **How can we ‘be the change’
we hope to see in the
workplace?**



SESSION 2

THE MORAL VIRTUES AT WORK

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WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST IN YOUR WORKING LIFE?



Put the following in order of priority:

To be secure

To be respected and valued

To be helpful/part of a team/to participate/contribute

To receive a fair day's pay and just conditions, including rest

To be treated fairly

To engage in meaningful work

To work with interesting people

Discuss with a partner.

Which virtues might help to guide you towards these ends?
Write a short piece explaining how. You may need to research what the virtues mean.

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WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST IN YOUR WORKING LIFE?



List the kind of qualities (not skills) that make 'the good employee'.

List the kind of vices that make 'the bad employee'.

List the kind of qualities that make 'the good employer'.

List the kind of vices that make the 'the bad employer'.

Now look at the next slide. Discuss as a group the issues on there. Which ones did you get? Which would you add?

Is there anything you would change about how the virtues and vices are categorised?

VIRTUES AND VICES IN THE WORKPLACE: FINDING THE MEAN



Desire	Virtue	Overdoing it	Underdoing it
To be secure	Good sense	Workaholic; control freakery;	Laziness; negligence; imprudence; complacent
To be respected and valued	Ambitious for the right things – a good day's work; grateful	Self destructive ambition; competitive show-off; glory seeker; smug; arrogant; career-ism;	Timidity; overly cautious and afraid to commit.
To be helpful/part of a team/to participate/contribute	Conscientious, diligent, generous, supportive and forgiving	Flattery; sucking up; destructive rivalries	Selfishness; back-biting and gossiping; involved in 'office politics'
To receive a fair day's pay and just conditions, including rest	Justice; fairness	Corruption/greed/nepotism	Exploitation
To be treated fairly	Anger tempered by patience and persistence; a sense of justice and fairness	Irascibility; fuming; prickly, touchy and hot-tempered; over-sensitive; grumpy	Giving up; quitting; emotionally withdrawing; lack of spirit



Go back to the 'Virtues and Vices in the Workplace' table.

Either:

Select one 'workplace' vice you recognise in yourself, and wish to uproot.

Or:

Select one virtue you aspire to show in the workplace.

Now, list practical ways in which you can grow in virtue, or uproot the vice!

The spider-diagram on the following slide works through an example.

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THINKING THROUGH A WORKPLACE VICE – WAYS IN WHICH YOU ARE EXPLOITATIVE OF OTHERS!



ASPIRING TO A WORKPLACE VIRTUE





**Now, discuss your
workplace (or school)
resolution with your teacher!**

MAIN TASK #1



Choose one of the Desires on the 'Virtues and Vices' table.

Either:

Create a scenario around the desire, either written, or acted out that reveals virtues or vices.

Or:

Find a scenario from news, film, drama or literature that portrays the desire and the virtues and vices that circulate around the various desires.

Discuss:

- How do the vices reveal themselves in your scenario?
- Suggest ways in which a more virtuous way of acting would improve the scenario.
- This can be done either as a written task or as a role play.

MAIN TASK #1



“It is better to acquire a little with virtue, rather than acquire great revenues with vice”

(Pr 15:16)

Do you agree?

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MAIN TASK #1



Think about your work life; if you don't yet work, think about your school life.

Whose style of working inspires you to work better? How do they do this? Which habits, or practices of theirs would you like to imitate?

Perhaps the most destructive vice in the workplace is that of **EXPLOITATION**. This can reveal itself in many ways, from unjust pay and conditions, corrupt, self serving arrangements, to a failure to give recognition where it is due.



SESSION 3

THE MORAL VIRTUES AT WORK

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MAIN TASK #2



In groups, research how the individuals on the following slides tackled the issue of exploitation in the workplace.

For each:

Look at what they contributed to the working lives of their contemporaries.

Define the vices they tackled and the virtues they showed in doing this. In particular, look at how they showed great courage in overcoming obstacles to workplace fairness.

From each, construct a short piece of writing highlighting how they have inspired you.

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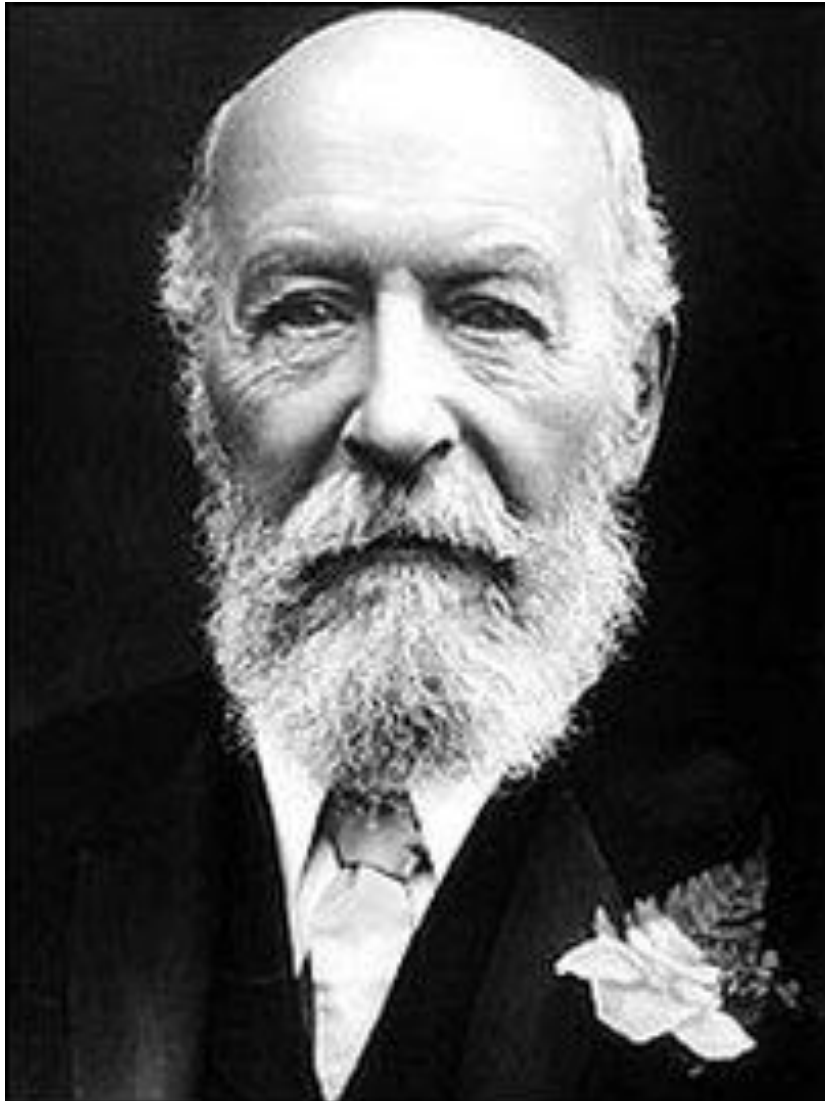
- # CASE STUDY 1: The Tolpuddle Martyrs



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George Cadbury



Robert Owen



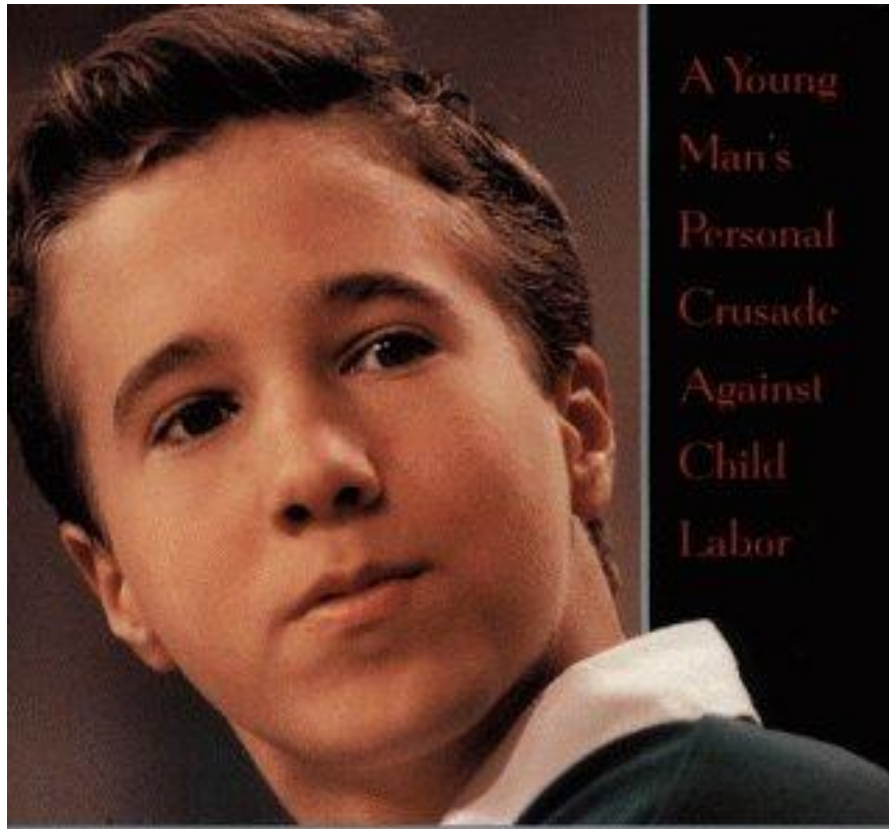
●

Cesar Chavez and *La Causa*



Lech Walesa and Solidarity





A Young
Man's
Personal
Crusade
Against
Child
Labor

FREE THE CHILDREN

Craig Kielburger

with
Kevin Major





What moral, performance or civic issues confront you in your current working place?

When have you had to work in a group or a team? What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them? How did you cope with your own vices – and the vices of others? (Be honest – you will have them, to varying degrees!)

What team projects are you currently working on – which virtues would make your team function better?

How could you ensure that this got done?

What needs to improve, in terms of pay and/or conditions – be realistic and balanced!

How can you 'be the change' that begins to lead this improvement?

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SESSION 4

THE MORAL VIRTUES AT WORK

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The Morecombe Bay Cockle Pickers' Tragedy, 2004



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MAIN TASK #3



Research:

What happened in the Morecombe Bay Cockle Pickers' Tragedy of 2004?

What issues did it illuminate about exploitation?

What action did it lead to?

How much impact has the action had?

What more needs to be done, by whom and how?

- Watch Nick Broomfield's *Ghosts* (Cert 15) and discuss the issues it raises from a virtues perspective.
- Research into issues of sexual exploitation and slavery in the UK.

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MAIN TASK #4



Debate:

Video Search Engine: Gap Yar Intahship

In teams of 3 or 4 prepare either the for or against side of this debate; you will need to decide who will research which aspects, and who will speak on which aspects and for how long.

This House would ban unpaid internships.

- Use the resources and framework here to inform your debate:
http://www.debatingmatters.com/documents/DM_TopicGuidesUnpaidInternships.pdf

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How did your group function as a team throughout these tasks?

Evaluate the personal qualities (or virtues) – and vices – your team displayed in executing these tasks:

Task 1: Constructing a Scenario that displays virtues and vices

Task 2: Researching, analysing and presenting on Inspirational Figures

Task 4: Researching, analysing and presenting on the Morecombe Bay Cockle Pickers' Tragedy

Task 3: Engaging in a Debate on Unpaid Internships

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● **Look back at the workplace virtues and vices.**

Evaluate how well you performed Tasks 1-4 as a group.

● **Who embodied which virtues and how, and who embodied which vices, and how . . .**

Discuss these in an open and collaborative way, if you dare...

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