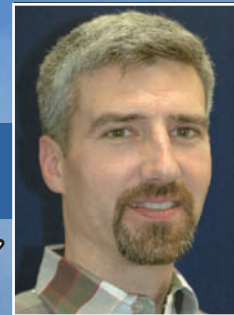


How's your Reputation



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Benjamin Franklin once said “It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it”. As we age, we see this more clearly and often this is wisdom that experience creates. For example – the young person who has worked hard the past fifteen years, has an untainted reputation, wise decisions, laborious and effective work and is highly respected. One day chooses to align with a person of poor reputation and character. The outcome – disastrous. The person of poor standards and character is not elevated to the higher standard in reputation and the once spotless reputation of the other is now lowered in view and opinion. This is true even if every future business transaction from that point on is of pristine standard. The reputation of the two combined are both spoiled and deprecated. We heard this from our parents, possibly in Sunday School or as seen in George Washington’s quote “Associate with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company.”

Similarly, in relationships with friends, family, your spouse or at work; lie to them once, be unfaithful or tell them that you will do something and don't - what ever the circumstance or perceptions of reality. With broken trust, most will always have to deal with the reputation earned unless those involved move or pass on; people do not forget such things. When considering how far reaching and hounding a damaged reputation trails its owner, it becomes of greater importance to maintain value in your name by actions and choices.

We like to say we don't judge but ultimately and routinely, at some level, we judge and discern good from

bad. Maybe some prefer the term fruit inspector but we're still looking for bugs, rot and quality and if wise and discerning as an inspector, we throw out the bad in order to keep the good or to not foul the whole barrel! This is true even for those whose character is flawless, but in business decisions, have shown that they do not have good judgment and hurt the company – these lose their jobs.

It is my conclusion that we are often our own worst enemy, not others. Our record of action and character are connected to our name and more often than not, when people say they have heard of you, they probably have and in some degree of truth. Thus the saying “your reputation precedes you” either of good or ill report. This also holds true to names of people we have known or heard of in the past and we associate the name knowingly or otherwise with another not related.

And there are examples of those who hold good reputations that cross paths with someone enthusiastically judgmental or gossipers (plural - they run in packs), a heavy handed critic or a malicious person that can damage a reputation of another by simply dropping a line or asking a rehearsed question and causing doubt. Character defamation is a serious charge and rightly so if it has indeed occurred. The catastrophic effects on a reputation from gossip, slander or false accusations can be numerous and the reputation may never be restored. Joseph Hall has said “A reputation once broken may possibly be repaired, but the world will always keep their eyes on the spot where the crack was.” 💧

Best wishes.