



Availability vs. Self-Centeredness
 Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I serve

Five Keys:

- Be productive
- Develop useful skills
- Find a way to help
- Communicate with others
- Serve cheerfully

subscription

Attitude


Joey didn't like oatmeal, and in protest he stood up in his chair at breakfast. His father immediately told him to sit down, but Joey refused, citing his distaste for oatmeal.



Finding his protest ineffective, Joey finally sat down. Then he muttered, "I'm sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside!"

Some make themselves available on the outside but have a bad attitude on the inside. Attitude makes all the difference. An available person is genuinely grateful to help.

Character at Home



Get the book *Achieving True Success for studying character with your family.*

Feb 26-27 Seminar

Learn how to use *Character First!* in your organization.

- Oklahoma City
- Feb 26-27



Team Player

Everyone on a team must perform whatever he or she needs to do. Each member's preparation and expectation allows the team to fill gaps and make other adjustments in order to win the game.

When individuals combine their efforts toward a common goal, they can achieve what they could not do alone.



- Know your organization's goals.
- Resist the temptation to guard your "turf." Help others succeed.
- If you cannot help a customer, find someone who can.
- Do what needs to be done, even if you have to do additional research or learn another step in the

process.

- Share the credit.

Read more about Availability in this month's [bulletin](#)

True Friendship

Help your children understand true friends help one another. Sometimes this involves hard work, but it shows you really care.

- If your friend hosts a party, offer to help set up, serve, or clean up afterward.
- If your parents are carrying a heavy load, offer to carry something, or open the door.
- If your siblings need help cleaning the kitchen, offer to wash dishes or put things away.
- If your teacher needs help filing papers, give up some free time to assist him or her.



Can others count on you to help, even when it is hard or inconvenient? Look beyond yourself and lend a hand.

2008 - Championing Character

by [Sheriff Jim Alderden, Larimer County, Colorado](#)

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Allow me to wish all of our readers a happy and prosperous New Year as we enter 2008. Let me also wish you success in keeping with the inevitable New Year's resolutions and the sincere hope that your resolve will hold for more than 30 days. (That's about the average

for me.)

I want to start out this year with an uplifting [article] and point out just a few examples of the great character exhibited by employees of the Larimer County Sheriff's Office and how we hope to recognize citizens who demonstrate good character in the coming year. Typically, our employees are reticent about their actions, and I only learn about them through third parties. Some are embarrassed about receiving any recognition, so I am leaving their names off the following accounts.

Recently, a deputy assigned to the Red Feather area was tasked to do a welfare check on a 16-year-old girl and her infant child. The reporting party was concerned that the young female and child did not have sufficient heat in the cabin. It was snowing and bitterly cold. The deputy found the cabin to be clean and there was sufficient food in the cabin, but he learned that the husband's chainsaw had broken as he was cutting firewood and that he had to leave for work. The deputy proceeded to cut firewood himself and ensured there was enough wood for the young lady to maintain the fire. He also contacted other family members and arranged for additional firewood to be brought to the cabin. This act of kindness and service goes well beyond the enumerated duties of a deputy sheriff.



Another example of benevolence (giving to others' basic needs without having as my motive personal reward) is the deputy who encountered a young female who had driven from out of state to see her mother who was hospitalized. She ran out of gas in front of our local strip club, which was somewhat frightening, and she was afraid

to leave the car to seek assistance. A deputy came across her and found the young lady had no money. The deputy took her to a gas station, and purchased her gasoline, coffee and some food.

Another deputy encountered a penniless transient who was trying to make his way home. The deputy purchased him a bus ticket. A third example is from one of our sergeants who became acquainted with a single mother who was working as a waitress and struggling with transportation issues. The sergeant purchased her a used car to help her get back on her feet.

Responding to a suspicious person complaint a few months ago, a corporal contacted the subject who did not know who he was or where he lived. He was transferred to the hospital where he was placed on a voluntary hold. Over the next month, the corporal kept in contact with the individual and was eventually able to determine his identity and reunite him with family members in Wyoming.

Each of these examples of generosity (carefully managing my resources so I can freely give to those in need) and compassion (investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others) demonstrates the great character embodied in the personnel who serve the citizens of Larimer County through the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. Each of them is a character champion in my book.

In light of the recent events concerning the Animal Angels Horse Rescue and our seizure of 27 assorted animals from there, I would be remiss if I didn't also recognize the many volunteers from the Larimer County Sheriff's Posse who donated their time, trucks, and trailers to help rescue these animals, along with several employees who helped with the investigation. Many of the employees were clearly out of their element (dealing with livestock, not the weather). It was a cold, miserable day. I'll miss someone if I try to name them all, so please just know I appreciate all that you have done. A special thanks to the county staff that work at the Ranch for setting up stalls and working with us to ensure the animals have a safe environment. Your support and assistance is greatly appreciated. Finally, a special recognition for the availability (making my own schedule and priorities secondary

to those I serve) of the volunteers who have routinely been to the facility to feed and exercise the horses, care for their wounds, and clean stalls: Jeff Clinton and his son Nick; Ken Conley and his daughters Megan and Devon; Dave and Barb Jehu; and my better half, Deborah.

As an agency, we are deeply committed to the premise that good character results in success, both professionally and personally. We emphasize the importance of character in our training and promotional processes. We reward superior performance and achievements by recognizing the character qualities that led to that achievement.



Developing and recognizing good character is important, not only within our department, but in the community. We all seem to spend too much time and effort identifying and dealing with things that are wrong in life instead of appreciating those things that are good. I include myself in that category. To counteract this, the Larimer County Sheriff's Office is implementing a new program to recognize those citizens in our community who demonstrate good character in their daily lives.

This first hit me a few months ago when I was in line at a grocery store. I had only one item, and the person in front of me graciously offered to let me go first—a small but much appreciated gesture that typically passes unnoticed.

Later that evening, my wife and I were at a local restaurant for dinner and the service wasn't quite up to par. The manager recognized this and went out of her way to make things right. Watching her interaction with the other customers, we commented on her obvious enthusiasm (expressing joy in each task as I give it my best effort). What started out as a negative turned into a positive experience and because of the character of this one individual, the Lonestar (now the Texas Land and Cattle Co.) has become one of our favorite restaurants.

The LCSO Character First Committee designed a pin to distribute to citizens when we "catch them in the act" of demonstrating good character. Kelly from the Lonestar, now working at the Fort Collins Hilton, was the first recipient.

I know not all of our employees are going to buy into this, but many have and many more will. As part of the greater Larimer County community, we all have a vested interest in promoting good character by expressing our appreciation for small acts of kindness or recognition for a job well done. Stay positive!

Jim Alderden
Sheriff, Larimer County, Colorado
January 3, 2008

Sheriff Jim Alderden and his staff have implemented Character First! in the Larimer County Sheriff's office since 2003.

To view the online version of this newsletter, please visit:

<http://www.characterfirst.com/resources/newsletters/2008/01/>

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