

## Integrity is a Personal Asset

BY MICHAEL JOSEPHSON

I saw a cartoon of an earnest-looking fellow standing in front of a man sitting behind a desk. The caption: "We admire your integrity, Daniel. Unfortunately, we have no room for that in our firm." This may not be an overstatement.

A 1995 survey of more than 2,000 secretaries in the United States and Canada revealed that nearly 60 percent had lied about their supervisors' whereabouts. OK, that's a moral misdemeanor, but nearly one in five also said they had falsely stated they witnessed a signature on a notarized document, and 10 percent said they had removed or destroyed damaging information from a file at the request of their bosses.

Usually, the lies and deceptions told at work aren't company policy. Instead, they reflect the flexible morality of individual supervisors who, out of ambition, fear or corrupt character, ask others to lie or look the other way.

Let there be no mistake: It's unethical to ask someone to lie to advance personal or business objectives. Executives should establish an environment where every employee is expected to be honest. And they must deal firmly and consistently with those who ask or allow employees to do otherwise. But it's also the responsibility of individual employees, regardless of their power or status, to exercise the moral courage to refuse to do anything unethical, even when ordered to do so. Your integrity is a personal asset. Don't let anyone mess with it.

*Reprinted from The Best is Yet to Come, Josephson Institute of Ethics. ©2004 [www.josephsoninstitute.com](http://www.josephsoninstitute.com). Permission given by the Josephson Institute of Ethics.*



**DIXON**  
The Right Connection™

When you need the best in brass fittings, think of Dixon Brass. We offer brass hose fittings, couplings and adapters for even your most challenging applications. Plus you get impressive service and immediate delivery.

For more information, call 800-323-4440. When it's got to be right, it's got to be Dixon.

- hose fittings
- welding connectors
- brass ferrules
- pipe fittings
- garden hose fittings
- compression fittings

**Dixon Brass**  
40 Chestnut Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559-1128  
800-323-4440 • 630-323-4442 • Fax: 800-628-7259 • 630-323-4120

[www.americancouplings.com](http://www.americancouplings.com)