

Individual Leadership Character Submission

Nominator Information

Name: akhila aiyer

Nominee Information

Name: David Geller

Title: CEO

Organization: GV Financial Advisors

Nomination Information

Examples of how this person demonstrates INTEGRITY:

The past year has been very turbulent in the stock markets, there is a natural reluctance to give bad news to clients. However, David has insisted on telling it the way it is and not sugar coating information.

As company layoffs loomed, he was honest and kept an open information process that he shared with all employees.

Examples of how this person demonstrates RESPECT:

He is one of the best listeners that I have known, always welcoming suggestions from employees, he is very accessible, willing to discuss merits or faults of an idea without assigning blame.

Examples of how this person demonstrates RESPONSIBILITY:

He has always held himself accountable to his clients. He is very mindful of the fact that people entrust him with not just their wealth and their life savings but also their values and passions and goals in life. It is very typical for people to share details with him, comfortable in the knowledge that he can be their guide and counselor. He is a great advisor and coach for both his clients and his employees.

Please relate an incident demonstrating leadership character:

When morale was down after a round of layoffs within the firm, he was the first one to re-charge and re-invigorate the troops with a message of hope and a positive outlook to the future. The speech that he gave to his employees greatly help reduce the stress levels within the firm. At the same time, he did not try to paint a rosier picture and was very clear that the company continues to face challenges. The honest and open information sharing represents a rare quality that few leaders possess.

He is an innovator and a thought leader. He has come up with creative solutions that have helped his clients. He has created processes and services that are ground breaking.

When helping clients it's typical for him to create a client experience that has been described as "a transforming event". There are few leaders who have the capacity to lead their firm and in the lives of their clients, being a trusted advisor, guide and coach.

Leadership Character Submission

Nominator Information

Name: Elizabeth Dworschak

Nominee Information

Name: David Geller

Title: CEO

Organization: GV Financial Advisors, Inc.

Nomination Information

Examples of how this person demonstrates INTEGRITY:

Integrity is the character trait that makes David Geller the leader, advisor, confidante, employer, father, husband, and friend I have known since 1993. This has been an incredibly difficult year for everyone involved in financial planning. David showed tremendous leadership during this crisis. I'd like to share three examples:

(1) When the market crashed in 2008, David spent hours calling each and every one of his clients, often several times a week, and giving them his honest assessment of how the market mayhem might impact their lives. Thankfully, because of the planning they had done, David was able to tell most of his clients that they should be able to weather the storm, but he also cautioned others to take action to protect themselves and their assets. Where other financial advisors might have been reeling and hiding under their desks, David made - and continued to make - difficult, reassuring phone calls to his clients in order to help calm their fears. Knowing they could count on David to be honest about how the market collapse might affect them personally, many of his clients were fortified to stand firm until the market began to rebound in March 2009. David is well known and highly regarded for his ability to challenge his clients and this is but one example of the many times I have seen him speak truthfully to his clients, even when they sometimes do not want to hear the message. David is honest without being brutal and that is a rare and special combination of gifts.

(2) The market collapse also reduced revenue for the firm. David called an employee meeting to explain how the market collapse had caused a decrease in firm revenue. Along with others in management, David made difficult calls to eliminate a few employee positions and cut his own and the pay of other employees in order to preserve the firm's ability to continue its work for clients and keep as many employees working as possible. David candidly and calmly explained the situation and then patiently answered the questions of nervous employees. His leadership inspired everyone to work toward the common goal of preserving the firm instead of fretting over whether or not they would be let go. No one liked the pay cut, but everyone understood why it was necessary, and David can take credit for keeping the firm and its employees going during an incredibly difficult year.

(3) David is a master at uncovering the fundamental truths that lie within and then explaining them in ways that resonate with others and provide a working framework for making decisions. David is able to speak the truth because he has worked so hard -

both professionally and personally - at sorting out what the truth is. David's ability to read and synthesize information into new paradigms has helped him start a revolution in financial planning that can help people use all aspects of their wealth to create the life they desire. David's paradigm, which he calls Guided Wealth Transformation (tm), is nothing less miraculous than a truth-seeking device. There are many wealthy people in the world, but few of them have the ability to sort out their values and priorities in a clear, concrete way that then would allow them to lead their best life. David has helped multitudes of people see their money in an entirely different, and far more honest, way. He has helped me and countless others shed their long-held, but fundamental flawed views about money and thereby led me and others to a more authentic power and more authentic life.

Examples of how this person demonstrates RESPECT:

David follows the mantra, "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." I have known and worked with David for nearly two decades and I have never - not once - seen him use his vast intellect, experience, or wisdom in a disrespectful manner. Two examples come to mind.

(1) Using Questions to Understand. When a client stakes out a position such as, "I need \$10 million to be financially secure," the easiest thing to do might be to tell the client he's an idiot who doesn't know what he's talking about. But David never does that. What he does is ask the client a series of carefully crafted questions that help the client get to the root of his statement. He gently, yet persistently hones in until he and the client, working together, find the truth about what the client needs and wants. By being kind, respect, and still persistent, David helps his clients find their own truth without triggering their defensive mechanisms that would lead them to stick to their guns no matter the consequences to themselves. David not only practices specific techniques of listening and repeating back what he's heard, he teaches everyone in his organization to do the same. In my book, that is tremendous leadership.

(2) When I first started working with David, he asked me if I had any questions or concerns. I told him I was afraid of making a mistake. Although it was more than ten years ago, I can still recall what he said to me exactly: "Short of being unethical, there's nothing you can do that I cannot fix." That statement gave me the confidence to work harder and smarter to earn the respect he showed me that day. And, years later, when I did make a big mistake, David never once even had a flash of anger or impatience. Instead, his sole focus was on fixing the problem, and secondly, on making sure I knew that mistakes can happen and that I should not beat myself up about it. I will always be grateful to David for the respect and kindness he showed me then.

Examples of how this person demonstrates RESPONSIBILITY:

(1) David is a "the buck stops here" guy. Many financial advisors act as solo practitioners, even when they are part of a group. David has instead created teams to better serve the clients of the firm. Each team is headed by a senior advisor, and has an associate advisor and customer service person assigned to the team. In order for these

teams to work well together, each person must understand exactly what tasks they are responsible for carrying out and must then be accountable to the team for doing them well. David changed the entire mindset of the firm. All advisors work - and work successfully, more profitably and more efficiently - as a member of the individual team. David was instrumental in changing the corporate culture and lead by example. David was able to gently, yet insistently persuade others to adopt the team approach, and he did so by having one-on-one conversations with key advisors, organizing firm meetings to explain the team process, creating job descriptions that eliminated doubt as to who is responsible for what task, and inspiring others to embrace the new system.

(2) It took an enormous amount of self-confidence and courage to buck the traditional financial planning model and strike out on a more holistic path. No doubt there were many detractors who thought David's "touchy, feely" approach was the wrong one. But as they say, the proof is in the pudding. Many of David's clients had been stalled for years, unsure of what their next steps might be, until they met David. David helps people by taking them through the Guided Wealth Transformation (tm) process and helping them sort out their values and their priorities so they can begin to make real progress on their most important life priorities. David shares his GWT philosophy freely with his clients and everyone in his firm because, as he says, he is on a mission to help the entire world think differently about money and wealth. That's responsibility!

Please relate an incident demonstrating leadership character:

David is one of those people who never forgets other people's problems. His brain may not have an answer today, but he never stops thinking about it and he has a remarkably trained memory.

By and by, David comes up with a new approach or a new contact that provides - if not THE answer - then another path to try. I like to say that David has more ideas in his morning shower than most people have all day. Rarely, if ever, are those ideas self-serving ones.

David's finest character is that he never stops thinking about how he can help others. Most of his boundless energy goes toward helping his clients and his colleagues, but he also uses his tremendous intellect and gift for seeing alternative ideas to help others, including "friends of David" (FOD) and causes that are important to him or his clients and colleagues.