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# A Christian Business Perspective on the Development of Student Character

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# Motivation

- Prior study assessing 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce talent (Halley et al., 2012)
  - Key finding: 26% of executives describe the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for most pressing issues facing their organizations as *personal attributes*
    - Includes descriptors such as character, honesty, integrity, morality, and respect
- Highlights a desire by business professionals for virtuous employees

# Motivation

- Simultaneous desire by core business faculty to be more intentional about character formation
  - Ongoing discussions about how students can “Be Known” at our university
- Felt a need to better understand whether we were shaping students in a way that fit the “market” demand
- Led to a key question for our participants:
  - How do we go about the business of developing student character in our classrooms?

# Practicing What We Preach

- Wanted to practice thoughtful self-reflection
- Opportunity to explore deeply held convictions (our calling)
- Chance to collaborate and encourage one another
- Desire to spur deeper thought and conversations about our role as faculty

# What We Did

- Invited 5 business faculty members to participate
- Represents 4 distinct disciplines
- Four open-ended questions were asked
- Key limitation:
  - Does not address our roles as a mentor or advisor
  - Limited scope

# The Questions Asked

- What are the top three virtues you are trying to impart to your students?
- What activities, assignments, or discussions are you using to encourage these virtues?
- Reflect on reasons why virtues you try to encourage have been successful/unsuccessful?
- How might you unintentionally encourage vice in your students?

# Takeaways

- This form of reflection:
  - Is an excellent way to practice departmental reflection
  - Gives us a common bond that transcends disciplines
  - Sharpens the lives of the faculty participants
- The results imply:
  - Developing character is intentional and requires plenty of practice
  - Virtues must be protected, expected, and planned