

discretion:

recognizing and avoiding words, actions, and attitudes that could bring undesirable consequences

Think Before you speak!

Discretion *n* 1: the quality of being cautiously reserved in speech. 2: the ability to make responsible decisions. 3: individual choice or judgment. 4: wisdom in avoiding errors and in selecting the best means to accomplish a purpose.

Discretion causes people to stop and consider what will happen if they take a certain step of action. If there are negative consequences, discretion dismisses the idea. If there are positive results, discretion prompts people to continue.

Discretion is “separating out” words, actions and attitudes that lead to undesirable consequences. It should not cause people to rule out every choice, or worry so much

about making a wrong choice that they take no action at all.

Although discretion focuses on avoiding words, actions, and attitudes which are harmful, it is more than just saying "No" to everything. It also seeks to determine the best choice available. It prompts us to examine each option carefully in order to pick that which is the best.

To help recognize discretion you can look for instances when someone refuses to do something wrong. Discretion is when someone will walk away from a potentially bad situation or refrain from using words that might offend or hurt others. When praising discretion, look for things unseen!

“Discretion is the perfection of reason, and a guide to us in all the duties of life.”

(Walter Scott)

“A sound discretion is not so much indicated by never making a mistake as by never repeating it.”

(Christian Nestell Bovee)

“Discretion is nothing other than the sense of justice with respect to the sphere of the intimate contents of life.”

(Georg Simmel)

discretion

vs.

simplemindedness

discretion is:

- * choosing my words carefully
- * practicing good manners
- * listening to criticism
- * not making fun of others
- * turning down any invitation to do wrong

Pay Attention to Signs!



Discretion has extra meanings for those in leadership, since people watch the words, actions and attitudes of those in authority very carefully. Leaders always find themselves held to a higher standard. Without discretion, they are seen by others as thoughtless, uncaring, abrupt, impulsive, and untrustworthy. With it, they are respected and trusted.

It has been said that character is what you are in private. Some of the most damaging words leaders speak or write are those which they think no one else will hear or read. Effective leaders use discretion even when speaking or writing in private.

Topeka City of Character
700 S.W. Jackson, Suite 807
Topeka, Kansas 66603

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 8073
Topeka, KS 66608

Phone: 785-233-3699
Fax: 785-232-3498
E-mail: tcoc@sbcglobal.net

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Topeka City of Character May 2006

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Good character is the key to success!