

# ETHICS of LEADERSHIP

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## Trust in Leadership

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

### Reading

- Solomon, R. C. (2004). Ethical Leadership, Emotions, and Trust: Beyond "Charisma". In J. B. Ciulla (Ed.), *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 83–102). Westport, CT: Praeger.

### Background

While Max Weber maintained that charisma is an essential virtue for effective leadership, Robert Solomon disagrees. In this article, Solomon provides severe criticism of charisma, suggesting that focusing on charisma is vacuous and ultimately a distraction from what really matters for good and effective leadership: trust.

### Questions

1. Solomon maintains that charisma is "without ethical value and ... without much explanatory value either" (p. 90). What is his argument for that position?
2. What is Solomon's understanding of the proper role of emotion and trust in leadership? How does this help justify his conclusion that "trust would be a much better emotional vehicle for the discussion of leadership than charisma" (p. 100)?