



Dependability comes from the Latin prefix *De-* which means “down” or “from” and *pendere*, which means “to hang.” A mountain climber’s life depends on the integrity of the rope and the stability of the anchor to which he or she attaches the rope.



## What is Dependability?

*Fulfilling commitments even  
in the face of difficulty.*

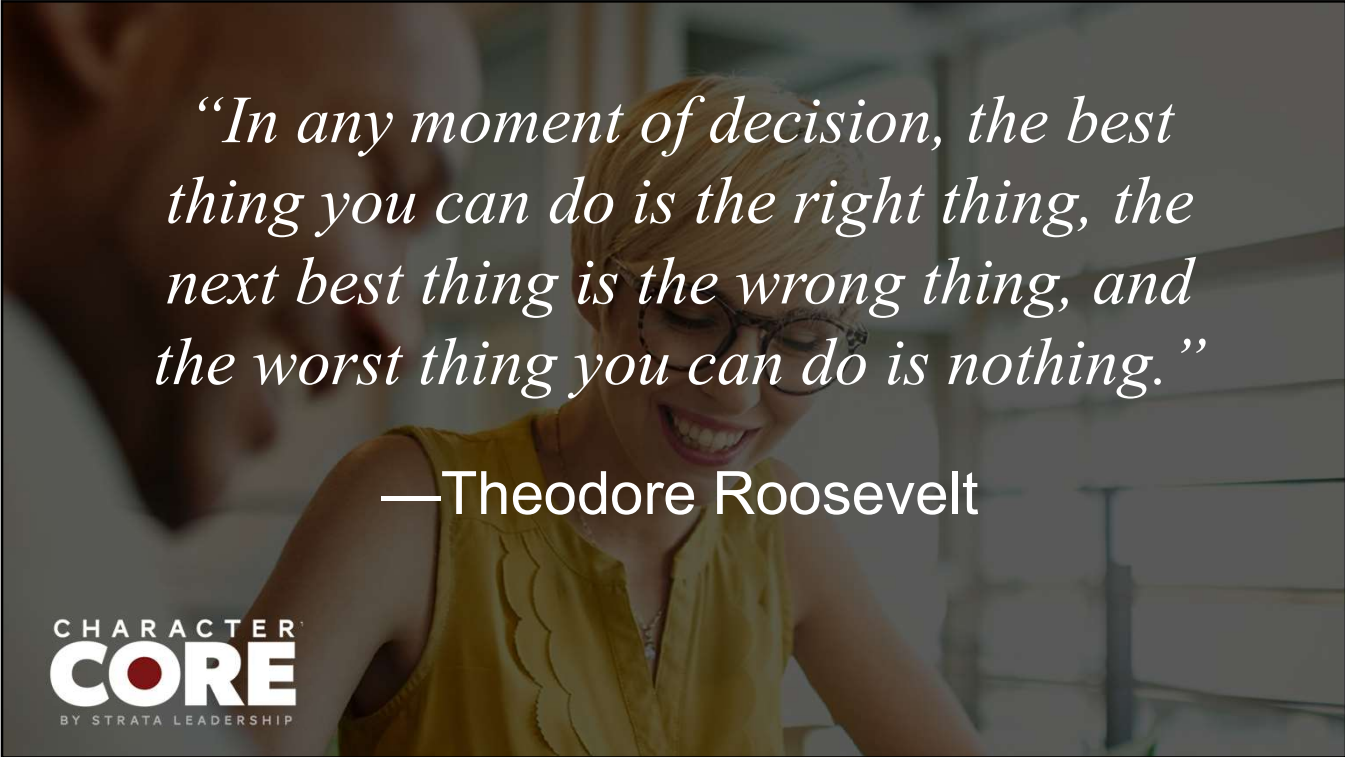
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Dependability is one of the most important qualities for any worker. The success of the company depends on everyone's ability to deliver what is expected, when it is expected. If we fail, customers will take their business somewhere else. Dependability is also about personal integrity. When your actions consistently match your words, others can depend on you.

**Opposite:** unreliable, undependable, untrustworthy, irresponsible, disloyal

**Related Concepts:** trustworthy, constant, keeps their word, does what is asked, keeps promises, fulfills expectations

**Summary:** Doing what you say you will do.



*“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.”*

—Theodore Roosevelt

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**Theodore Roosevelt** (October 27, 1858 – January 6, 1919) Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. was an American politician, author, naturalist, soldier, explorer, and historian who served as the 26th President of the United States.

**Other Dependability Quotes:**

“Where would you be without friends? The people to pick you up when you need lifting? We come from homes far from perfect, so you end up almost parent and sibling to your friends - your own chosen family. There’s nothing like a really loyal, dependable, good friend. Nothing.” – Jennifer Aniston

“Doctors, dressed up in one professional costume or another, have been in busy practice since the earliest records of every culture on earth. It is hard to think of a more dependable or enduring occupation, harder still to imagine any future events leading to its extinction.”

– Lewis Thomas

“If you want children to keep their feet on the ground, put some responsibility on their shoulders.”

– Abigail Van Buren

“‘I must do something’ always solves more problems than ‘Something must be done.’”

– Unknown

“We need to restore the full meaning of that old word, duty. It is the other side of rights.”

– Pearl S. Buck

“The future depends on what you do today.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

“Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

“You are what you do, not what you say you’ll do.”

– C.G. Jung

“Make a pact with yourself today to not be defined by your past. Sometimes the greatest thing to come out of all your hard work isn’t what you get for it, but what you become for it. Shake things up today! Be You...Be Free...Share.”

– Steve Maraboli

“Action expresses priorities.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

“Faith is about doing. You are how you act, not just how you believe.”


– Mitch Albom

“Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting in a particular way.”

– Aristotle

“Depend upon yourself. Make your judgment trustworthy by trusting it. You can develop good judgment as you do the muscles of your body - by judicious, daily exercise. To be known as a man of sound judgment will be much in your favor.”

– Grantland Rice



# 1. Be Careful What You Promise

Recognize the seriousness  
of giving your word.

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Recognize the seriousness of giving your word. Ask questions in order to clarify expectations. What exactly do you need? What is your timeline? Is there anyone else involved? What priority should this have?



## 2. Get It Done

Finish the job with a good attitude.

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Break down each task into smaller steps, and do the most important things first each day. Do not procrastinate or wait for a “more convenient” time. Finish the job...with a good attitude. Recognize the value of being a person who keeps his or her word, even when things get difficult.



### 3. Communicate

Talk with others when you realize your task cannot be completed on time or as expected.

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When it's impossible to meet a deadline or keep a promise, address the issue as soon as possible so that everyone can work together to find a solution. It is better to say, "I just realized what happened," or "I just learned about this," than to cover it up and hope no one finds out. Whatever happens, be the kind of person that others can trust.

# Discussion Starters

1. Why is it important to be honest about what you can deliver and when?
2. How can breaking down your task into smaller steps help you accomplish your goal?
3. Why is it important to let others know when you can't make the deadline?

## Additional Dependability Discussion Starters:

Why is it important to ask questions in order to clarify what you need to do?

What are some questions you can ask to clarify the expectations others have of your task?

Why might it be important to determine not only your role in completing the task, but also if others are involved?

What can happen if you procrastinate on a task or project?

Why is it important to be known as a person who keeps his or her word?

What happens if people come to realize that they can't depend on you to do what you promise?

When have you realized you couldn't fulfill a commitment or meet expectations? What did you do once you realized this was the case?

How can covering up a problem lead to more problems down the line?

Why is it important to be a person that others can trust?

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