

## **A Chocolate Spill**

Stephen Covey, author of "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People," once saw integrity in action during a stay at a hotel. He ordered room service, and was told exactly when to expect his order to arrive. About 15 minutes after the expected time, the waiter arrived with the hot chocolate he had ordered and apologized for the delay.

On his way upstairs, the hot chocolate had spilled on the tray and stained the linen, so the waiter had returned to the kitchen to replace it and get a fresh cup of hot chocolate.

Covey wasn't at all upset about the few minutes' delay, but the waiter considered his action a broken promise of sorts. He told his boss what had happened, and the next morning, his boss called Covey to apologize for the slip-up. He offered him a free breakfast buffet as compensation.

Did the waiter have to turn himself in? No. It's unlikely that a guest would amplify such a small error into a crisis. But he chose to admit his mistake, apologize for it, and seek to make amends. In the end, the hotel had a very satisfied customer.

In Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home, are we always going to do everything for our customers perfectly? Of course not, although we have the best of intentions. We are human beings, and that means mistakes are inevitable.

Our character is identified by how we respond to a shortcoming or a crisis when it occurs. Skunks always reveal whom they are. So do people of good values.

--Beecher Hunter