

## A Ship on a Reef

In August 1994, a ship named the *Columbus Iselin*, doing environmental research, ran aground off the Florida Keys and, ironically, spilled 200 gallons of diesel fuel.

Siobhan McCready of the University of Miami said the ship was collecting “chemical, physical and biological data on the currents of the Florida Straits.” The data would be used to manage ocean oil spills.

When the *Columbus Iselin* hit a reef and punctured its two fuel tanks, it was working in the Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary, where the coral formations are famous. So, their presence should not have been a surprise.

Adding to the problem: Efforts to pull the ship free from the reef spread a huge plume of sand, which can kill live coral.

Just as an environmental research boat can pollute the very waters it hopes to preserve, leaders of any organization – and certainly including health care – who fail to live up to ethical standards can harm the people who follow them.

Conduct arising from a foundation of integrity earns the respect and confidence of our customers and the public at large.

And for leaders, a commitment to high moral principles and professional standards generates loyalty and like behavior among those for whom they are responsible.

– Beecher Hunter