



12 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD JUDGEMENT *by Robert Porter Lynch*

1. **General Prudential Rule:** This is a nautical rule directing every captain at sea to avoid collisions, no matter who is violating the rules of the road. It's very much like the Hippocratic Oath – do no harm, take whatever action is necessary to prevent damage, avoid conflict whenever possible, when in doubt, assume the worst might happen and take advanced precautions.
2. **Good Judgement Starts with Wisdom** (principles from 4H)
 - **Head** – Knowledge is vital, but don't bet your life on just "knowing," intelligence is a small part of wisdom.
 - **Heart** – Caring for others, understanding human behavior, being merciful and forgiving.
 - **Hands** – Choose only those actions that produce good results with Minimal Adverse consequences.
 - **Health** – be guided by a [Moral Compass](#), do what's right, (unless it will make you "dead right").
3. **Keep It Simple and Straightforward** (KISS). People remember and follow that what is simple to grasp.
4. **Be Equitable** – Lawyers have created complexity and inequity with confounding laws and rules that are often unfair and unjust. Be sure your lawyers agree to follow the [12 Principles of Equity](#) and the Golden Rule.
5. **Build & Maintain Trust** – Leaders have a fiduciary (trust) relationship with the people they are responsible for. Follow the [FARTHEST](#) Principles. Avoid [FUDDD](#) – Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust, and Divisiveness.
6. **See the Big Picture:** and the System Interactions first, before analyzing the details, every story has two or more sides, get insights from people outside your arena.
7. **Character is Preeminent:** Competence without good character is trouble ahead (see [Guiding Principles for Good Character](#))
8. **Strive for Excellence:** Don't lower standards to accommodate mediocrity. Gravity will pull down standards of excellence. If you don't reestablish the high standard, people won't trust – they will know substandard is okay, that no one really cares, indifference will set in. There's a difference between excellence and perfection. Striving for Excellence will let you be decisive, perfection will always be elusive -- you will have to making decisions with 60-80% information, because the world will change before you have all the information.
9. **Be a Collaborative Leader:** Exercise [Leadership with a guiding hand](#). Listen actively and ask questions before spouting an opinion, don't assume anything. Follow
10. **Turn Breakdowns into Breakthroughs:** Breakdowns are likely to happen, think five moves ahead, expect the unexpected, imagine what could go wrong and have a plan should it happen, breakdowns are most likely to happen at interfaces of different things or systems, have early warning systems in place should a breakdown begin, turn breakdowns into breakthroughs and learning, don't get trapped in the blame game. Turn [Polarity into Paradox into Creative Solutions](#)
11. **Control Your Passions:** Never let negative emotions (such as [anger or revenge](#)) get in the way of good judgement. If wrapped in passion, wait 24 hours before responding. Never get in a pissing contest with a skunk, the skunk always wins. Don't wrap yourself around those who are in pissing contests with skunks. When attacked by a rabid skunk, keep your distance, take the high ground,