

Unless you have been living under a rock this summer (which you may be doing with COVID and all...) you have probably seen the news that the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, Larry Householder, was indicted on federal bribery and racketeering charges. These charges are a result of a \$60 million dollar bribery scheme related to the passage of House Bill 6, which was a controversial subsidy of FirstEnergy Solutions that passed the state legislature last year. Householder was subsequently voted out of his speakership by his colleagues but has maintained his seat in the Ohio House of Representatives. He is currently unchallenged in the general election this November.

This is clearly a failure of leadership, but it is so much more. We often hear about leaders who have strayed from the straight and narrow, especially elected leaders. It's certainly not a partisan problem – over my nearly 25-year professional career I've seen leaders from both major political parties fall from grace due to everything from serious lapses in judgement to criminal conduct. While political figures get most of the attention, we also see business and community leaders in our local, state, and national news who have made morally questionable or illegal decisions. These situations all have one thing in common: Ethical Leadership Failures. These failures can come from 1) Individual Causes or 2) Organizational Causes.

Please take some time to check out this short article titled *Understanding and Preventing Ethical Leadership Failures* by Linda Fisher Thornton: (<https://leaderonomics.com/leadership/ethical-leadership-failure>). The article is a few years old but is still valuable information on how to identify and address these issues within your own business.

As leaders it is important that we follow an accepted moral code that is grounded in ethics and laws. We must do the right thing, even when we think no one is paying attention. But we can't stop there! We need to build a workplace culture that rewards – **no, requires** – individual and group actions that are grounded in ethics. While this should go without saying, the example above, along with too many others to mention, tells me that it needs said again, and again, and again...