# Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

**“In looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence and energy. And if they do not have the first, the other two will kill you.” – Warren Buffett**

**What do you understand by this statement in the present-day scenario? Explain.**

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| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Integrity as foundational virtue; intelligence; energy and initiative; ethical leadership; misuse of competence; recruitment; public trust**

## Model Answer

**Introduction**

Warren Buffett’s statement emphasises that integrity is the foundation of trustworthy leadership. Intelligence and energy are valuable, but without moral character they can magnify the harm caused by an individual.

**Meaning in the Present-Day Scenario**

1. **Integrity builds trust:** An honest professional uses authority and resources responsibly. Without integrity, even technically sound decisions may serve private interests.
2. **Intelligence without ethics is dangerous:** A highly capable person can exploit legal loopholes, manipulate data or design sophisticated forms of corruption.

3. **Energy without integrity increases harm:** A dishonest but energetic employee can implement unethical schemes quickly and influence others.
4. **Leadership and institutions:** Ethical leaders create a culture of transparency, fairness and accountability. Unethical leaders can normalise misconduct throughout an organisation.
5. **Civil services:** Officers need competence to solve complex problems, but integrity ensures that their skills are directed towards constitutional duties and public welfare.

**Present-Day Examples**

An intelligent financial officer who falsifies accounts may cause greater damage than an incompetent one. Similarly, a skilled administrator who manipulates beneficiary lists can systematically deny welfare to deserving citizens.

**Way Forward**

Recruitment and promotion should assess integrity alongside competence. Transparent procedures, conflict-of-interest rules, ethical training, whistle-blower protection and accountability mechanisms reinforce ethical behaviour.

**Conclusion**

Intelligence determines how effectively a person can act, and energy determines how vigorously. Integrity determines whether that ability is used for good. It is therefore indispensable to responsible leadership.

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