



Good People

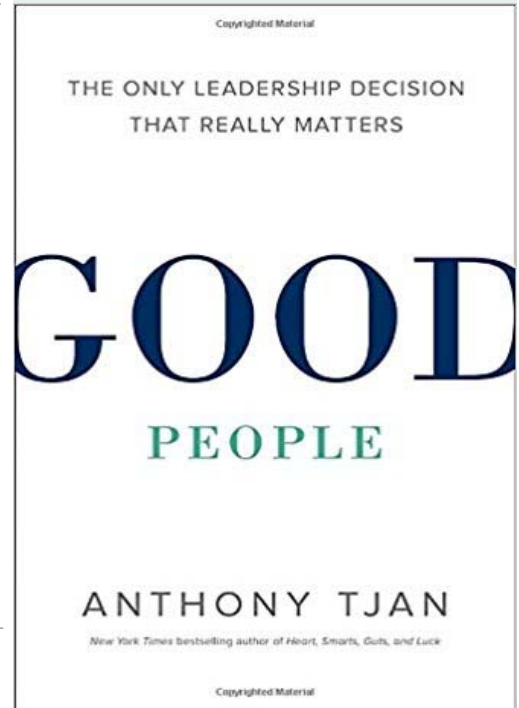
The Only Leadership Decision that Really Matters

By ANTHONY TJAN



In his 2017 book “Good People-The Only Leadership Decision that Really Matters,” Anthony Tjan notes that businesses have historically hired and rewarded employees based on competency as an indicator of goodness. In a time where competencies have become global and commonplace, Tjan urges that companies are better served when “good” is measured by values and character, and the drive to invest in a servant leadership of colleagues, industry, and the wider community. In an effort to specifically define “goodness” and “good people,” Tjan has developed a framework and a common language to help businesses set themselves apart by looking beyond skills competency as the sole marker of a “good” employee. Developed from his own diverse business management experiences and from over 100 interviews with distinguished leaders in a variety of fields, Tjan’s “Goodness Pyramid” defines the mindsets, practices, and actions for the goodness values of truth, compassion, and wholeness.

“Nothing even comes close to the importance of the people who surround us, so we should always prioritize clan and culture over competency, company, name, and cash” (Tjan, 2017, p. 15).



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Tjan



Tjan's Values and Beliefs:

- ◆ Goodness is a value, not only a competency
- ◆ Success must include goodness by definition
- ◆ Success comes from doing your best for others, not just yourself
- ◆ Goodness is fundamental to individual, business, and societal success
- ◆ Leadership transcends competency
- ◆ Leadership needs to bring the human factor back to business
- ◆ Family is the most important start-up

“If you focus on the right people with the right values, the rest resolves itself” (Tjan, 2017, p. 14).

Anthony Tjan holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard College, a Master of Business Administration from Harvard Business School, and is a Fellow of Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Tjan leads as an entrepreneur, a strategic advisor, an investor, and a venture capitalist. Prior appointments include founder and CEO of ZEFER internet services, senior advisor at Thomson Corporation, and senior partner and vice chairman at The Parthenon Group, a strategic advisory and investment firm. Currently, Tjan is cofounder and chairman for MiniLuxe retail services and is the CEO of venture investment firm The Cue Ball Group. Tjan is the coauthor of bestselling book *Heart, Smarts, Guts, and Luck (2012)*, and is a contributor to the Harvard Business Review. Born in Montreal, Tjan moved to Newfoundland and Toronto before settling at his current residence of Brookline, Massachusetts.

“I believe that goodness and good people are integral to individual, business, and societal success and to creating the future we claim we want” (Tjan, 2017, p. 28).

The Organizing Principles of Goodness



The North Star

-a guiding definition of "good people."

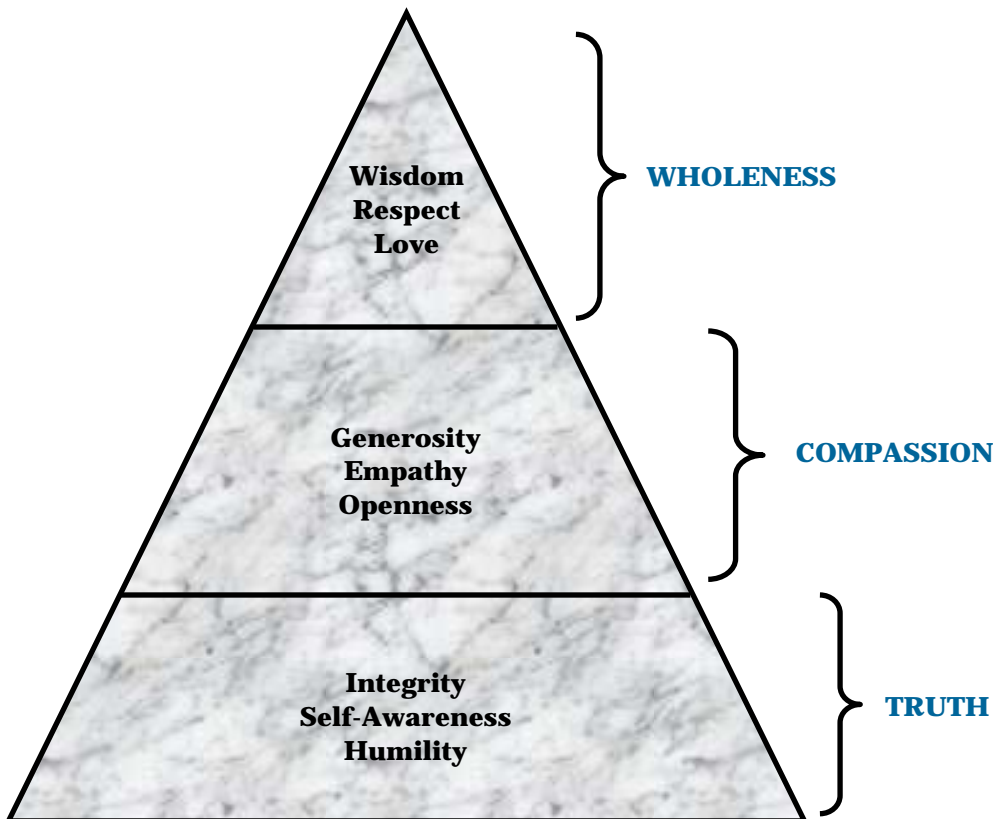
“Our general definition of “good people” is this: *those committed to continuously cultivating the values that help them and others become the fullest possible versions of who they are*” (Tjan, 2017, p. 30).

THE GOOD PEOPLE MANTRA

(The 5 dimensions of goodness)

1. **Good people put people first in decision making.**
 - be consistent, long-term
2. **Good people grow by continually growing themselves.**
 - help others to grow
3. **Good people commit to the values of goodness.**
 - go beyond competency and discover underlying values
4. **Good people balance reality and aspirations.**
 - recognize benefit of idealism and pragmatism
5. **Good people practice goodness all the time.**
 - make goodness habitual

THE GOODNESS PYRAMID



What is the Goodness Pyramid?

- ◆ A concrete framework/structure
- ◆ A set of values
- ◆ Mindsets, practices, and actions for each goodness value
- ◆ A lexicon that develops common language, categories, and definitions
- ◆ Useful for developing goodness in self and in others
- ◆ Inspired by Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory

TRUTH



“Honesty and congruency in your thoughts and actions” (Tjan, p. 31).

Mindset of HUMILITY

- As a leader, having a mindset of humility means being modest about self-capacity, ability and achievements. It means reflecting on actions, behaviors, and decisions so that pride is balanced with humility.

“Only by maintaining genuine humility can one foster a lifelong intellectual curiosity and the openness required for even greater possibility, creativity, and humanity” (Tjan, 2017, p.47).

Practice SELF-AWARENESS

- As a leader, the practice of self-awareness involves being honest about one’s own strengths and weaknesses and mindful of the role leaders play in successes and failures.



“Self-awareness helps us build stronger integrity and congruence between what we say, think, do, and feel” (Tjan, 2017, p. 50).

Act with INTEGRITY

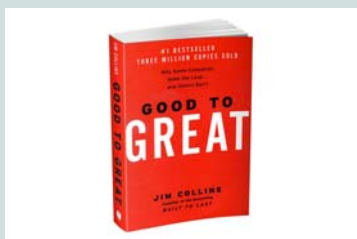
- As a leader, our actions need to align with our values. Being transparent and acting with integrity allows leaders to earn trust and credibility.

“Integrity is complete self-congruence, so that what you do is what you say, what you say is what you think, what you think is how you feel, and understanding how you feel is who you are” (Tjan, 2017, p. 57).

ADVOCATES OF HUMILITY

JIM COLLINS

- Level 5 leaders (those with the highest performing organizations) have a mindset of humility



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

- Humility— The 13th virtue



PRACTICES FOR SELF-AWARENESS

- Meditate and stay mindful
- Track plans and priorities to help define success
- Self-assess through psychometric tests to understand personal qualities and biases
- Seek honest feedback from friends
- Seek formal feedback from work to identify strengths and areas for development for self and for the organization



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE INTEGRITY

- routine reflection on values
- be a student first, improve leadership through lifelong learning

STRATEGIES IN ACTION

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN:

- daily reflection on alignment of actions, thoughts, expressions, and feelings with his 13 virtues.

The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin 55

FORM OF THE PAGES

Temperance.
*Fail not to Dine in
 Drink not to Excess.*

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
T							
S	••	•	•	•	•	•	
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ANTHONY TJAN:

- AM/DB: A morning debrief or reflection that measures progress and actions against values to ensure alignment.

COMPASSION

Generosity
Empathy
Openness

“Selflessness made possible by understanding others’ experiences” (p. 31)

Mindset of **OPENNESS**

- **As a leader, the mindset of openness allows a capacity to be present, unbiased, and non-judgmental**
- **Openness paired with solid values promotes creativity and flexibility for self and staff**
- **Leaders with an open mindset are more receptive to new ideas**

“Banishing our conscious and unconscious biases and adopting a mindset of openness expands, enriches, and diversifies our point of view. Openness allows for inquiry, too.” (Tjan, p. 74).

Practice **EMPATHY**

- **Carl Rogers (American psychologist) defines empathetic listening as understanding the nuance and feeling behind others’ messages**
- **As a leader it is important to be able to see and feel others’ perspectives**
- **Leaders can dissipate conflict through empathetic listening and by acknowledging others’ frustrations**

“Leaders should practice paying attention to the motivations and emotions expressed by their employees, customers, colleagues, and mentors” (Tjan, p. 78).

Act with **GENEROSITY**

- **Leaders can engage in pro-social behavior, which is behavior that intends to benefit other than the self**
- **Businesses need to think beyond generosity as extrinsic rewards such as pay and promotions and adopt a deeper and more genuine expression of generosity that shows compassion and interest in employees**

“Pro-social behavior has a multitude of benefits. Acknowledging, recognizing, and helping employees can be just as effective as offering them monetary rewards” (Tjan, 2017, p. 84).

“Compassion can amplify organizational objectives and performance” (Tjan, p. 73).

DEVELOP AN OPEN MINDSET

The 24 x 3 Rule:

- Wait 24 seconds, 24 minutes, 24 hours when asked to consider a new idea or possibility
- Consider all the reasons why the new idea might “work” before considering why it might not work.



BECOMING A LISTENER

- Be genuine and authentic
- Avoid phatic language (routine questions) that are asked out of habit and where we don’t listen genuinely to the response (e.g. How are you?)
- Ask questions and listen to the answers



DEVELOP GENEROSITY

Perspective Journey:

- Leaders can benefit from annual reflection on the year’s generosity

Acknowledge Others

- Acknowledge others who helped accomplish achievements
- Work just as diligently to help others realize their potential



WHOLENESS



“Fulfillment and gratitude for the people we have around us” (p. 31).

“We must be more than just numbers...we must work toward the durability of something institutionally good in the character and culture of our organizations and the people we touch” (Tjan, 2017, p. 95).

Mindset of **LOVE**

- Leaders with a mindset of love purposefully work in the service of others
- Employee engagement is a synonym for love
- Leaders need to engage staff and involve them in greater purpose. In return, staff will be engaged and love their job.
- When staff are happy, they extend happiness to customers
- When employees are engaged and love their brand or service, business becomes stronger and more influential
- Employees require meaningful roles based on organizational visions and values

Practice of **RESPECT**

- Leaders earn respect by:
 - consistently aligning behavior with values
 - following through with commitments
 - recognizing own mistakes
 - having good etiquette
 - deferring to others

“Ultimately, genuine respect accrues to those who respect other people. Respect is a two-way street” (p. 104).



65% of staff would choose a new boss over a pay raise (p. 108).

Act informed by **WISDOM**

- Acting informed by wisdom allows leaders to make sound decisions
- Wisdom allows leaders to balance tensions

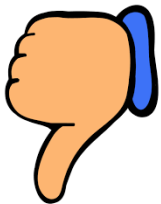


“Wisdom is wholeness in action. It allows us to discern what’s important and what’s not, what’s passing and what’s permanent, what’s right and what’s wrong, what’s naïve and what’s well considered” (Tjan, p. 109).

‘INSIDE OUT’ VERSUS ‘OUTSIDE IN’ BUSINESS PHILOSOPHIES

OUTSIDE IN

1. Research customer base
2. Build competencies required to deliver the product



INSIDE OUT

1. Establish organizational **culture of self-care**
2. Invest in **building emotional connections** with customers

“In business and in life, we must begin with a baseline of care and love for ourselves before moving outward to care and love for others” (Tjan, 2017, p. 99).



Balancing Tensions to Achieve Goodness

Goodness in action isn't as easy as it sounds. Living truth, compassion, and wholeness involves balancing tensions that arise out of daily situations and challenges. Leaders will undoubtedly face these tensions and must find a comforta-

ble balance between each pair that aligns with personal and organization values.



1. PRAGMATISM VS IDEALISM

Idealists embed their dreams, morals, values, and principles in their organization at all costs. Pragmatists prioritize and search for answers. Negative outcomes can arise when idealists don't give enough time for ideas to be realized. Leaders who find balance between pragmatism and idealism are creative enough to dream big ideas, but practical enough to plan for the realization of these

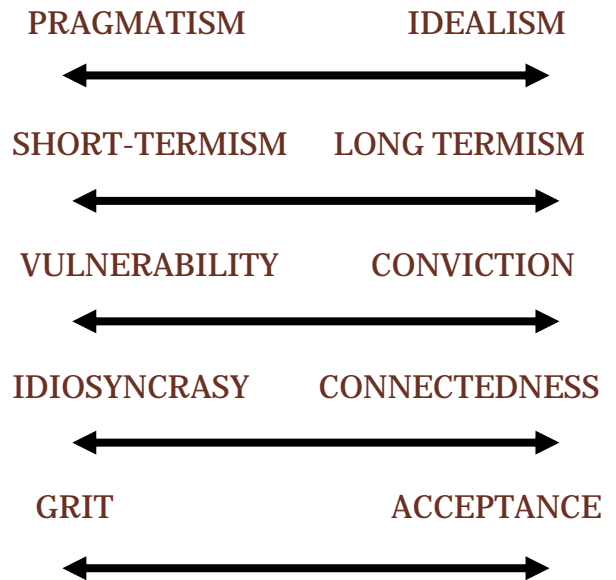
dreams. When balance is found, this tension pair can be very productive. To balance these tensions, it is helpful to filter new ideas through the organization's values and purpose. Relationships are also key to finding balance between these tensions. "Pragmatism and idealism can find a natural equilibrium through diverse but complementary team relationships" (Tjan, 2017, p. 140).

3. VULNERABILITY VS CONVICTION

Businesses who take risks in order to achieve goals are making themselves vulnerable. In order to grow a business, a certain amount of vulnerability is necessary. At the same time, businesses

need to balance their vulnerability with conviction. This involves purposeful management of risks and being accountable for the results of actions and decisions.

THE 5 TENSIONS



2. SHORT-TERMISM VS LONG

Finding balance between short term and long term in business is challenging. Short term project turnaround is the current reality for most businesses. Companies often use short-term strategies to promote short-term returns to maximize profits. In a climate of financial risk and uncertainty, short-termism can be seen as necessary. This poses a challenge for

companies that value impact over the long term and staff development. Greater goals as well as the development of great people takes time. Businesses willing to adopt a long term plan will realize more worthwhile goals, will give projects the resources they need, and will show value to their employees by investing in them over the long run.

4. IDIOSYNCRASY VS CONNECTEDNESS

Idiosyncrasies are unique to individuals. They are the textures and hues of personalities. Idiosyncrasies in business are too often discouraged as they are seen to distract from business. Balancing right and left side thinking can lead to innovation and holistic solutions. There is strength in having diversity in personnel and diversity in critical think-

ing. When balanced with connectedness, idiosyncrasies that allow for creativity or thinking differently in business can be a major advantage. As long as creativity is balanced by being connected to organizational values and purpose, it can drive business forward by sparking innovation.

5. GRIT VS ACCEPTANCE

Grit is a characteristic of hard workers. It is the work ethic of dedication and seeing jobs through to quality completion. While grit is an important quality in business, it needs to be balanced with acceptance. Acceptance is the ability to adapt to what comes in order

to optimize results. Acceptance gives permission to go off course before making it to the finish line. Having the flexibility to veer off course, make adjustments, and get back on track balances the determination of grit.

“Businesses should never compromise truth in purpose, humility and self-awareness in leadership, or integrity in values” (Tjan, 2017, p. 46).

RISE: RECONCILING TENSIONS

It is beneficial for leaders to have a consistent approach for dealing with tensions when they arise. Leaders can use the RISE approach for balanced decision making and problem resolution. Although the RISE process doesn't guarantee success, the decision making process improves the probability. Leaders need to return to their values when using the process to ensure value-centric decisions and solutions.

R - RECOGNIZE the situation, assess risks and consequences, set realistic expectations

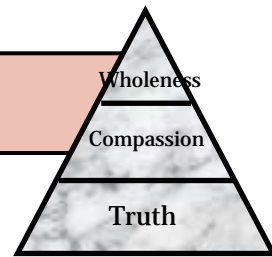
I - INTERNALIZE by taking time to see the situation forward and backward

S - SHARE and contemplate with peers and mentors for other perspectives

E - EXECUTE confidently once you concretely know the “why” and the process



Putting Goodness into Practice



“The ultimate test of our goodness isn’t whether we do the right thing when our character is in question; it’s whether we do good whenever we have an opportunity to do so” (Tjan, 2017, p. 205).

Goodness doesn’t happen by chance. To embody the values of truth, compassion, and wholeness takes commitment and consistent effort and reflection. Goodness is practicing truth, compassion, and wholeness ourselves while also helping others to do the same through leadership and mentorship. Leadership is an opportunity to put goodness into practice by serving others and helping them to achieve their goals. Leaders should be mindful of the support and mentorship they received along their career path and proactively serve others in the same way.

Engagement

ENGAGEMENT definition:

“Employees who are involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work and workplace” (Gallup, 2015).

ENGAGEMENT data:

Only 31% of Americans are engaged at work (Gallup engagement poll, 2015).

Increasing ENGAGEMENT:

Workplaces who treat their employees like family can increase engagement. Families provide environments of support and foster growth and development. Businesses can mirror families in the way they support, care for, and encourage employees by developing relationships and putting the values of the goodness pyramid first, and focusing on profits and competency second.



Mentorship

Mentorship can increase engagement when the goodness pyramid is in place as the foundation of an organization. Mentor-mentee relationships founded on the values of truth, compassion, and wholeness create an environment of trust through which mentorship is most effective. Relationships need to be the first focus of mentor-mentee partnerships, and competency development second.

“The quality of mentorship is directly correlated to the quality of the relationship between a mentor and mentee” (Tjan, 2017, p. 241).

10 Principles of Mentorship

1. Choose to be of service and listen
2. Help uncover and celebrate superpowers
3. Shout loudly with optimism, keep quiet with cynicism
4. Encourage unconventional success
5. Find meaning—the intrinsic “why”
6. Help develop meaningful roles
7. Share wisdom but choose kindness over rightness
8. Let mentees come to the answer themselves
9. Let mentees control the volume dial—allow mentees to control the level of mentorship
10. Respect commitments—reciprocal respect

Mentorship Roles

Mentorship is traditionally biased toward developing competencies. Mentors can ***focus on values as well as competencies***. This can be achieved through a variety of mentorship roles.

MASTERS OF CRAFT

- ◇ Share wisdom regarding the history, values, and current state of the industry
- ◇ Teach values and skills needed to become the best in profession
- ◇ Help identify and realize the mentee's natural strengths

COPILOTING COLLEAGUES

- ◇ Peer mentors
- ◇ Reciprocal relationships—support and collaborate with each other, hold each other accountable
- ◇ Quality of work and engagement increases for both parties

CHAMPIONS OF OUR CAUSE

- ◇ Provides emotional support
- ◇ Advocates
- ◇ Helps to connect with others
- ◇ Usually a superior supporting the mentee's career path



REVERSE MENTORS

- ◇ Mentors learning from mentees
- ◇ Feedback on engagement and leadership style flowing from the mentee to the mentor
- ◇ Opportunity for mentors to learn new perspectives from mentees

ANCHORS

- ◇ Offer objective advice and counsel
- ◇ Support personal and professional lives
- ◇ Help mentees to see how to improve
- ◇ Close friends, parents, or community leaders

5 Critical Questions That Mentors Should Ask:

1. What are you truly trying to achieve?
2. What are you doing well that is helping you get there?
3. What is slowing you down?
4. What will you change tomorrow to help get you there faster?
5. How can I be of help?

Evaluation and Application

Critical Evaluation

Traditionally, businesses have measured success of employees by their competency. Tjan pushes businesses to think beyond competency as a measure of success. He urges business to also measure success by the mindsets, practices, and actions of trust, compassion, and wholeness. He suggests that leaders have a duty to not only develop themselves as good people and their businesses as productive businesses, but also to develop the capacity for success and leadership in others. He sees the development of others as equally important to the development of self and business. Tjan's "goodness pyramid" is developed through his experiences, conversations, and interviews with a number of high level global leaders. Tjan's book exemplifies the goodness components of truth, compassion, and wholeness through stories of Tjan's own experiences and interviews. While lacking in quantitative data, Tjan's insights, drawn from his experiences and interviews, offer significant qualitative data to support the importance of the components of his goodness framework and of servant leadership. Focusing on the soft aspects of business, Tjan's book offers leaders insight into the power of humility. He really emphasizes the "why" of leadership as the first and most important aspect, with the "what" and "how" taking the back seat. For the business world, this may be a new way of thinking that challenges a more traditional concept of success. Business leaders who read this book can expect to alter their perception of success and may find themselves seeing from the perspectives of their employees.

While Tjan's framework provides a valuable language and structure to define goodness, other parts of the book are less successful. Tjan's discussions of the tensions that threaten goodness are thin and lacking in evidence. The concepts themselves are interesting but don't seem to be grounded in research and the methods suggested for balancing tensions are surface level and arguably random in nature. He attempts to link his framework theory to practice by including a section on mentorship at the end. Here he offers principles of mentorship that make sense but are not backed by the abundance of research in this area.

Chapter summaries are in point form and help the reader to review and summarize the points made in the chapters.

Application to Educational Leadership

Tjan's belief that success should be measured by values and character rather than just competency deserves to be well considered by educational leaders. While education is all about the development of the whole child (physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual), we tend to evaluate teachers by teaching competencies only. Leaders in education may naturally foster the values of the goodness pyramid in their staff and naturally work in the service of developing others, but reading Tjan's book may draw leaders into considering their influence more carefully. Tjan's book may pair more naturally with the education world than the business world as "soft skills" live in the daily life of educators.

Theory to Practice

Administrators have the responsibility of evaluating teachers. Many assessment frameworks are built around achieving and improving teacher competencies such as classroom environment, planning, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Tjan's values and language of goodness would fit well into teacher assessment frameworks. Education today serves to develop these values in students. Having the language to talk about these values in respect to teachers would open the door to the equal importance of these soft skills in education.

Discussion Questions

- * Tjan suggests that businesses should put people first over profit. What difference could this make to businesses themselves and to the wider world community?
- * In education, profit can be otherwise named as student achievement. What would be the implications and results in education of putting the development of student goodness (truth, compassion, wholeness) ahead of student achievement (profit)?
- * As a leader, how does Tjan's goodness framework change or confirm how you evaluate teacher competency and quality?
- * As a teacher, how could Tjan's goodness framework influence the construction of expected norms of student behavior in your classroom?

Reference

Tjan, A. (2017). *Good People: The Only Leadership Decision That Really Matters*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House LLC.